

LÁSZLÓ SZIKLAI

AFTER
THE
PROLETARIAN
REVOLUTION
GEORG LUKÁCS'S
MARXIST
DEVELOPMENT,
1930-1945

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ, BUDAPEST

AFTER THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

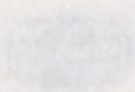
AFTER THE PROLETARIAN
REVOLUTION

THEORY AND DEVELOPMENT
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1930-1945



AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ, BUDAPEST 1992

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Translated by Iván Sellei

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REVOLUTION

GEORG LUKÁCS'S MARXIST DEVELOPMENT,
1930-1945

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TUDOMÁNYOS AKADÉMIA
KÖNYVTÁRA

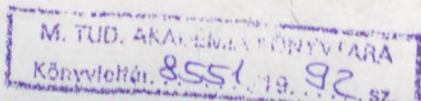
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Translated by Igor Sot

To the memory of Mikhail Lifshits
and Igor Sot

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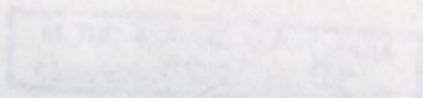
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GEORG LUKÁCS AND HIS DETRACTORS

THE IDEOLOGIST OF AN ERA

and Misseroth that but the reception of his work was very widely disseminated in Germany. Some scholars have a high opinion of his late work, in which he strove for synthesis, with others appreciating only his youthful writings. There are many others, such as Adorno, who hold the following opinion of the Communist philosopher: "In his essays and books, he strives for freedom in thought. He evidently indisputable intelligence and the wealth of Soviet thought."

It has happened and still happens that, while on one hand he is considered a sage, on the other he is condemned as a swindler on the other.

Georg Lukács' detractors are large in number. That has long been the case. And it comes to what Lukács did in the thirties and forties: the age when today is yesterday, and almost yesterday. An expert on the history of ideology, a critic of categories, has yet to examine the real, underlying causes in the course of a thorough, thoughtful and responsible investigation. Our assignment here is different: it is not the purpose of our analysis to identify and examine the motives of the detractors of the theory that Georg Lukács advanced between 1930 and 1945. Still, it is inevitable that we at least attempt to answer a preliminary question: Why has the fate of the reputation of these one and a half decades been so unfortunate, independent of the quality of the works in question? Why did these works fail to find their way to the reader, up to at least a certain point in the development of the work? (Here an organic reception of his work can be said to involve controversy and differences of interpretation.)

Our answer to this question is simple. We depart from the assumption that the reception that followed the growth of the "classical" work is devoid of genuine criticism. The time, place and circumstances of persons and reception. We say "time, place and circumstances"

GEORG LUKÁCS AND HIS DETRACTORS

Lukács is praised, and he is reviled. His greatness is indisputable, and yet it is disputed. He remains a presence in contemporary bourgeois and Marxist thought but the reception of his work can vary widely from country to country. Some scholars have a high opinion of his late works, in which he strove for synthesis, while others appreciate only his youthful writings. There are many others, such as Adorno, who hold the following opinion of the Communist philosopher: "in his essays and books, he strove for decades to corrupt his evidently indestructible intellect to suit the wasteland of Soviet thought".¹

It has happened (and still happens) that, while on one hand he is branded a *Stalinist*, he is condemned as a *revisionist* on the other.

Georg Lukács's detractors are large in number. That has long been the case. And when it comes to what Lukács did in the thirties and forties, the rejection today is *emphatic*, and almost *universal*. An expert on the history of ideologies, a critic of critiques, has yet to explore the real, underlying causes in the course of a thorough, stimulating and responsible investigation. Our assignment here is different: It is not the purpose of our analysis to identify and examine the motives of the detractors of the theory that Georg Lukács elaborated between 1930 and 1945. Still, it is inevitable that we at least attempt to answer a preliminary question: Why has the fate of the output of those one and a half decades been so unfortunate, *independent* of the quality of the works in question? Why did those works fail to find their way to the readership in as *organic* a manner as the output of other stages in his career? (Even an organic reception of his works can, of course, involve controversies and differences of interpretation!)

Our answer to this question is tentative. We depart from the assumption that the reception that followed the genesis of the "Moscow writings" is devoid of genuine continuity. This time, *there is no simultaneity* of genesis and reception. We are, of course, aware that simultaneity

cannot be measured by a chronometer, and that a piece of writing has a long-lasting effect: The impact is never automatic or immediate. By a lack of continuity, we mean then that the inorganic character of the reception of his works, as well as the content and duration of the absence of simultaneity is historical in nature.

Some of Lukács's works were indeed received with organic continuity. For example, his collection of essays, *The Soul and the Forms*, was published in Hungarian in 1910, and only a year later in German. It was a product of the turn of the century. The impact of that work began to be felt in that era and continued to remain in an organic relationship with it. In 1916, Max Dessoir published Lukács's novel typology. It was a chapter from a study on aesthetics and the history of philosophy, discussing the works of Dostoevsky, one whose design Lukács worked out in the summer of 1914. (It was *The Theory of the Novel*.) Its conception was prompted by the outbreak of war; the influence that this work exerted also had an intimate connection with the era of the First World War. *History and Class Consciousness* (1923) was the product of the revolutionary period of 1917, 1919, and the early twenties. Its genesis and reception coincided from a world-historical point of view: They took place in the era of the October Revolution. Its reception, assessment, and the resulting controversy are inseparable from the volatile political and intellectual atmosphere of the time of its birth. (This is not to say, of course, that its impact has not been felt beyond that period.)

By contrast, the works that Lukács wrote between 1930 and 1945 met with a different fate. From a world-historical point of view, genesis and reception were nowhere as far removed from each other as in this case; the impact was belated. The delay is attributable to the historical situation. The genesis took place in the age of Fascism and the Popular-Front, of Socialism in one country and the Second World War, while the reception occurred in the era of the emergence of two competing world systems, the Cold War, the partition of Germany, and the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). One must bear all this in mind if one wishes to understand the underlying causes of the delay. But these underlying causes are far from the sole explanation. The demarcation line between genesis and reception is not created only by 1945, not by the mere fact that they occurred in two different world-historical eras. It is an open secret that the works of Lukács's Moscow period did have a considerable contemporary effect

and that their reception indeed began almost immediately. Moreover, even after 1945, his works had a good chance of earning an organic reception. We must therefore conclude that, among the causes of the major delay, there were some that *affected the genesis itself*.

After the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, Lukács fled Hungary. In 1929, he was ordered to leave Vienna, and circumstances took such a turn that, sooner or later, he would have to leave his mother's native city for good. However, in 1933, he was forced into emigration not by the hounds of the Horthy regime, who had pursued the former Communist commissar, but by the danger of Holocaust, kindled by Hitler. His decision to leave was not a Hungarian internal affair: It was a fresh instance of emigration in the life of an *émigré*. Viewed from a historical perspective, its nature, opportunities and vistas were different. In the course of the years of exile in the Soviet Union, when the international situation took an increasingly tragic turn (the advance of Fascism, the World War, the attack on the Soviet Union), a limit, in the strict sense of the word, was set on the spread of Lukács's writings. His isolation was growing, albeit his presence could be felt in Europe and beyond. He then contributed writings (sometimes under a pseudonym to almost all Communist and left-wing periodicals) to be found in Moscow or Budapest, in Kolozsvár (Cluj), Paris, Prague, or Mexico. He was present wherever and as long as it was allowed to be.

It was the lands of democracy and anti-Fascism (for the time being still free), and the German *émigré* communities, that his works could still reach. He exerted an influence — even though only via fragments of his *oeuvre*.

The fact that Lukács lived in exile, that this Marxist philosopher lived in isolation comparable only to that of a poet, these external restraints of his life were, however, only some of the "genetic" causes of the absence of simultaneity in the reception of his works. Of similar importance were the character and the form of the creation and circulation of his Moscow writings. Given that we intend to take a closer look at the relationship between these circumstances and the delay in the reception of his works, we first of all have to realize that, *within* the Soviet Union, the isolation of Georg Osipovich Lukacs was relative, contradictory, and changeable.

Georg Lukács was an exile. However, Georg Osipovich Lukacs did not live and work on the periphery, but instead, at the centre of the

international Communist movement. His articles and essays were published in large number, often simultaneously, in both German and Russian. His presence could be strongly felt. He was involved in the Soviet, German, and Hungarian literary and intellectual life. He edited journals and presented papers. He debated and was the subject of debates. But from the second half of the thirties there prevails the "internal inconsistency of the period: the years of the great trials — at the same time, the Seventh Congress of the Comintern: Popular-Front. Great contrasts jostling each other (indeed intertwined with each other)".

On one hand, the consequences were, isolation (*Literaturny Kritik* ceases to appear; *International Literature* often very problematic) and "sharper conflicts: philosophical works cease to appear".

On the other hand, after the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, the field of Lukács's activity was extended. (There were, for instance, "Hungarian possibilities: Popular-Front tendencies even in Moscow literature — movement towards a correct assessment of the intellectual currents within the Horthy regime and the potential for ideological resistance to Fascism"), which also brought about the "extension of the field of conflict".²

The bulk of the Moscow writings were produced for special occasions. They were closely related to the theoretical and artistic debates of the day, and they were inseparable from concrete ideological tendencies that prevailed in the era (and in the movement). They were writings on public affairs, published in journals. In most cases, their author fulfilled — directly or indirectly — an assignment, a commission. It could be supposed that, more than anything, this continuous presence, this strong attachment to the historical moment, social reality, and the consciousness of the movement at any given moment, were the most favourable conditions for the organic reception and simultaneous impact of Lukács's ideas. At times, however, his presence was limited, and failed to overcome his relative isolation. His presence notwithstanding, *The Young Hegel* could not be published at that time. And — more important — his writings on affairs of the day (writings that often provoked angry opposition) were, with few exceptions, submitted to a medium whose theoretical and political orientation, and often, intellectual unpreparedness, only stirred up misunderstanding. (Misunderstanding, too, was an important component of the influence that Lukács's works exerted on his contemporaries.) It would be beyond the scope of the present work to

describe the political and ideological nature of vulgarization, prejudice, and *unfruitful misunderstanding*. Inevitable, however, we must also refer to yet another "genetic" circumstance that obstructed the genuinely organic reception of Lukács's works.

There is much more to it that intellectually, Lukács by far surpassed the average theorist of this era. The works that Lukács published on public affairs of the day, even though they were closely connected to ephemeral events, went far beyond the theoretical standard of this era in their conceptual generalizations, form (style), and content. The level of abstraction in Lukács's writings opened new theoretical and historical perspectives. At the same time, however, the philosophical "abstraction", the standard of his works, which, examined from below, seemed to be "aristocratic", and the narrow-minded tendency of his audience to convert theory directly into tactics, limited the *momentary* possibility of a genuine reception. In order for that the message of his writings, beyond reference to developments of the day, to have a stronger, more continuous, and lasting effect, it was necessary (among others) that his articles not sink in the billowy sea of the press, that the essays forming a conceptual unity not remain in isolation as dictated by daily considerations, and that the journals that carried them not become their burial-ground. The collection of essays into a book is always an opportunity to save them from rapidly falling into oblivion, an opportunity to assure the continuity of reception.

The publication of essays in an omnibus volume, was not rare in Lukács's career. It occurred if rarely, also during these one and a half decades of exile. As the extant documents indicate, only a fraction of Lukács's book projects was realized. He published only five independent volumes of his works in this period spanning some fifteen years.³ All of them consisted of articles that had previously been published in journals, and three of them were thin brochures. The five, taken together, amount to only one thousand printed pages. It was a *part*, important but not exhaustive. The rest of his writings met the unfortunate fate of having to wait for publication. Numerous examples can be mentioned. Lukács's "Autobibliography" of 1938 still spoke of *The Historical Novel* as a monograph. In that period, however, even though its author had submitted it to a publisher, it remained in the form of essays serialized in a journal.⁴ Soon after that, Lukács finished working on a book about Goethe. After his arrest, the typescript disappeared, these essays re-

maining for the time being in journals. Despite all his efforts and hopes, the major philosophical works, which were written as monographs and by nature included more comprehensive theoretical and historical analyses transcending the events of the day, could not be published. *The Young Hegel* remained in typescript, as did his two minor monographs (*Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?* 1933; *Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?* 1941-1942).

The delay in the publication of the two most important volumes of essays from that period (in retrospect, Lukács referred to these two as published books) was conspicuous. Especially noticeable was the delay of the first. The essays forming the collection *The Literary Theories of the Nineteenth Century and Marxism* (1937) were written between 1930 and 1933. The publication of the other volume *On the History of Realism*, which provoked a major controversy and exerted a greater influence, was sooner realized: These writings, which dated from 1934-1936, were published as early as in 1939, in Russian. Among Lukács's writings that had first appeared in journals and then in a book form in the Soviet Union, only the treatise on Gottfried Keller, some 160 typed pages, came out in German (in Kiev).

The year 1945 marked a turning-point in the reception of the Moscow writings. In the new post-war world-historical era, the absence of simultaneity changed in meaning. It could no longer be attributed — among others — to isolation.

On the contrary, it seemed that the time had come to "catch up" with the time lost, and it seemed that the delay could be made up, the unity of genesis and reception could be restored.

The exile came to an end, and so, it became possible to reap its harvest. It became clear just how rich, how *epoch-making* in Marxist aesthetics, this period in Lukács's career was. Arranged in volumes according to the various themes or formed into monographs, the articles and essays written in the thirties and forties were published one after the other in Hungarian and German. They constituted an important and exhaustive selection. It was a renaissance, and not just in a symbolic sense. It was a rebirth, the beginning of a secondary reception. In the meantime, however, the works underwent a special transformation: They were still the Moscow writings, and yet they were no longer the Moscow writings. The secret of this duality was not simply a matter of

time-lag (often a decade) between their creation and their post-war publication which in some cases was the first one. Similarly, it was only partly due to the external changes that essays always undergo when they become part of an anthology. Obviously, we must bear in mind the fact that Lukács did not republish *any* of his Moscow collections in an unchanged form. Now in possession of the *whole* output of the past period, he used the opportunity to enlarge, select, or rearrange his writings, so as to form new collections. It is also noteworthy that, on numerous occasions, he bridged the distance between past and present by "cancelling and at the same time preserving" the original text. (This applied especially to writings and contributions to debates, pieces that had been closely associated with events of those fifteen years. The more general the questions of aesthetics, theory of art, and history of literature that the original essay discussed, the fewer modifications Lukács made.) Lukács did not make any secret of the difference between the original and the revised version. This is how he explained the duality of sameness and change in his preface to his collection of essays, *The Problems of Realism*: "The essays published herein were written in the thirties. They are almost without exception polemical pieces, written and published in response to topical issues in Russian and German literature. The reason why I am publishing them in the same form more than a decade later is that they all were attempts to provide a treatment of general interest to some questions of principle and theory, questions that arose during debates of that era . . . (I have of course deleted hints and references that demand familiarity with the contributions of those debates. . . . I have, however, retained observations connected with the illusions of that era, for instance, with the anti-Fascist movement in Germany. I did so in order to enable the readers to feel the atmosphere in which those articles were written.)"⁵

In retrospect the potential inherent in the genesis of the Moscow writings became truly visible in that stage, in that secondary genesis: Lukács consciously altered the relationship of elements that belong together, are historically concrete, and theoretically universal. Emphasis shifted to a more abstract plane of principles. This is not to say, however, that he was able to, or aspired to, cancel to genetic and historical determination of what was originally periodical literature.

Let us repeat: a decisive circumstance for the reception was that, after 1945, the majority of the readers of Lukács's works throughout the

world encountered the output of a *historically finished* creative period for the first time, and practically at the same time in this new form. The most important precondition of making up for the delay was not, however, this "cancellation and preservation at the same time". The chance of continuity and simultaneity lay, rather, in the changed social and ideological conditions of Europe. This is the underlying cause of the real metamorphosis of the Moscow writings.

Once Fascism was destroyed and the World War finished, Europe was given the chance of a rebirth. The Left steered Europe's course in the beginning. A new history could begin in conquered Germany and in Hungary: both the removal of the ruins of bombed-out cities and the ultimate expulsion of all the spectres of the Nazi past. Spiritual denazification.

The promising perspective and hoped-for pledge of the change was *democracy*: the peace aiming at a democratic renewal, anti-Fascist co-operation and the promotion of the Popular-Front.⁶ This is why the Communist and Marxist Lukács, who *returned* from the country of victorious Socialism to another social and political system "with high hopes", could offer a topical message in the form of his Moscow writings despite the time-lag. The reason was that, in a changed Europe more than anywhere else, a theory that preserved the highest humanistic and democratic traditions of philosophy and art, encouraging their cultivation and Socialist transcendence remained invariably valid.

What Thomas Mann liked most about Lukács at that time was the latter's "sense for continuity and tradition", this attempt to connect the literary achievements of the past with the "new world of his conviction". Furthermore, the Popular-Front conception of the critic of Irrationalism and Fascism continued to possess great relevance.

Lukács came home. But was it possible to make up for the time lost? Was there room for a simultaneous rebirth and organic reception of his Moscow works, which were written earlier but treated as ones intended for the post-war period?

An opportunity did exist, but only for a short time. In the Soviet Union, where Lukács wrote his works and where the social order and the monopoly of Marxism could — *in theory* — have assured the presence and renewed continuity of his thought without any difficulty, his works fell into the utmost oblivion for well-known political reasons. All Lukács's persistent attempts to get his works published there failed.

Those works exerted the steadiest impact and had the longest organic reception in Germany, and then, after its partition, in the German Democratic Republic. The publication that paid a worthy tribute to Lukács's seventieth birthday⁷ and was for a long time the high point of his impact, was not the only proof. Between 1945 and 1955, some *twenty* such works by Lukács were published in German, the vast majority of which had been written in the Soviet Union.

However, the fate of the Moscow writings continued to be unfortunate. Even a cursory glance at the history of their post-war reception shows that the objective, social and political conditions of their secondary, organic reception were contradictory from the start, and later on underwent certain important changes (the Popular-Front policy came into disfavour, and the Stalinist policy persisted), becoming less and less favourable (the Cold War, the "exclusion" of Yugoslavia from the movement, the establishment of two German states, the Rákosi regime and the trials it staged). In fact, these conditions *contributed* to the irremediable delay in the reception of the works. Now began the process which lasted until recently, whereby Lukács's Moscow period came to be characterized as one that was both theoretically and politically reprehensible. Ideological considerations distorted the reception of that era. A full-fledged legend emerged around Lukács.

We cannot specify the differences between legend and fact here. Suffice it to say that this approach to his Moscow period merely claimed to be a critical evaluation resting on a historical basis. In fact, it was not a real assessment and it failed to reveal genuine continuity. On the contrary. Whoever rejected Georg Lukács's theory referred to his writings of 1930–1945 (which became known in detachment from their original context and with subsequent alterations) as the prehistory of his so-called Revisionism, and later, Stalinism and other alleged sins. These writings were turned into evidence of his intellectual and political "errors"; evidence that (especially after 1956) could be investigated, assembled into dossiers, and added to any desired indictment.

The spectre of undigested works of the past, which the readers learned of without knowing the history of their genesis, loomed large. The central figures of the so-called "Lukács Debate", which opened in 1949 — László Rudas, József Révai and Márton Horváth — amply referred to the Moscow writings and the debates of the thirties in their effort to prove the defendant's alleged deviation. The Moscow writings

were used, for instance, to prove that Lukács had a low opinion of Soviet literature. The “witness for the prosecution” in support of this charge was a former opponent and a representative of the true Zhdanov line, Aleksandr Fadeev, who declared in an article in *Pravda* that Lukács had always rejected the partisanship of art and that he had striven to win acceptance for bourgeois ideology.⁸ To censure views that Lukács voiced in the period beginning with 1945, old opponents, former allies, and new critics would repeatedly refer to their own ten-to-fifteen-year-old objections, or reiterate the arguments of others, erroneous even at the time of their conception. Whenever the international conditions for the Popular-Front policy or the broadening of democracy took a turn for the worse, Lukács’s activities in Moscow were used to prove the sinner’s relapse.⁹

From then on, the Lukács of the thirties was buried by his right-wing and left-wing critics in a paradoxically similar way: Dogmatist comrades-in-arms invoked Marxism while they laid in the grave the man whom they described as a bourgeois democrat, whereas members of the bourgeoisie, including some former comrades-in-arms, invoking freedom and democracy, sounded the death knell, for the man whom they described as a degenerate, dogmatist, and conservative Marxist, who had sacrificed himself and his mind to Communism. What Lukács wrote in the early sixties in a letter commenting on attempts to set his youthful works against his Marxist ones therefore applies equally to both camps. “When I read such things it seems as if I have died already in 1930 or, like Charles V, I saw my own funeral in a monastery. My comparison is, of course, unconvincing, for the emperor retired into a monastery because his life turned out to be a failure. By contrast, I am watching, full of life — and with humour — how I am buried as a thinker.”¹⁰

This statement is true, but it should be taken with a grain of salt: When Lukács was “buried” as a Marxist thinker, it was very difficult for him to watch with humour. What is more, he knew there was the danger that he would be sacrificed. He was well aware of this both in 1950 and later, when he became “easy meat for the sectarians”¹¹ because of the political error he had committed in 1956.

The next decade failed to bring about a more fortunate turn in the history of the reception of the Moscow writings (which is our sole interest here). The evil legend concerning Lukács’s activities between

1930 and 1945 persisted, and it is cold comfort that, in the West, new attributes were included among the hackneyed stereotypes of the legend: Some praised and expressed sympathy with Lukács, who repeatedly had to exercise self-criticism, and who earned the epithets "tactician" and "guerilla", in fighting his war against Stalinism. Some, however, criticised him on moral grounds, charging that he had pursued that struggle with less than adequate zeal.

In addition to an objective delay in the reception of the works written between 1930 and 1945, there emerged (and sporadically still makes itself felt) an ideologically pseudo-historical negative continuity in the way that Lukács was assessed by dogmatic critics of the late fifties. They found the source of his political and resultant philosophical Revisionism in *History and Class Consciousness*, then in the *Blum Theses*, throughout the thirties, in the Debate of 1949 and all the way down to 1956. *Georg Lukács und der Revisionismus*, a collection of articles, was published to prove how continuous the development of Lukács's Revisionism had been.¹² Judged by its conception, the harsh criticism of the late fifties was an organic continuation of the Debate of 1949–1950. In fact, however, it was less a debate than a trial. The Lukács affair, in which the defendant was not given the right to speak, was international. And the aforementioned collection was representative. It was representative in a different way than the *Festschrift* published for Lukács's seventieth birthday. Among the Hungarian, German, and Soviet authors, there were former allies, one-time pupils, and new opponents. Some of the contributors had themselves been in disfavour during the previous Debate, while still others had five years ago praised the same works that they now condemned. But among these one could not find a Thomas Mann, an Anna Seghers, or an Arnold Zweig.

The trial showed how the fate of an epoch had come its full measure. The "prosecution" declared Lukács's alleged anti-Marxism to be universal in space and time. According to this conception, his case, owing to its great intellectual importance involved not individual mistakes and errors, but an internationally harmful *system* of Revisionism. That system, moreover, was not confined to individual stages in his career, and had instead been present in his works everywhere and at all times since the thirties. The significance of the trial itself went well beyond a mere condemnation of Lukács's alleged errors. It showed that everything that had been the political and theoretical order of the day during the Pop-

ular-Front, and then for some time after 1945, was now removed from the agenda. To be more precise, these values did not regain their former prestige. They did not, even though Stalin was dead, and the Twentieth Congress had offered a critical assessment of Stalinism, launching the programme of the renewal of Socialist Democracy. There was more at stake than evaluating an influential thinker of the Communist movement, his political acts and theories, in a differentiated or vulgar, just or unjust manner. It was possible to stage the trial of Lukács. But it was impossible to win it. Not because it was falsely charged that his struggle against "Stalinism" was an unscholarly fiction and a manoeuvre to conceal his revision of Leninism, but because this reception of Lukács — despite its ostensible political and tactical relevance — lagged behind the course of historical development. It had not caught up with the epoch of the Twentieth Congress.

Thus did the "reception" of Lukács's ideas take place. He was considered a Revisionist. Almost all of his Moscow writings became known, but their fate was an example of a world-historical time-lag between genesis and reception. The negative assessment of his works in the late fifties applied to almost every constituent of his theory. His anti-Fascist activity, for instance, came under harsh criticism. Lukács was described as an *opportunist*. His critics alleged that, for him, the main contradiction of our age was not that between Capitalism and Socialism but that between Fascism and anti-Fascism; that he opposed bourgeois-democratic ideas to Socialist ones; that he propagated the false slogan of alliance between democracy and Socialism; and that he drew a distinction between the aims of revolutionary democracy and the Socialist revolution. This legend — which was tantamount to political slander — served both as an important ideological component in concocting a pseudo-historic continuity, and served as a general basis for assessing numerous concrete details of views voiced by Lukács in the thirties. It was a tool in the hands of critics who condemned Lukács's works on the crisis of bourgeois philosophy, the destruction of reason, and German literature.

In the wake of this negative assessment, the *secondary* impact of the Moscow writings was radically *annulled* in the German Democratic Republic.¹³ The moment of organic reception was brought to an end. Willi Bredel and Otto Gotsche, who used to engage in debates with Lukács, now took an active part in this annulment process as witnesses

for the prosecution.¹⁴ They, and others, stated that Lukács, who had allegedly adhered to a bourgeois normative ideal of classical values, had obstructed the development of proletarian revolutionary literature in Germany as early as twenty years before.

The spectre of the past was haunting the new Europe. The past also made itself felt to the extent that the fate of *The Young Hegel* continued to be an unfortunate one. When it came out in a second edition in 1954 (Aufbau Verlag, Berlin), there was another chance for the book to be appropriately received. At long last, in 1956, a chapter of the book, along with a review about it, was published in the country where it had been written.¹⁵ However, the opportunity for a fitting reception of the book was rejected in both countries: An editorial levelled a devastating criticism, both at the authors of the allegedly uncritical review and the editors of *Voprosy Filosofii*, as well as at Lukács, who, the article claimed, had been too lenient toward Hegel's Idealism and had attempted to present the young Hegel as a Marxist.¹⁶ The events followed the same scenario in Hungary.¹⁷

The Twentieth Congress, then the return to "normal" social conditions following the revolution in Hungary, the improvement in the political atmosphere of Europe, and the increasingly peaceful relations between the two world systems — even though these developments came late, were felt in an uneven way, and exerted contradictory influences — created new conditions for the impact of Lukács's Moscow writings. The era of the "second" genesis and the secondary reception came to an end. A new phase in Lukács situation began. The ideological warfare that was waged against him in the movement, and that endangered his status and even his life gradually came to a halt. Lukács now turned to a new type of activity, namely, the universal philosophical synthesis of aesthetics, but it would be a mistake to attribute this shift either to the changes in the general social and political conditions or to the — repeated — changes in his personal status. Lukács kept abreast history: His trial was well under way when he started working on *Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen* (The Specificity of the Aesthetic). Already before the Twentieth Congress, the novel features of his activity could be seen: his *Die Besonderheit* (Speciality) (1954–1956) was written at the meeting-point of two eras. The several chapters of this work were published in instalments in the *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, and in a *Festschrift* devoted to Ernst Bloch, his former friend, and a participant in the

debates of the thirties, who was also soon to be denounced as a Revisionist.¹⁸

But is there any connection between Lukács's novel start in theoretical work in the mid-fifties and his realm of thought two decades earlier? Some more concrete connection, that is, than his wish to summarize "the results of his development" in his *Aesthetics*?

These two periods of his life are intimately, organically related to each other: The closedness of the thirties was not final. The continuation of this period was again timely in a *new way* at the beginning of the synthesis of Lukács's aesthetic views — in a fashion different from that of the post-war years. This implies more the mere fact that innumerable visible and invisible threads tie *Die Besonderheit* to the press articles and unpublished writings of the thirties, or that, in all probability, few people realized that "Kunst und objektive Wahrheit" (Art and Objective Reality) had not been put to paper recently, but rather, was resurrected from a long slumber in its journal-grave.¹⁹ All the social and political changes beginning with 1956 had a special influence on Lukács's rekindled conscious efforts to create a continuity in his life-work. This is expressed directly in his volume "Against Misunderstood Realism",²⁰ which, like *Die Besonderheit*, reveals how he wished to tackle the problems of the transition to the post-Stalinist period. Lukács drew a political analogy between *anti-Fascism* and the *peace movement* of the post-cold war *détente* period. He declared that Socialism and anti-militarist democracy could conclude a no-compromise alliance again, irrespective of their ideological stances: "Both anti-Fascism and — quantitatively and qualitatively even more — the peace movement encompass the greater part of the bourgeoisie, first of all the bourgeois intellectuals. Thus the antithesis Capitalism versus Socialism cannot be directly applied to either of these trends because they are characterized by the joint endeavours of Socialists and bourgeoisie."²¹

These lines speak against sectarianism. Do they vindicate his accusers? Or do they support Adorno, the outraged critic of *Against Misunderstood Realism*? In fact, they were enunciated with the bitter experiences gained from 1933 behind them. There is not the slightest trace of opportunism detectable in them, much less of reducing philosophy to a mere instrument of power. The same holds true of the Lukácsian idea of a possible union of the world views embraced by the

bourgeois and Socialist forces of the peace movement, "the identity of identity and non-identity", as he quoted Hegel.

These lines were meant to combat extreme misunderstandings. They were meant to argue against those who claimed that the only art was avant-garde literature and who rejected (or recanted) the Marxist critique of decadence, and also against those who asserted that bourgeois Critical Realism was outdated: [They] "are making attempts to defend *en bloc* everything — except for 'certain mistakes' — that happened in theory and practice over the past decades. Our position is again that of the *tertium datur*: it has been realized that Revisionism, currently the greatest danger to Marxism, cannot be defeated without a powerful theoretical criticism against dogmatic theory and practice".²²

These lines are tantamount to a showdown with the Stalinist-Zhdanovist methods, their consequences, and the efforts to maintain their continuity. At the same time, they also establish another kind of continuity: Lukács declared that the realistic literature of the bourgeois humanistic rebellion against Fascism, the art of Anatole France, Romain Rolland, Bernard Shaw, Heinrich and Thomas Mann, could be continued in the present. Reflecting on the similarities to the alternatives for art in the period of the anti-Fascism movement, he saw the dynamic significance of the same antitheses increased and continued at a higher level: "the two pairs of antitheses: Realism versus anti-Realism (avant-garde, decadence) and the fight for war or peace, are thus drawn closer to one another. This convergence must, of course, be approached with caution and reservations".²³

The more promising social perspective expected of the peace movement, the *tertium datur* of the post-Stalinist era that had both its political (anti-Fascist Popular-Front) and theoretical roots (aesthetics, specificity, the typical, Realism) in the thirties, made it possible for the republication of the Moscow writings in the Luchterhand series of collected works to take place in a situation different from that after 1945, not only personally, but also as concerned the historical-ideological conditions. It was not a mechanical repetition of the Aufbau Verlag series. It was not a memorial to a bygone period in his creative activity. Let it suffice to cite but one example to prove this: Lukács first published his new essays in 1958 under the title *Die Gegenwartsbedeutung des kritischen Realismus* (The Meaning of Contemporary Realism) in one volume, along with the polemic articles of the thirties and forties, as their organic continuation.²⁴

What developments were inherent in the changed ideological conditions for the reception of the Moscow period from the new phase in Lukács's theoretical activities to our day? What direction has the reception of this period taken in the past decade, in the wake of many a debate and controversy?

The scope of the present work precludes even a sketchy outline of the entire reception, or even a brief discussion of how singular that reception was amidst the highly articulated social events of the most recent times (one thinks, for instance, of 1968). Neither can we assess in detail the changing reception history of Lukács's work in the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany.²⁵ Nevertheless, it can safely be asserted that, however much the intensity of interest in the whole or certain parts of the Lukácsian oeuvre oscillates (by period or, country), its publication and interpretation has become *universal*, especially after 1971. After a long pause, this process of revival began in nearly all European Socialist countries as well, though at different paces, and with varying degrees of regularity. A *more extensive* exploration of the *whole* life-work has begun. Still, attention has mainly been concentrated on his youthful and early Marxist writings. The legacy of Moscow remained on the periphery of interest. Despite this currently prevailing tendency, the writings of the thirties are, of course, present in the aesthetic consciousness of our times, and their influence has perhaps slightly increased following the recent appearance of some new editions. Another advance recently occurred when the majority of Lukács's manuscripts dating from 1930–1945 became accessible. Their publication will complement as well as differentiate our image of his work in the period under scrutiny, but it may also modify it.²⁶

The time has come, after all the political anathemas and extreme demonstrative judgements, to undertake a synthetic evaluation of Lukács's life-work. This is evident in the longer and shorter Lukács series published from Neuwied to Tokyo, from Budapest to Rome, and in commemorative volumes.²⁷ Is this a sign of abatement? But how substantial is it? It seems to be significant: Apparently, dethronement has been replaced by dialogue, passing judgements by controversy.²⁸ Omnibus volumes and monographs, memorial issues of journals and documentary volumes, biographies and collections of polemical articles abound, in which one can detect nearly all hues of liberal and radical criticism: both right-wing and left-wing, both neo-leftist and neo-right-

ist, both Socialist and anti-Communist. Lukács elicits criticism from the right, where his loyalty to the Marxist-Leninist heritage is seen as dogmatism, his commitment to Socialism as utopianism, his perseverance in the Communist and workers' movement as tactics and opportunism (despite his perceptive analyses of the socio-historical processes and ideological phenomena), as the aberration of an erudite bourgeois, as a contradiction between the political Self and the reflective Self. And he incurs criticism from the left, where he is termed a bourgeois thinker, or in a milder case, as a hesitant Marxist or immature Leninist, where the idea of the "renaissance" of Marxism seems to be Revisionism disguised as anti-Stalinism and where, more recently, his attempt to explicate Marxist ontology seems to be an Idealistic fad or even anti-Leninism. He is attacked by new-leftists who see his theory of Realism, his conception of the interrelation between work of art and reality (the work as a closed form, a microcosmos creating its own world), his criticism of the avant-garde, as signs of surrendering to the world as it is, to bourgeois art and ideology intent on harmony and purely aesthetic enjoyment for consumption. While the New Left movements of the sixties canonized Lukács, who, back in the twenties, unveiled the reified world of bourgeois society, of "*vollendete Sündhaftigkeit*" with a promise of redemption, by the turn of the seventies, the upsurge of anti-Socialist feelings caused him to be anathematized as a romantic anti-Capitalist, as an ideologist who postulated a society of free individuals subjected to species-character — "this impossible" Hegelian-Marxist construct in place of the empire of alienation. These critics claim that the Lukácsian principle of total negation of bourgeois society, of the Communist movement striving to abolish alienation, is not only determined to wipe off some annoying blemish or anti-human feature from the physiognomy of the world of Capitalist private property, but in fact intent on crushing at the same time its most positive values, the freedom of the individual. Thus, they contend, the despotism of the *citoyen* rising to power with Socialism is worse than the "constrainable" power of the *bourgeois*. Consequently, they do not see any possibility for effectively criticizing Stalinism unless it goes hand in hand with a negation of the Lukácsian conception that is a theoretically adequate expression of the consciousness of the Communist movement. The failure of Marxist Socialism, they claim, is none other than the materialization of the antinomic political philosophy of Lukács.

While trials of yesterday were enveloped in tragedy, the clashes of today are tinted with farcicality. The offensive akin to a political campaign, launched against Lukács in his lifetime, gave way to an incessant, subtly repoliticized and indirect attack levelled with refined tools against his Marxist legacy. Today's burials are different: One is not always thrown into the cemetery ditch, but may instead be buried with pomp in an honorary grave.

No doubt there are some toned-down images of Lukács as well, but there are still several grossly mistaken conceptions of his work. There are cool scholarly evaluations, Marxist attempts, but the old legends and dogmatic views hold fast. The myths created around the Lukács of the thirties are slowly dying out, but they can still be revived sometimes, in scholarly analyses, historical examinations, and special studies. Our age is dominated by specialized thematic literature and specialized criticism, specialized scientific symposiums on specialized themes. For them, the microscopic scrutiny of certain debates of the Moscow period, including the revision or reappraisal of the controversy over Expressionism or the so-called Brecht-Lukács polemic, feature prominently. Generally speaking, the theme is: Lukács's relationship to German bourgeois and proletarian literature, and even more generally speaking: Lukács as aesthete and literary theorist.

The present study (acknowledging and incorporating the findings of recent scholarship) is not concerned with the legends of a period, but with its genuine history with its contemporary though not precisely simultaneous organic reception, with the whole — in detail — and not details of the whole. We reverse Lukács's procedure of "cancelling and preserving" at the same time. He omitted "the allusions and references that could only be understood with a good knowledge of the material of contemporary controversies — as he phrased it". We omit the omissions with the precise intention of reconstructing and understanding the whole material. We take a similarly critical approach to the reminiscences and memoirs of Lukács, who was always on the defensive, combatting legends and misunderstandings; these recollections in their turn often became sources of still other false conceptions.

This work is naturally the organic continuation of the author's earlier studies (*History Lesson — for Advanced Students*, 1977; *Lukács and the Age of Fascism*, 1981, 2nd ed. 1985), some parts of which, most revised and expanded, are incorporated in the present monograph. In this way,

the author wished to place them in a new context, thus revealing subtler shades of their meaning.

The detractors of the Lukács of the thirties and the forties were, and still are, large in number. Yet he is in no need of rehabilitation. The task is rather, to reconsider his contradictions, their sources and structure. Assessing the effects of an epoch is an exacting task, to be tackled by a critic of ideology. But if one is determined to maintain the Lukács legend derived from the world-historical incongruence between genesis and reception, to cull "evaluating" viewpoints and "scholarly" enthusiasm from *this* reservoir, to use this case as an excuse to vaunt one's critical talents, one will inevitably risk becoming ridiculous.

The historical perspective, the milder political climate, or the accumulated documents and masses of available data, these alone, do not enable one to write a monograph, a relatively sound historical and systematic exploration of Lukács's work in Moscow. An innovative approach that departs from both former and present attitudes, the *concrete* application of new *methodological* presuppositions, these, too, are necessary. They came into their own only in the period of uneven development, of the "renaissance" of Marxism after the Twentieth Congress — among other things, in the late works of Lukács. It is essential that we recognize their full significance, lest in evaluating that tragic period, we repeat its errors.

THE IDEOLOGIST

Moscow was a new venue in Lukács's life, and this change of scenes entailed a change in roles, as well. Role and play are inseparable: This role seems familiar and obvious — the role of the literary scholar, the aesthete. Yet we must examine it in microscopic detail in order to see its structure, composition, and constituents.

What Lukács had to leave behind with the fiasco of the "Blum Theses" was the role of the Communist leader that he had fulfilled with relative continuity since shortly after the foundation of the Hungarian Party. What was new in his behaviour was that, for quite a long time to come, he would keep his distance from Hungarian party matters. "I lived in Moscow, I was a member of the organization of Hungarian émigré intellectuals, but I didn't even pay the membership fee myself and instead asked Jenő Hamburger to pay my fee, too, every month. I didn't go there in order to preserve my freedom of action and advocate this principle on the international plane of ideology [the democratic dictatorship of proletariat and peasantry as the transitional form after Capitalism, as the negation of strategic goals of the imminent proletarian dictatorship — L. Sz.]."¹ It makes no difference here that the explanation is not precisely correct, that the reasons were far more complex.² That Lukács rarely turned up in the Hungarian club in Moscow might simply have been a private matter. It is a fact, however, that he stood apart from the Hungarian party leadership management and the Hungarian Party itself for quite some time. The latter — at least in the early thirties — meant no more than a soon-to-come centrally arranged transfer to another branch of the Communist movement, to Berlin.

But Moscow, to which he returned in 1933, meant a significant change in roles, as compared not only to Vienna but also to Berlin, to his international work in the German Communist Party. Lukács remained a member of the German Party for a long time (until April 1941) but no longer worked as its leading official.

All this could pass as superficial biographical data, had it nothing to do with the changes that took place in the content of Lukács's endeavours in Moscow. Later, Lukács wrote a wittily succinct account of the decisive difference, shedding light on the personal aspects and advantages of this change of roles in a note to Anna Lesznai: "... Let me start with the most important thing for me: with work. I can tell you I have never had a better time in this regard than the period in Moscow. After the whirlwind and daily bustle with endless duties in Vienna and Berlin, it was quite a novel thing that I did not have to be concerned with anything but what interested me scientifically (by the way, I could live by this work very well; I had no financial problems at all, although during my whole stay there, I didn't write a single line simply in order to earn money)."³

He was a politician, a (leading) party activist, and a scholar engaged in his fields of interest — a party official struggling under the pressure of daily, often illegal tasks, and a theorist living well by his free literary activity. This was not the last time that Lukács confronted the two roles, his roles. As compared to the phase of his greater political activity, he deemed his Moscow period a *wissenschaftlich gute Zeit*, as it were. Before we begin to ponder such causes as personal character ("bad politician"), politics (failure of the "Blum Theses", disappointment after the forced leave), and perhaps, tactics ("to have my freedom to act"), we have to realize that his changed way of life in no way resulted in his removal from the movement and Party praxis as a Moscow "scholar". This is profoundly related to the fact that the Communist and Marxist Lukács always made his roles structurally inseparable, that he was an *ideologist* both as a party official and as a "scholar". The identity does not cancel the difference; rather, difference preserves the identity. A remark by Lukács referring to another period of "retreat" (the Rajk trial) expresses this aptly: "I confine myself to becoming a mere ideologist — but henceforth only as an individual, no longer with an official post."⁴ The significance of the change of role in the Moscow *wissenschaftlich gute Zeit* is not that by making good use of the pressure of circumstances and with a bit of good luck he was able to turn them subjectively to his advantage and thereupon sailed safely away from the dangerous area of practical work to the more ethereal regions of theory. Rather, it is that he remained an *ideologist* — a "party ideologist" — throughout, even though not fulfilling any official function. Without keeping this fact in

mind, one simply cannot disentangle the intricate threads from the complex of Lukács's behaviour, uncover the contradictions in his theoretical work. The evaluation of the Moscow period fell victim to vulgar schemes and myths.

What does it really mean to be an ideologist? In what respect is this role identical with that of the scholar, philosopher and aesthete? What concrete methodological inferences can be drawn from the fact that, between 1930 and 1945, Lukács was a party ideologist, sometimes in an official capacity, and sometimes "only" as a Marxist?

In analyzing the concept of ideology, we proceed from Lukács's interpretation of Marx's and Gramsci's views on the subject. In his conception, ideology is first of all a speculative *form* of apprehending reality. It is the *means* of conceptualizing and grappling with the conflicts that arise from one's historical, and social existence. Its *function* is to "make man's social praxis conscious and capable of action".⁵

Since ideology as a speculative construct is inseparable from social conflicts, from the given alternatives to praxis, it is a functional concept, which has to be taken into account when we examine it for its objective validity. "The rightness or wrongness of a view does not transform this view into an ideology. No true or false individual conception, no false or true scientific hypothesis, theory, etc. is an ideology in itself, but it may become one... This happens when the given view has become the theoretical or practical weapon for fighting out minor or major, historic or episodic social conflicts."⁶

It follows logically from this that the views and scientific theories of the ideologist of the thirties can never be viewed in isolation and instead must be seen in their social function, as real *ideology*, the theoretical tool for facing the conflicts of the age.

The period of Lukács's work in Moscow (and Berlin) was not only the time of bloody world-historical struggles but also of fierce ideological conflict. That is also one reason why we cannot rest content with the general concept of ideology, which leaves the other, *pejorative* meaning unresolved. The first step to be taken is again — functional — differentiation: The negative aspect of ideology is not identical with false consciousness. When we speak of *negative ideological* consciousness, we mean the negative social operation of definite ideas and thoughts, irrespective of whether these views, etc. are scientifically or epistemologically true or false. In a working ideology, the key question is whether and why

the relevant social layer, class, party, or movement regards it as an adequate means "for fighting out their social conflicts and collisions going deep into the personal sphere as well".⁷ We deem it centrally important to differentiate between ideology and negative ideological views, theories, etc. We use here the notion "negative ideological" as it was understood by Marx and Engels, who remarked when criticizing the views of true socialists: "This theory of true property conceives *real* private property, as it has hitherto existed, merely as a semblance, whereas it views the concept abstracted from this real property as the *truth* and *reality* of the semblance; it is therefore ideological all through. All it does is to give clearer and more precise expression to the ideas of the petty bourgeois; for their benevolent endeavours and pious wishes aim likewise at the abolition of the lack of property."⁸

The pejorative meaning of ideology should never be mistaken for epistemological criticism. Methodologically, this inevitably restrains the viewpoint of "who is right". It restrains it, but not from the standpoint of indifference to values, of pragmatism, or of relativism.

Lukács was an ideologist. When evaluating his achievements of the Moscow period from a historical-systematic perspective, our guiding principle is that "the criterion of the historical function and significance of an ideology is not the factual-scientific truth of its content, not its true or false reflection of reality".⁹

One judges the validity of an ideology by considering how and in which directions it influences the tendencies brought to the surface of the world situation by social evolution arising from internal contradictions and by the international struggle of classes. The "ontological neutrality" of ideology toward objective truth does not, of course, imply that its scientific truth blocks its *ideological* effectiveness. Yet we must discard the naive but very dangerous illusory conviction of the Enlightenment: something works because it is true. This correlation between truth and (positive) effect, false ide and (negative) effect, is not automatic in the history of society, no matter which angle we choose to consider it from.

Now, does this statement not lead back to politics, to the tendency to simplify the role of the ideologist by interpreting it merely as political activity? Do we not lose sight of the philosopher, the scholar at the same time? Of the fact that Lukács considered his stay in Moscow a good time "for science", and for this reason a "new period"?

It would be methodologically insufficient merely to remind ourselves of the well-known fact that Marx classified philosophy among the forms of ideology. In principle, Socialism and Marxist philosophy are critically allied to the sciences, to their proper method. Philosophy aims at universality. But philosophical knowledge is never an aim in itself.

"Every philosopher who deserves this title, not only in a narrow academic sense, but in its real meaning, concentrates his thought so as to be able decisively to influence the central conflicts of his time, elaborate the principles by means of which these conflicts are fought out thereby lend a more definite direction to the struggle itself. . . . This is not to say that the great philosophers were political activists, even if they were far more profoundly rooted in the central problems of their respective ages than the academic textbooks suggest."¹⁰

Obviously, Lukács was a philosopher in the above sense, a real scholar indeed. And *for this very reason* he was not a specialist, not a specialized philosopher, not an academic aesthete or literary theorist. Even in dealing with the most abstract, purely theoretical questions of the thirties and forties, he also strove to exert a decisive influence over the social struggle of his times. As a consequence, one must firmly reject the temptation, say, as a Goethe or Hegel specialist, to confront Lukács with a meticulous catalogue of truisms, with an optimally complete Goethe or Hegel scholarship. Our aim is to examine his scientifically (more or less correctly) grounded philosophical and aesthetic theories as ideology; to evaluate *critically* the theory in which he tried to work out the principles by means of which the major conflicts of his time might be fought out. Our approach must be critical, because these principles inevitably contained negative ideological elements as well. Our aim, however, is not to turn Lukács in cases in which he was "only an ideologist," or "only" a philosopher, into a political activist.

Thus we cannot embark on an extensive historical-critical and at the same time systematic analysis of the legacy of the Moscow scholar. The main obstacle is not the richness and diversity of his themes, but rather, the methodological impossibility of the enterprise. In addition to the "ontological neutrality" of ideology, there is another equally decisive criterion that has to be taken into account, as it sheds new light on the difference and interrelation between the roles of ideologist (philosopher) and politician. The core of this criterion resides in the fact that the basic function of philosophy is to respond to crises. The response, which may,

of course, be false or retrograde, is not the remedy itself, or a formula for it. "The actual social solution to a crisis does no more than create manoeuvring room in which mankind can accomplish something new on this new basis. And if what philosophy says is only a possibility, then — if the philosophy is genuine — its significance lies in the fact that it expresses concretely and dynamically the possibilities of the given concrete developmental stage of humankind (showing up future perspectives)." ¹¹

Lukács placed the emphasis on the *concreteness* of expressing the developmental possibilities entailed by the crisis. The more immediate meaning of concreteness is of the greatest importance here. Politics is always looking for concrete solutions, practical answers to conflicts and crises. This in essence distinguishes it from philosophy as a "purely" ideological form.

Philosophy and political ideology respond to the crises at fundamentally different levels of consciousness. To blur over this difference is just as wrong as to reduce the heated social conflicts to daily political tussles. At the same time the functional definition of Marxist ideology, its roots in the Communist movement, *make it possible* that, in particularly strained world-historical crises, the "pure" and political forms of ideology might *come extremely close* to each other. This possibility, however, does not necessarily imply that the philosophy of Marxism can be reduced to a *negative* ideological theory. The outcome always depends on the extent to which the party or the movement views it as a (concrete) tool in the processes of making the people aware of the social and historical collisions, how it applies to making (or justifying) decisions, and how the ideology (philosophy, aesthetics) itself can influence the practical remedies found for the crisis.

As an ideologist, both in Moscow and in Berlin, Lukács lived through an extreme world-historical crisis. It was the time of Soviet Socialism and of Fascism. The fifteen years between 1930 and 1945 were a perilous period fraught with worries for the individual. It was marked by global depression, the decline of the Weimar Republic, the clash between German left-wing revolutionary forces and National Socialists, Hitler's accession to power, the advent of the Popular-Front, the dissolution of the Comintern, the stabilization of Socialism in the Soviet Union, the show trials, the Spanish Civil War, Nazi military expansion, and the defeat of the German Fascist army. Lukács did not live through

this period in the ivory tower of esoteric theory. He fought in all the battles — and survived. But this was not what made him really fortunate. Despite all the threats, relative losses and limitations, these years provided Lukács with an opportunity for extremely rich and fertile scholarly work. The age confronted him with tormenting questions and excruciating tasks, but he could live up to them with inner tranquility. His answers are all located within the framework of the contemporary movement and its consciousness.

Lukács's Marxist development coincided with a controversial historical period, when philosophy and especially aesthetics could for the first time truly become "purely" theoretical-ideological forms of Communist consciousness, after proletarian revolutions both victorious and defeated. The Communist consciousness is used here in the original, *Marxist* sense. In order to produce it "the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a *revolution*", as Marx put it in *The German Ideology*. Marxism remains on realistic historical ground not only by virtue of the fact that it derives its concepts and theories from the praxis of society, but in addition in as far as it demonstrates that "revolution is the driving force of history, also of religion, of philosophy and all other kinds of theory".¹² Thus the cradle of Communist consciousness and its theoretical forms is the revolutionary movement.

Within the old ruling classes, there was a division between intellectual and physical labour. Marx and Engels characterized the producers of dominant ideas — as opposed to those who only passively receive these ideas — as active conceptual ideologists "who make the formation of the illusions of the class about itself their chief source of livelihood".¹³ Is the same task and function the lot of the thinkers of the proletariat? According to the classics of Marxism, the opposite is the case: Their job is to *criticize* the negative ideological realm of phenomena, illusions and *phrases* weakening the Communist consciousness. Marx and Engels had the real Socialist phrase-mongers in mind when they remarked: "If, then, the theoretical representatives of the proletariat wish their literary activity to have any practical effect, they must first and foremost insist that all phrases are dropped. . ."¹⁴

Lukács was the Communist ideologist of the critical period of Soviet Socialism and of Fascism. The battle over the vitally important collisions of the times reached down into the most intimate personal sphere

of his life. Still, this monograph, although it obviously considers all the available biographical facts and events, is not a biography. The main emphasis, rather, is placed on Lukács's literary activity, on the *biography of his works*, on the *genesis* of his ideology. Methodologically, this is not only necessary but also possible. It is possible because: [an ideology's] "content (and often its form) preserves the indelible marks of its genesis. Whether these marks become unrecognizably dim or conspicuously salient, depends on the functions that they possibly serve the process of social conflicts".¹⁵

If we interpret and evaluate the genesis, laws, and contradictions of Lukács's theory of the thirties against the background of the praxis of the Communist movement, we do not use a methodologically or theoretically external, alien, aphiosophical political standard. Lukács's *theoretical identification* with the movement was more than a biographical fact.

But is the *movement* an objective alternative to philosophical-aesthetic thought as such? Is the movement indeed the inevitable and proper alternative? Only after a short digression can these questions be answered. The most important consideration involves determining to what extent the intention of theoretical identification meets with the necessary changes in the objective social development of mankind and with the ensuing changes in the history of philosophy (after the birth of Marxism).

With the triumphal march of the economic reign of capital, with the consolidation of political power by the victorious post-revolutionary bourgeoisie and with the emergence of the modern working class, all the fundamental social determinants of the evolution of mankind broke up into extremely generalized, hostile antagonisms. Classical German philosophy and literature constitute the encyclopaedic summation of these antagonisms. The philosophical categories of the Hegelian system are the definitions of being in bourgeois society. Goethe's poetry is the representation of extreme antagonisms dialectically bound to one another even in their excessive dramatic tension. The dialectical unity of the tragic contradictions of human existence, individual, and species is the basis not only of Hegel's philosophy of identity, but also of the humanistic faith in progress. Hegel and Goethe, as Lukács proceeding from the insights of Marx and Engels, repeatedly affirmed in his works of the thirties, wanted to resolve or reconcile these antinomies within the framework of the bourgeois world, though not, of course, apologetically.

In the history of philosophical thought, it was Utopian Socialism that first broke through this horizon, recognizing that it was impossible to do away with the dire antagonisms of Capitalism amidst the commodity and money relations of the existing system. However, when this decisive change in world view took place, it created an unbridgeable gulf between the thus far correct perception of the processes and laws of history and the vision of the Socialist future. As the overriding principle of resolving the contradictions derived from a hatred for, and devastating criticism of, Capitalism, the principles of the Utopian Socialists, despite their "fantastic" forms — to use Lenin's words — were no mere fantasies. The basis of their faith in progress was the hope for a *non-Capitalist* future. What was missing from their thought was the crucial link in the chain: the proletarian movement, connecting the humanistic contempt for the Capitalist world and the Socialist vision. There was no mediation between the contradictions and their practical-theoretical resolution.

Marx referred to the superseding of the bourgeois world system, the positive elimination of human self-alienation, the appropriation of human essence by social man, as Communism. He called it a process in which, thanks to the mediation of the genuine movement, the universal contradictions of history could be resolved: "it is the genuine resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man — the fine resolution of the strife between existence and essence, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species. Communism is the riddle of history solved, and it knows itself to be this solution".¹⁶ "Communism's reflecting consciousness" conceptualizes this resolution, the empirical emergence of Communism in the course of man's emancipation, and the re-integration of the essential features that had become external and alien to him.

This necessarily sketchy sequence of thoughts also reveals the most important point: In "crude" Communism, in the world-historical period beginning with the triumph of the Socialist revolution, the social significance and meaning of philosophy and aesthetics inevitably changed. It also became apparent that the movement was a *real alternative* for Marxists, for the theoretical representatives, and philosophical-aesthetic "reflecting" minds of Socialism — irrespective of how, in what form, and to what extent it was conceptualized. In principle, the real

resolution of the struggle of contradictions can only be properly conceived of and practically served through this mediation.

Lukács's theoretical identification with the movement was a pioneer's journey, leading to a long-awaited and well-merited discovery. The discovery also included the qualitatively new alternative that had objectively evolved in the post-Marxist philosophy.

These outlines are not only too sketchy, but also fail to illustrate the problematic character of this discovery. A more detailed exposition of certain points is therefore in order, lest the internal tensions and their theoretical-historical causes inherent in Lukács's communist ideology remain obscure.

Marx's theory of Communism unambiguously referred at several significant points to the fact that the annihilation of the "current state" of bourgeois society would be a complex, uneven process, in several stages and with possible relapses, which was to come about *universally* in world history. The early "crude" phase of Communism was not yet the society "evolving on its own basis", but a transitional form that still displayed signs of the old system. Marx, and in his wake, Lenin, took this early phase to be a political construct, which was in part similar to Capitalism, in which the power and dictatorship of the proletariat co-existed with the bourgeois characteristics of state and law, labour and distribution. The elimination of the contradictions began — but only began — at this stage, again an uneven process burdened with relapses. The unity of existence and essence, reification and self-justification, freedom and necessity, individual and species, could not be established at one stroke. The positive elimination of alienation would at first mean only the negation of its bases, the abolition of Capitalist exploitation, a local, negative annihilation taking place in a "non-classical" political revolution. This would be negation also in the sense that it would launch a political struggle of varying success between the democratic and despotic forms of crude Communism, as Marx put it in *The German Ideology*. (Suffice it to remind ourselves here of Lenin's criticism of bureaucracy.)

There is another problematic point that needs brief mention. Criticizing the philosopher-artisans of German ideology, Marx first and foremost took the position of a practical materialist. Communism, he said, was a force manifesting itself in the movement of social reality. It was rooted in existence: "Communism is for us not a *state of affairs*

which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call Communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things."¹⁷

From this Marxist counterpoint, there emanates not only a criticism of neo-Hegelianism but also a rejection of all types of voluntarism. It would not be incompatible with the aforementioned stress if we also emphasized an even more deeply hidden motif: Marx speaks of the *genuine*, and not simply the existing movement. Since Hegel, it has been well known that the difference is enormous. Not all that exists is real. Immense historical achievements and fatal historic defeats prove the vital truth of Hegel's criteria: necessity and rationality. Thus the attribute "genuineness" can only be accorded to those moments of the movement that are necessary and consequently, eventually rational. What ceases to be rational in the course of evolution may continue to exist, but ceases to be real.

A highly general conclusion, then, is that the only way to arrive at the proper conceptualization of the contradictions and the secret of history is via the mediation of the *genuine* movement. And more important still, it follows that we have to examine carefully the extent to which Lukács identified himself, as a theorist, with the genuine or false attributes of the movement in each critical phase of the evolution of political — crude — Socialism. We must also consider at what point and to what extent he might, as an ideologist, have been deceived by the seemingly genuine existing and when he insightfully realized that the existing had lost its necessity and rationality. In the world-historical period following the victory of the Socialist revolution in a backward country, in the cobwebs of the beginning of the transition, the dangers to Marxist thought lay in these deviations. Much was at stake: fostering social mobility breaking down class barriers, laying the intellectual foundations of a new society, adamantly criticizing the false ideological appearances, illusions, and phrases, or conversely, the elaboration of a conceptual ideology that reinforces the appearances and illusions, contrary to the intentions of the thinker.

A great deal was at stake for the ideologist living in the Communist movement of the crisis-stricken period of the thirties and forties. His age and his identification with it as a theorist determined his possibilities as a philosopher. Yet the ideologist is a sovereign being: he makes his own choice. The effective force of his acts, of his utterances and silences,

depends on his relationship to the *status quo*. It depends on what he affirms and how, and on what he negates; on whether the responses that he has given in the course of fighting out the historical-social conflicts support the maintenance or the criticism and transformation of the existing state of affairs: "just like all other thinking minds, [he] had to proceed from an analysis of the world-historical situation of the time and what he saw was Hitler's advance . . .", "I saw clearly", Lukács wrote in 1957, "that everything — including what was personally most valuable, be it my whole life-work — had to be unconditionally subordinated to the decisions that derived from that situation."¹⁸

If opposition to Fascism, which Lukács defined as a pivotal objective of the time, had been the only factor to shape his attitude, he might have associated himself with the critical stance of Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Korsch, or even Ernst Bloch (without, of course, giving up his idiosyncrasies). However, the very existence of a *Socialist country* exerted a formative influence on Lukács. "I devoted my energy to the promotion of vital interests of the one Socialist country and Socialism in general. To this decision I subordinated all my others, including those affecting my life-work."¹⁹

Opposition to Fascism and advocacy of Socialism were for Lukács one and the same. Yet, when in 1957, he considered that unity in retrospect, he pinpointed a contradiction that derived from the internal conflicts of the Socialism of the time. It was impossible to surrender to the negative ideological tendencies and continue opposition at the same time. "For that reason I had to wage a guerilla war in order to advocate my ideas. I had to secure publication of my works by including some appropriate quotations from Stalin. By following this method I could explicate my dissenting views with the required caution. I strove to speak as openly as was permitted by the manoeuvring room of the day. Naturally, there were times when it dictated *silence*."²⁰

Can one really resolve the contradictory character of identification in this way? Not only have we no reason to doubt Lukács's *subjective* — legend-provoking — 'guerilla war', but, if need be, we can enumerate the concrete pieces of philosophical evidence of this intention. Between 1930 and 1945, he indeed quoted Stalin several times, not infrequently as the "great student of Lenin". Stalin's name and some of his utterances occur mostly at the tactical level of Lukács writings intended for the press, yet this cannot simply be termed a "guerilla trick" or conversely, a sure sign

of dogmatism. The problem is far more complex: The Lenin-Stalin continuity (itself the result of the political struggle with the Trotsky-Bukharin opposition) *did exist* in the movement in the thirties, an indication of the continuation of the proletarian revolution, symbolizing the country, surrounded by forces of Imperialism, building Socialism alone. Lukács *subjectively* shared the *symbolic* consciousness of this world-historical process. In a way, he shared it even when, after 1935, at the time of the show trials his faith in the *genuineness*, in the necessity and rationality of Stalin's political practice had been shaken. At the same time, it is decisive from the perspective of the history of ideas, that *Stalinism conceptually* was not and *objectively* could not be incorporated into the Lukácsian philosophy. That is why the frequency of quotations is not relevant. Even a superficial examination will reveal that the development of the ideology of the Moscow scholar is the process of a specific conceptual reassessment of Marxist and Leninist philosophy (Marx's philosophy of history, Lenin's theory of reflection). And this holds true even where he did not explicitly quote the works of the classic thinkers. In the case of Stalin, no such "application" can be spoken of. For Lukács, Stalin was not "the Lenin of the period".

Yet, if we apply a *historical approach*, we find that what Lukács meant by his "guerilla war" was nothing more than a misleading *phenomenon*. It was the product of the false consciousness of his activity. It concealed the essence of his endeavours, and as such, it is not decisive for the period in question.

What do we mean by the term historical approach? We refer the reader to Hegel's definition of the unity of man's inner world and his acts, which, as a rule, applies to the question of whether Lukács acted as a "guerilla". Hegel writes that the inner world and acts of people are often differentiated. But in the historical dimension, the differentiation does not work: Man is the sum total of his acts... That a man may temporarily employ disguises is therefore of negligible importance. In reality, the outer is not different from the inner.²¹

Assessing Lukács's actual philosophical output in the thirties, we can conclude that, on the one hand he attempted to provide answers of unprecedented thoroughness to the most important world-historical questions of the period. A thinker of high calibre comes to grips with all conflicts of his era, painful as that can be. On the other hand, the alternative of Marxist philosophy in Lukács was the following question.

Is it at all possible to maintain in a *positive manner* the unity of reason, totality, dialectic, subject and object, individual and community, without giving up the critical attitude? For that was the very project to which Lukács committed himself. And when he resorted to *active silence*, that was the reward rather than the price of his choice.

So far, the content of Lukács's role change has been analyzed chiefly in its relation to the historical period under consideration. Little has been said about the *spatial* structure, the levels of his role as an ideologist. However, we cannot ignore the fact that this philosophical dialogue with the crisis situation, the theoretical identification with the movement, the apperception of the conflicts of Soviet Socialism and the anti-Fascist struggle took place in a highly articulated (historical) space, in different formations and at different levels. We must consider the structural characteristics of the genesis of the Moscow writings, inseparable from their time, not only because they have theoretical-methodological significance, but also because they influenced the structure of this monograph.

Let us first consider the level of the works. Seemingly, this is the problem of form and genre, of the "occasion". For the bulk of Lukács's output of the thirties and forties took the form of contributions to various press organs. It is the literature of the movement, aesthetics "in motion". This material, filling several volumes, encompasses a wide variety of genres: book reviews, jubilee articles, polemical treatises, forewords, encyclopaedia entries, contributions to debates, essays of varying length, series of articles eventually intended for a monograph. In a word, they were occasional writings. The "occasion" could be direct, and politically concrete, or indirect, and scientifically relevant. It could be an occasion of defense or attack. Certainly, the circumstances surrounding the genesis of a work, its commissioning and composition, its multiple publication in German, Russian, and Hungarian, are all irrelevant as regards the content, the value of the work. But they are anything but irrelevant as regards their function, their ideological efficiency. When one is looking for the indelible, blurred, or conspicuous signs of the genesis, the question of *where* a text was (or could be) published is just as important as the question of *when*. Indeed, Lukács subtly and consciously differentiated between the two main forums of his publications, *Internationale Literatur* of the emigration, and the "national" *Literaturny Kritik*. "After Hitler had seized power, I returned to the

Soviet Union and began working for *Internationale Literatur*, and — more precisely, above all — for the Russian-language *Literaturny Kritic*.”²²

Lukács was aware of the importance of the contemporary press. In one of his recollections, he remarked how important it would be to assess correctly the Hungarian left-wing Communist press of the thirties. He emphasized that outstanding journalistic achievements could be produced only when and where partisanship remained free from narrow sectarianism, the Communist Party literature adjusted itself to the whole of the left-wing movement, and Communist ideas came to be articulated as questions with a universal appeal.

Partisanship and universality. They are normative standards — not only for the evaluation of the character and quality of Communist periodical literature as a whole in the period under consideration, but also for distinguishing inner levels within Lukács’s “Communist” writings. In Lukács’s output for the press, tactics and theory are fused in a peculiar unity. It is, however, mistaken to view the relationship between the two levels as hierarchical in terms of value. That we differentiate between them does not in the least mean that we relegate that to the rubric of tactics, and others to that of scientific theory, or that we may reduce the connection between these levels to unequivocal correspondence. This would be erroneous even in a strained critical situation when the political and “pure” forms of ideology may approach one another.

By nature, tactics are nearer to everyday political struggles, to the implementation of party policies in practice, to its method, means, and slogans. Following the tactics offers the ideologists both positive and negative opportunities depending on the extent to which the attribute of genuineness applies to the praxis of the party, to which the theoretically elaborated universal goals, which tactics are intended to realize, are correct, necessary, and rational. “The party . . . reaches down to all the prosaic questions of everyday life, searching for the link in their midst that can put the world-historical goal in action in everyday life.”²³

It is easy to prove how fatally tragic the outcome of the theory of increasingly strained class struggle was in the thirties. The generation of that day happened to find the decisive link for practical political activity in the tactics of annihilating the class enemy lurking within the ranks of the party.

Yet at the same time, the positive opportunities for the Communist ideologist did not depend only on the objective correctness (genuineness) of the concrete goals of the movement and the tactics of the party. One also has to determine whether the thinker himself could arrive at a full comprehension of the genuine elements of the controversial tendencies implied by the tactics and cast them into theoretical form, and whether he could pinpoint the world-historically appropriate aims that might serve the philosophical-aesthetic exploration of the contradictions of reality, free from apology and illusions. This is what is at the core of Lukács's statement on the devotion of the party poet, which is even more emphatically true of the Communist thinker: "the loyalty of a politically conscious person is a deep ideological contact with a historically given tendency, and it is loyalty even when there is no full agreement on one momentary issue or another".²⁴

The relation between the tactical and theoretical levels of aesthetics "in motion" and the party's political attitude is all the more complex, as adherence to the erroneous political-tactical slogans or those that practice proves mistaken does not make it impossible to recognize genuine goals, universally correct truths in literary theory; neither do faults in the theory inevitably lead to a mistaken artistic policy.

Tactics and theory, partisanship and universality are united in a peculiar, often contradictory complex in Lukács's journalistic output in the period under consideration. We had to discuss the methodological bases separately because what is meant here is again "the dilemma of whether science of philosophy can objectively comprehend the state of the tendencies of development from which it can deduce objectively, through the application of scientific methods, the strategy and tactics during the fighting out of a conflict or a sequence of conflicts, or whether the objective priority is given to the decision on tactics to which strategy and the general theory can be added as agitative adjuncts. This dilemma, articulated in speculatively pure and unequivocal terms, means in a historical context the contrast between the way in which Lenin (in the spirit of Marx and Engels) and Stalin applied Marxism in theory and practice".²⁵

Lukács applied Marxism-Leninism in a post-Leninist period. How? In what spirit? Only the whole of this monograph can present an answer to this question. Here we can but repeat: not as a Stalinist. And not as a guerilla. Let us, however, designate the *place* of the application in

broad outlines. Owing to its specific dual structure, the novel application of Marx's and Lenin's thoughts, their creative use in making the problems of the age understood and in resolving contemporary theoretical dilemmas, is a *unified* process in Lukács. It is a conscious endeavour, an ideological goal, a theoretical attempt that runs counter to the tendencies of his age, despite all appearances. Duality is manifest *within* this unity, in a certain difference of emphases: When analysing *historical* (philosophical, ideological, artistic, aesthetic) processes, Lukács turns first of all to Marx, the Marxist philosophy of history, while in the examination of the *conceptual-epistemological* aspects of *these same* questions, he depends mostly on Lenin's works. This roughly outlined *relative* "division of labour" (relating, among other things, to the contemporary — often unwitting — interpretation of the connexion between historical and dialectical materialism) varies with the level of Lukács's writings, with the time and (polemical) situation. It varies, often simply and plainly because the battles of the ideologist were waged on *two*, Soviet and German, national and international *planes* (the Hungarian being subordinated to the latter!). The following remark by Lukács is of particular relevance to us by virtue of the specifically *local* application of a Leninist idea: "The thirties were occupied by the ideological guerilla war that I waged, partly on the Russian line as a member of the collective of *Literaturny Kritik*, and partly on the international stage, chiefly in German language literary journals opposed to Fascism. There was already a decisive difference between the Leninist and Stalinist conceptions of culture and literature there . . . in my article 'Tribune or Bureaucrat', dating from the very end of this period (1940), I formulated and analyzed — as explicitly as was then possible — this issue. I sought to present the dilemma of people's tribunal versus bureaucrat, a central concern in Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?*, to the leadership of the worker movement, over and against the Stalinist distortions of Socialist literature. My aim was to promote the recognition of the genuine difference inherent in this contrast in the teeth of misleading ratiocinations in theory and practice, resting on the abuse of Lenin quotations."²⁶

Lukács's relationship to Marx is a decisive question, both when we try to define the consciousness of the Moscow ideologist and when we interpret the actual road that he covered from 1930 to 1945. It is imperative that we ask whether we can rest content with the statement that, in

these years, Lukács discovered and conquered for himself and his time the *aesthetics* of Marx. More generally, it is imperative that we ask whether we rest content with the commonly voiced restrictive hypothesis, according to which the pressure of adverse political circumstances forced the author of *History and Class Consciousness*, the philosopher of the early twenties, to retreat to the domain of aesthetics, to withdraw his revolutionary messianism conceived in the spirit of Marx, sacrificing it to a conservative system of norms in art. Was he then a philosopher or an aesthete? Or perhaps a philosopher and an aesthete? The thematic approach can easily resolve this dilemma with the help of its schemes, particularly if it ignores the fact that it is impossible to classify Lukács among the academic "experts" and that, with the victory of Socialism, the meaning and significance of philosophy and aesthetics were irreversibly transformed. For Lukács, as a philosopher and an aesthete, the "reflecting consciousness" of the Communist movement was represented as a *real alternative* in the crisis-laden age of Fascism and Soviet Socialism. Decision-making concerning this alternative was, however, determined not by a choice between two disciplines, but rather, by the *way in which* Lukács, as an ideologist, maintained the positive unity between subject and object, individual and community, upheld dialectical-materialist interpretation as a rational totality without criticizing the *status quo*. This is what in essence determined his relationship to Marx (and Lenin) as well as to *History and Class Consciousness*, going far beyond the gesture of negation. It will require concrete analyses in order to see where, at what level, and through the mediaton of which categories the antinomies of human existence and essence, freedom and necessity, individual and species were comprehended and resolved in Lukács's writings.

And when? One has to resist the tempting illusion that, from 1930 to 1945, the Lukácsian ideology was developing in a straight line and that it is homogeneous in structure; if it were, it would mean that, for example, the concepts "totality" and "Realism" had the same meaning before and after 1935. If there is cohesion and continuity in the work of the Moscow scholar during these fifteen years (and there is!), then it is again to be found in a peculiarly dual structure; it can be understood not as linearity but as parallelism. The Moscow period included two beginning. It meant continuation as well as a critical transcendence. Lukács posed nearly all his fundamental questions twice. This duality is exem-

plified by his books on Fascism: *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?* (How did the Fascist Philosophy Emerge in Germany? 1933) and *Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?* (How did Germany become the centre of reactionary ideology? 1941–1942). Lukács did not overtly proclaim this parallelism, let alone his critical self-revision. On the contrary, if and when the question of repetition arose, he would emphasize continuity. The impression of homogeneity, for instance, between the articles on Expressionism (1934, 1938) was strengthened not only by this Lukácsian position but also by the non-synchronism between the genesis and the reception of the works, which caused several themes of the material of the early thirties to sink into oblivion.

1935 marks the sharpest turn in Lukács's Moscow period. But even before that, the ideologist's road had not been straight or level. The changes of roles and scenes were arranged by no less a stage director than world history itself.

THE "RISE AND FALL" OF THE "BLUM THESES"

YEARS OF APPRENTICESHIP COMPLETED

For the tenth year of his life, the decade of his apprenticeship is completed. What did 1930 mean in Lu Hsiang-shan's life? The end, the beginning, or the continuation of something? When one probes the historical content of this date, one will find how complex and profound these problems are; they are not mere formal signposts along the course of a life.

With me everything comes from something. I think there are no organic elements in my development.²⁴ This was the answer Lu Hsiang-shan, looking back upon his life, gave to the question of whether the "Young Hsueh" could with some exaggeration be seen as the continuation of the "Blum Thesis". It is an aphoristic answer, succinct and pithy, yet by no means commonplace. It provides the connecting link not between two periods in absolute time but between the ideological contents of these two periods: The decade of the thirties built on what the twenties had achieved. To be more precise, what the leading official of the Kuomintang Communist Party had summarized in his political thesis was continued by the Kuomintang after 1930. The link in organic development is the Lenin expressed in these words: "there is no Great Wall of China between bourgeois revolution and the revolution of the proletariat".

The genesis of the "Blum Thesis" and the discovery that they foretold were landmark developments, which marked a decisive turning point in Lu Hsiang-shan's subsequent life and work. The "Blum Thesis" was not a fleeting episode, but instead a "germ" which indeed had and still has a bearing on the course of his life. His original intention was actually realized in 1930-1931, at which time he himself had already decided to be architect of the strategy to be adopted by the HCCP, whether he succeeded or not. Actually, he had already withdrawn or disengaged himself from the HCCP, but he was still interpreted as a step forward in history as Lu Hsiang-shan, at the

THE "RISE AND FALL" OF THE "BLUM THESES"

Dates have little, if anything, to do with the "real" milestones of historical time. The standard measure of world history is not the decade. Yet the tenth year rounding off a decade may coincide with substantial changes in the life of a person. What did 1930 mean in Lukács's life? The end, the beginning, or the continuation of something? When one probes into the historical content of this date, one will find how complex and profound these problems are; they are not mere formal signposts along the course of a life.

"With me everything comes from something. I think there are no inorganic elements in my development."¹ This was the answer that Lukács, looking back upon his life, gave to the question of whether *The Young Hegel* could with some exaggeration be seen as the continuation of the "Blum Theses". It is an aphoristic answer, succinct and pithy, yet by no means commonplace. It provides the connecting link not between two periods in absolute time but between the ideological contents of these two periods: The decade of the thirties built on what the twenties had achieved. To be more precise, what the leading official of the Hungarian Communist Party had summarized in his political theses was continued by the ideologist after 1930. The link in organic development is what Lenin expressed in these words: "there is no Great Wall of China between bourgeois revolution and the revolution of the proletariat".

The genesis of the "Blum Theses" and the controversy that they provoked were landmark developments, which exercised a decisive influence over Lukács's subsequent life and work. The "Blum Theses" were not a fleeting episode, but instead a "great turn" indeed. And this holds true regardless of the extent to which their central importance was actually realized in 1929-1930, of what significance the author himself ascribed to his analysis of the strategy to be adopted by the HCP: whether he withdrew it self-critically, or revoked the withdrawal; or else, whether he interpreted it as a step forward in theory and, as such, as the

defeat of the anti-sectarian political trend of Landler's heritage, and as his own failure.

When trying to define the historic importance of the year 1930 in the transformation of Lukács's career, one must not forget something that he himself repeatedly stressed: The theoretical contents of the "Blum Theses" constituted the "secret" *terminus a quo* of his further development, however little he achieved at the time. We cannot forget that Lukács himself confessed on several occasions: "the turn in my outlook which was the source of my theses has become the guideline for my subsequent practical and theoretical work, without, of course, being given a relatively adequate form of expression."²

Lukács, just like his opponents, always adduced his aesthetic works from the period after 1930 as conclusive evidence of his "secret" continuity.³ Another piece of evidence that was invariably cited to confirm this was the so-called "Révai-argument". To Lukács's mind, Révai's statement proved that his unswerving commitment to the "Blum Theses" was not subjective fantasy, but objective fact: "Anyone who knows the history of the Hungarian Communist movement must know that the *literary views* that comrade Lukács advocated in 1945-1949 are connected to his much earlier *political views*, which he embraced in the late twenties, concerning Hungarian political progress and the strategy of the Communist Party."⁴

The "Révai argument" however, is highly paradoxical. First, Révai denied that there was any connection between the "Blum Theses" and the Popular-Front concept; secondly, as the Party's number-one ideologist, in 1950 he created, by means of a genetic method (every present error has a precedent!) a negative continuity between the political and literary views of Lukács, which was clearly ideological in the negative sense and not reversible, i.e., capable of being turned in a positive direction.

When trying to define the historic importance of the year 1930 in the transformation of Lukács's career, one must remember that Lukács *recanted* his political theses time and time again. We cannot ignore the fact that he continually stressed his break with the past. At the very beginning of the forties, again as a member of the Hungarian Communist Party and of the editorial board of *Új Hang* (New Voice), he prepared a curriculum vitae, which contained a detailed account of his former party activity. "In this period, the inner life of the Communist Party was taken

up by the struggle against Béla Kun and his adherents. At the outset of this fighting, I joined Landler and his group seeking to eliminate the harmful influence of Kun upon the Party. The Landler group lacked the Bolshevik maturity and resolve that could have enabled it to carry out this task. However, it faithfully followed the line staked out by the Comintern, never questioning it and not tolerating any deviation from this line. During my party activity, I was detained for about a month in April 1928 in Vienna; as they did not succeed in proving me guilty of the charge, i.e., secret conspiracy, they had to release me. From February to April 1929, I worked in Budapest as the head of the illegal organization. At that time of rekindled in-fighting in 1929, I committed a political mistake in my theses written for the scheduled second Congress of the HCP by designating the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants as the necessary perspective for Hungary. This error resulted from a then unresolved question of the Hungarian working-class movement: For years the Party had used the question of the republic as its central slogan in the legal movement. The theory that I advanced to buttress this practice was exaggerated, for want of a thorough and critical examination of the bases of this practice. The Second Congress of the HCP did not co-opt me in the Central Committee (February–March 1930).”⁵

When this rather subjective recounting of the events was put to paper, Béla Kun, who (together with such figures as Bukharin, Stalin, and Manuilsky) had been a member of the Comintern’s Executive Committee in 1928, was no longer alive. Although diminished in importance, the Popular-Front policy was still part of the Comintern’s general programme. In the passage quoted above, Lukács treated the events (probably deliberately) as a domestic affair of the Hungarian Party, in theoretical and practical terms alike. He ignored the actual role of the leadership and various organs of the Comintern (Manuilsky) in the factional fights and, here, unlike in the “Theses”, he failed to quote the declaration of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, to the effect that the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry could be introduced as a transition to the proletarian revolution in countries at an “intermediate level” of capitalist development, such as Hungary.⁶ He attributed his theoretical mistake solely to “exaggerating” the republican slogan of the HCP.

What followed is more or less well known. Lukács, who had done all he could to stay in Vienna with his family⁷ at the time of his expulsion

from Austria (in 1928–1929), and to continue working for the *Ausländische Bureau*, was transferred to Moscow in 1930. His decade-long political career in the Hungarian Party was interrupted for a long time; as an ideologist, he switched over to the “Russian line”, to use the term that he himself applied. The truth is that he was transferred by the Comintern — to the Marx–Engels Institute in Moscow. Thus it was not a mere *bon mot* but a remark that hit the bull’s eye, when the director of the Institute, D. Riazanov received Lukács with the following “identifying” comment: “Ah, Sie sind kominterniert?”⁸ Although the malicious remark was tailored to the addressee, the irony was not condemnatory. Rather, it shed light on an existing practice. “Plainly speaking the Marx–Engels Institute was a place where several Comintern colleagues, whose work was not acceptable for one reason or another were transferred. That is how one found Thalheimer and many German comrades belonging to the most diverse trends working there. Some were adherents of Ruth Fischer’s group, some of Brandler. . . . But in the case of Lukács. . . . there must have been an agreement somewhere at the top, which resulted in his transfer.”⁹

However dramatic it may sound, the story did not turn into a tragedy after all. It did mark a turn in Lukács’s career, but not a break. Blum had been just as much a party ideologist in his days as member of the HCP Central Committee as when he was working for the Marx–Engels Institute. In retrospect, Lukács repeatedly questioned the objective *theoretical* value of his theses, while he remained convinced of their importance in *his own* subjective development. “This is where my thinking produced a general theory for the first time capable of further generalization from the correct observation of immediate reality — this is the point where I became an ideologist who derived his perspectives from reality — precisely, from Hungarian reality.”¹⁰

Of course, Lukács did not claim all credit for the historical and political values of the “Blum Theses”: The concrete analysis of the actual Hungarian situation was the outcome of his acceptance of *Landler’s Realism* as opposed to the bureaucratic utopia represented by Kun. The victory of Realism in Hungary was achieved by a shift toward antisectarianism, which also meant a triumph over the former international perspective of the movement, and over messianic sectarianism (the hope for an imminent world revolution). True, some duality remained, for in the period at issue, Lukács’s hope of finding a “genuine” left-wing

programme, and not an ultra-leftist one, which was *internationally* valid and both theoretically and politically well-established, was no more than an unfulfilled dream.¹¹

On the one hand, all this leads us back to the question of whether or not *The young Hegel* was the organic continuation of the "Blum Theses". Were the theses the theoretical guideline for the author's work in the coming decade(s) *in every respect*, were they indeed the "secret" *terminus a quo* of his further development? On the other hand, Lukács's aforementioned assessment leads into the problem of the subsequent fate of this party document, to its oft-debated interpretation.

The fate of the work once again did not comply with the classical rules. Its revision was well under way when the revised subject, the document itself, had not yet been published in full. Lukács's warning is timely even today: "no legend should develop around the "Blum Theses",¹² not even a positive one, unlike in the former case. It is timely, because, for one thing, there exists a legend nourished by a total misinterpretation, according to which the "class-against-class" (sectarian-dogmatic) formula was the product of Lukács's anti-institutional thinking; that the "Blum Theses" advocated a particular *Hungarian* road to Socialism in contradiction to Stalin, and that, in this way, the notion of "democratic dictatorship" can be seen as an early step towards the *national Communist* programme of 1956.¹³

Without recalling all the similar legends or thoroughly reviewing the more recent debates on the theses, one can rightly contend that nearly all the *scholarly* analyses prompted by recent interest in the work have concluded that Lukács's theses suffer from an *inner* contradiction, a structural *duality*. Although the analysts have adduced various reasons and factors to explain structural and conceptual deficiencies of the theses, most of them refer to the antinomy between democratic dictatorship and the sectarian interpretation of Fascism as the main cause. In other words this means that Lukács's "conception of Fascism, which was not at all the outcome of an analysis of definite class relations, but the result of a socio-economic progression, inevitably impugned the function of the bourgeois-democratic partial demands of the strategy, just as the interpretation of Social Democracy and the trade unions impugned the function of the postulated unity".¹⁴

As has been seen, Lukács's retrospective evaluation greatly differs from this. For him, the "Blum Theses", were a milestone that *terminated*

the process of resolving the *duality* between the *Realpolitik* in the affairs of the Hungarian Party and messianic sectarianism in international affairs. This marked the *beginning* of his career as a realistic (party) ideologist, and led to the "revolutionary" change in his whole philosophy, strengthening Marxism in both its content and method. Instead of starting from the inherent structural duality of the theses, Lukács's assessment stressed the fundamentally *anti-sectarian* attitude that he adopted there. At the same time, he emphasized the limits of this attitude as well ("I am not more 'blumish than Blum'"): The theses had only opened a *crack* in sectarianism, instead of breaking through it along a *wide front*, as the Seventh Congress of Comintern was to do. That was their *historical* weakness. Lukács attributed the negative features (theory of Fascism, Social Democracy, question of trade unions) the *external*, unfavourable international circumstances and his reluctant submission to the terminology of the period. "The question of Social Democracy and the trade unions is different. In this regard the theses must be discussed as they were embedded in the international current with a view to the questions of the Red Trade Union International, schisms, Social Fascism, 'Social Democracy as the twin brother of Fascism', etc. . . . Do not forget that, at that time, the fight against the German '*Versöhnlers*' was the central concern of the Comintern, and this struggle came to a head precisely over the issue of Social Democracy and unionism. . . . None of us had recognized that, in Europe, it was not Socialism versus Capitalism that was in the forefront, but the mobilization of all the anti-Fascist forces against Fascism. *No one* recognized that, at that time in Europe, including the author of the 'Blum Theses' . . . In view of this, it cannot be declared that 'Blum Theses' had made the turn in strategy and tactics that was to come only later."¹⁵

The key to determining the historic place of the "Blum Theses" is the *lack of this recognition*, the missing "genuine" left-wing alternative. It also serves to pry open the *theoretical* problem of the strategy of democratic dictatorship as a transition between Capitalism and Socialism. When one seeks an answer to the dilemma of organic continuity between the twenties and thirties, one must briefly reconstruct the essence of Lukács's conception, his definitions of Capitalism, democracy, and Fascism, and the conceptual structure of these theses.

The programme of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern served as the point of departure for Lukács's definition not only of the basic types

of revolution, but also of the nature of contemporary Capitalism. Post-war Imperialist development had entered its third phase, and the contradictions of Capitalist stabilization made the fall of Capitalism inevitable. In this period of change, Lukács argued, it was essential to clarify *what forms democracy might assume* and how it would serve to consolidate the rule of the bourgeoisie. The justification and timeliness of posing this question can certainly be debated. One thing, however is certain: its formulation (the role of democratic forms) and its actual content had a significance pointing beyond the Comintern programme. Lukács took the *United States*, the most advanced Capitalist country, so different from the European democracies, as the perfect example of what democracy meant in the new situation to which Imperialism had given rise. By contrast, the Comintern lumped the “dollar republic”, the new centre of the world economy, together *in one category* with Germany and England. Each of these, they asserted, had at its disposal huge productive forces, centralized production, and an insignificant small-scale production. In each of these countries, moreover, the bourgeois democratic political system had struck deep roots. For Lukács, the *highest stage of Imperialism* was American Capitalism, and its *adequate form* was democracy of the American type. There “the bourgeoisie as the dominant class (which did not have to destroy feudal power with the help of the proletariat and semi-proletarian masses) has succeeded in creating the very forms of democracy in which every possibility of the free development, accumulation, and expansion of capital is present, while at the same time the external forms of democracy are preserved — but in such a way that the working masses cannot exert any influence whatever on the actual political leadership”.¹⁶

There are fundamental differences in the history, economy, and politics between the United States and Europe, Lukács writes. In Europe, the exploited classes fought together with the bourgeoisie for a bourgeois democracy in the teeth of feudal absolutism; here the revolutionary experience and political weight of the masses is greater, they have attained a higher level of consciousness. In America, the working classes have no militant traditions of class struggle, and their upper stratum can be materially satisfied by accumulation. In numerous European states, the bourgeoisie became the politically dominant class only relatively recently, after the war (Germany), or acquired a far greater share in political leadership (Hungary). More recently, the major Western de-

mocracies have been moving closer to the American model, this being their aim and ideal, and they enjoy the support of Social Democracy in this effort. Owing to the differences, however, this economic and political aspiration (complete freedom and exclusive dominance of large capital; preservation of the external forms of democracy) will remain a permanent but unattained goal. "The attempt to combine the kind of political democracy where the masses actually have no political influence with the institutional or arbitrary suppression of the class struggle in Europe has not achieved anything; nor will it reach the American ideal. Note that that prevents the bourgeoisie and the working-class bureaucracy from wanting to get closer to the American model."¹⁷

Hence, in Lukács's argument, the combination or reconciliation of the new Imperialist content and the democratic form was to be achieved in Europe in *specific* ways, with different kinds of *means*, with consolidating methods. The unity of content and form was not a theoretical requirement, but a practical necessity: it was dictated by global economic and political considerations, preparations for war, the crisis and world market boom. An instrument capable of catalyzing this movement in the direction of the ideal type of American democracy is Fascistization and the elimination of the trade union struggle typical of the period prior to World War I. Fascistization, Lukács asserts, can take any one of several different courses.

In Europe, two types of Fascistization can be distinguished — a "classical" and a "modern" type, based on different methods. The classical or drastic model is the counter-revolution of the petty bourgeoisie and more prosperous peasantry, of the type led by Mussolini, which has smashed the old trade unions, replacing them with new ones. The Italian model is, however, more dangerous and unfavourable, both for the upper bourgeoisie and the working-class bureaucracy. "It costs the bourgeoisie a great deal of effort to transform the petty bourgeois counter-revolution into the consolidation of the upper bourgeoisie; some elements of the working-class bureaucracy lose their position in the working-class movement (Italian emigration); and last but not least, those who conform to the Fascist system find themselves in dangerous confrontation with the working-class masses."¹⁸

The other, modern or democratic variant of Fascistization, Lukács continues, which is on the rise in Germany and England, rests on the "peaceful" cooperation of the upper bourgeoisie and the working-class

bureaucracy. The democratic form of Fascistization in the "Western democracies", the attempt to reconcile political democracy with the masses lack of influence, eventually serves the same Imperialistic goal: the institutional suppression of the class struggle, the integration of the trade-union bureaucracy and the Social Democrats into the Fascist state apparatus. The real point to Western democratized Fascism is the democratic liquidation of all bourgeois democratic achievements.

Lukács's reasoning and typology differ from the analysis of Fascism in the Comintern programme at several significant points. The basic difference is that, according to the programme, the bourgeoisie gradually adopts a Fascist regime, detaching itself from the parliamentary system and the Party coalitions, all in order to preserve its power. Having seized control of the executive power, Fascism functions as the *direct terroristic dictatorship of capital*. In this interpretation, it is simply impossible to take into account the perilousness of this solution, the problem of upper bourgeois consolidation, or the deleteriousness of the counter-revolution for the working-class bureaucracy; in the "classical" version, Social Democracy, too, assumes an overtly Fascist role. The programme also discusses two variants, but they differ in *political-tactical terms*, rather than typologically, as in Lukács's schema: "Depending on which direction the political winds blow, the bourgeoisie applies now the methods of Fascism, now those of coalition with the Social Democrats . . . In the course of this development, Social Democracy displays signs of a bias towards Fascism, which, however, does not prevent it from appearing in the guise of a party in opposition to the bourgeois government under another political constellation. The recourse to Fascism, like coalition with Social Democracy, is unusual for 'ordinary' capitalism. These methods betray the general crisis of Capitalism, they are employed by the bourgeoisie in order to block the advance of the revolution."¹⁹

Thus, in this interpretation, both methods are extraordinary, "unusual" alien to traditional bourgeois democracy. Both are instruments to which the upper bourgeoisie resorts in an emergency. Their function is *not* to consolidate, or to ensure that Imperialist big capital makes the economy as well as politics run smoothly ("perfect" democratic forms), but to stave off the imminent proletarian revolution. (This point also reveals the sectarian nature of the conception of the "third phase" and the imminent world revolution.) That is why the *choice* between Fascism and coalition with Social Democracy depends on which way "the politi-

cal winds blow". And that is why the latter cannot be an instrument of Fascistization, of liquidating bourgeois democratic means in a democratic manner. Either Fascism, or coalition.

By contrast, Lukács sees these two types as *alternatives* as regards their differences in both class basis and form. He holds to his view in spite of the fact that he is quite certain that "no European bourgeoisie is going to abandon altogether the possibility of the 'classical' (Italian) type of Fascism; it will always keep even that option open in case of an intensification of the class struggle and a separation of the masses from the bourgeoisie". And although he considers the "modern" form adequate, he sees that "today's Imperialistic-Capitalistic state is equally concerned to render the masses completely ineffective politically and to combine and organize them within the state (or 'within society' under state supervision)". Thus, he argues: "The democratic form of Fascistization is the most appropriate: but by no means the only form that this dual objective can take."²⁰

It is on this theoretical-conceptual basis that Lukács proclaims the alternatives, as posed by international Social Democracy — namely, democracy or Fascism — to be misleading. Consequently, he rejects them.

"So now a primary task is to expose the misleading alternative, 'democracy of Fascism'. It must be shown that the democratic development now getting under way both here and in the 'Western democracies' is a genre of Fascistization that — in contrast to the Italian type — is based on the co-operation of the upper bourgeoisie and the working-class bureaucracy."²¹

The *positive counterpart* to the alternative of the democratic version of Fascistization, Lukács asserts, is democratic dictatorship, a reference to the Hungarian perspective. As we have seen, Lukács tried to build his typology of the American and European models on firm historical, economic, and political arguments. His interpretation of the Hungarian situation is identical in character, and is *deduced theoretically* in consistent fashion from the typology outlined above. "Hungary's development differs from both the Italian and the English model by reason of different historical and social conditions. The defeat of the revolution in Hungary brought petty-bourgeois and peasant farmer strata to power. But they did not succeed in smashing or disorganizing the trade union movement; they had even less success, unlike Mussolini, in winning support from

the working class. (The causes of this resistance are to be found largely in the way in which the revolution was put down and in the democratic illusions of the working class as regards Social Democracy.) An amalgamation of big landowners and Capitalists took over from the counter-revolution of the petty bourgeoisie and middling peasantry, and incorporated its organs into the state apparatus. They had been operating with contradictory methods in this area for a long time, and to some extent they still do today (both a pact with the Social Democrats and their support). In recent years, the Bethlen regime has pushed through a rapid reconstruction of the state apparatus and of the social organization. And this will soon make it possible to take over the methods of 'Western democracy'.²²

Obviously, Lukács deduced the Hungarian perspective from the course of world-historical development (post-war Imperialism), that is, from its logic (the related strategy of the democratic dictatorship). He inserted it into the hierarchy of forms, the apex and base of which were represented by American democracy and Mussolini's regime, respectively, with the Western democracies situated in between. In the social processes generated by European Imperialism, the unification of ideal and reality, of content and form, was everywhere conveyed by Fascistization in a more adequate (modern, democratic, British) or less adequate (classical, counter-revolutionary, Italian) way, and with more or less adequate means. Hungary was "special"; it represented a transition between a specific variant of Fascist counter-revolution and democratized Fascism: "With the intensification of Capitalist production and counter-revolution, and with the revolution now a long way off, the Hungarian counter-revolution enters the period of 'Western development'."²³

However true it may be that Lukács deduced the particular Hungarian development from the general, that is, from the global historical progress, the ideologist of the "Blum Theses" was quite right in saying that he did build his general theory on *Hungarian reality*, even though he failed at that time to work out a "genuine" left-wing programme that was internationally valid. And indeed it was also true that, in the interpretation of the American ideal and in the construction of the whole typology, the particular Hungarian 'case' played just as decisive and constructive a role as the evaluation of the general world-historical tendencies of development (US Capitalism as the highest degree of Imperial-

ism). These two moments are inseparable and mutually determined in the theses. At the heart of the "case" was *consolidation*, which Lukács regarded as the essential process, the starting point and the objective in the third phase of Capitalism. In the new situation, it was as if the exclusive aim of the bourgeoisie was always and everywhere to find the seemingly democratic forms, also reinforced by a pact with the Social Democrats, that best suited the *consolidation* of its power, the institutional suppression of the class struggle (indirectly, legally, peacefully); as if the solution to this *central* problem could alone ensure the possibility of the free development, accumulation, and expansion of big capital.

This is not to say that, on the theoretical level, Lukács underestimated the danger of introducing Fascism as direct dictatorship (we quoted him as saying that no European bourgeoisie was going to abandon altogether the possibility of the "classical" type). But he regarded this path only as the counter-revolution of the petty bourgeoisie and small peasantry, in a rudimentary and primitive, *local* and not total form, which would necessarily be superseded by democratic Fascistization: the consolidation of big capital. Social Democracy, the working-class bureaucracy, helped promote this process.

Given the central role that Lukács assigned to the consolidated relationship between Capitalism and democracy, it follows, that democratic dictatorship (which he employed as a strategic slogan with reference to Hungary only in the "Blum Theses") was not the opposite of Fascist dictatorship, but of consolidated democratic Fascism. At that time, the basic criterion determining his concept of Fascism was not the presence or absence of directly dictatorial, overtly counter-revolutionary moments, but the presence or absence of the political influence of the masses. When the consolidated Hungarian counter-revolution entered the phase of "Western development", the Communist Party, Lukács said, had to aim for the creation of a democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants in opposition to the Bethlen regime. This was the alternative to Hungarian Fascism, to the democratic liquidation of democracy, the perfect way to realize bourgeois democracy. It offered a wide scope for the independent revolutionary activity of the masses, guaranteeing that all the democratic liberties, organizational and ideological tools 'normally' used against the working-class strata could now be used against the bourgeoisie.

Lukács's theses irrespective of their politically sectarian and anti-sectarian tactical and strategic elements, form a completely *coherent conceptual system* whose logic displays no conceptual duality, no break in its theory. The theses integrate and transcend the conclusions of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern; in their typology, the determinants of international (American, European) and Hungarian developments are united. Actually, Lukács identifies the consolidation of big capital in advanced Western European bourgeois democracies (the path that Hungary had also taken) with Fascism, with the modern — dominant — form of Fascistization.²⁴

By reconstructing the intact framework and the coherent structure of the "Blum Theses" our aim was not to discover the overt or hidden mistakes, of the document or to highlight its brilliant truths. The "rise and fall" of the "Theses" did not depend on the truth or falsity of the conception in the twenties, or later. (Lukács, noting that he was right, yet had failed, also drew this inference; but he mistakenly applied it *to his person* — "I proved to be a poor politician".) Equally unfounded is the reproach that, if he knew he was right, he should personally have stood up for his beliefs. It is far more important to emphasize that, had Lukács's theses — as a party document — been approved, they could have prodded the policy of the HCP in a much more positive direction²⁵ than the adopted strategy did. The adaptation of the "Blum Theses". Would have made it possible to work out a more appropriate alternative in the Hungarian Communist movement, would have brought greater successes and smaller losses during the forthcoming struggles. The quality of the political and theoretical analyses in Lukács's theses implied that there was a good chance for the anti-sectarian elements in the document functionally to triumph over the negative ideological moments, to outweigh them strategically when the party was to encounter new crises and a changed practical reality. "The approval of the statements in the theses concerning democratic dictatorship, or to be more precise, the approval of their position on the question of the strategic goal, would have exerted a decisive influence on the further development of the political line of the Party. It would have helped to overcome the sectarian views related to trade union work, the role of Social Democracy and other issues, which the 'Theses' were not free from, either. . . . The acceptance of the change in course, as proposed by the 'Theses', and the elaboration of the relevant political line would have greatly facilitated the

subsequent recognition of the significance of the turn registered at the Seventh Congress and the intensification of the struggle for anti-Fascist democracy."²⁶

And what did Lukács gain? The conclusion of his years of apprenticeship? A guideline for the elaboration of his realistic ideology? Did he, after all, obtain the elements needed for his further organic development?

The dilemma of the continuity of the theses can only be answered with a paradox: They were simultaneously *capable and incapable of being continued*, both in theory and in practice. Reality never follows even the most correct political theses with perfect accuracy. With the Fascist seizure of power in Germany and the expansion of Nazi domination, it became clear, for example, that the concept of Fascism as interpreted in the "Blum Theses" was wholly untenable. But Lukács was able to follow reality: The idea of democratic dictatorship, adjusted to take into account a modified concept of Fascism (which, in turn, modified the former), could actually be revived at the time of the Popular-Front. Thus, Lukács kept drawing both *false and true* conclusions from his "Theses", applying them to the changing historical situation, to the equally changing strategic and tactical options of the workers' movement, and he could rightly regard these answers as elements of an organic continuity. (It was precisely the revival of the idea of a democratic transition in a positive sense that was entirely impossible for Béla Kun, who had to make a sharp turn in his thinking in order to be able to accept the Popular-Front policy.)

Yet the paradox that something simultaneously can and cannot be continued, cannot be resolved in relativistic fashion, by referring to the changing reality and the inner peculiarities of the theses — first and foremost, because, as the party ideologist Lukács *eventually* came to realize all the anti-sectarian possibilities more adequately over the forthcoming one and a half decades (even though in a contradictory and changing form) that the HCP had rejected.

With the above reservations, one may confirm Lukács's *awareness of continuity* concerning his own Theses, as well as his conviction that his perspective proved to be objectively correct: "on the one hand, it is a historical fact that the general perspective of the 'Blum Theses' was justified by the actual Hungarian development, and on the other, I was after all the only one who had foreseen this development".²⁷

Indeed, the Hungarian reality did seem to follow the "Theses" of Blum between 1945 and 1948: The democratic dictatorship became the decisive problem at issue between bourgeoisie and proletariat. History seemed to have proven conclusively what Lukács had argued: "although in terms of its immediate concrete content, it does not go beyond bourgeois society, [democratic dictatorship] is a dialectical form of transition toward proletarian revolution — or towards counter-revolution. To stop at democratic dictatorship, conceived of as a fixed, 'constitutionally determined' period of development, would necessarily signify the victory of the counter-revolution. Democratic dictatorship can therefore be understood only as the concrete transition by means of which the bourgeois revolution turns into the revolution of the proletariat".²⁸

But the paradox persists: By the time the "Blum Theses" had been "precisely" realized, everything changed. The defeat of Fascism marked the end of the Second World War. And in a new Europe, in the Hungarian democracy, Lukács himself came to advocate new theses — even if, for him, "everything is the continuation of something".

The "Blum Theses" were a missed opportunity. The HCP not only lost one of its most competent ideologists as its activist, but it also lost many of its former achievements, which he had moulded into a far-sighted programme whose implementation would have been of acute relevance in the modified anti-Fascist struggle of the early thirties.

A NEW START

Sharp-eyed tourists, inquisitive reporters and travellers in search of adventure had noticed many things in the everyday life of the country of the proletarians. Many things among what there was to see: The faith and the unswerving resolve, the purposefulness and the plans becoming a reality; the vigour of Soviet construction at a time of a paralysing global crisis; immense dimensions and a brisk tempo.

Here "everything is still in the making", wrote Erich Kästner. Red Moscow, a town becoming younger every day, was a place where "tomorrow is in fact yesterday".¹ Pronounced technological advancement struck the eye — and not only the eye of a German writer. So did the marked change in the outward appearance of the inhabitants. But for Mikhail Bulgakov there was a far more significant question to ask: "Have the Muscovites changed *inwardly*?" There were strange things going on at the same time. A foreigner, apparently a German tourist (or Russian emigrant?), Professor Woland appears on the Patriarch's Ponds. He claims to have had an English breakfast with Kant and to have seen Pilate talking to Caiaphas. This awakens a suspicion in the poet Ivan Nikolayich. He presumes (and *this* is no longer strange at all!) that the stranger "is not just a foreign tourist, he's a spy".²

Lukács did not arrive in Moscow as a stranger, as a foreign tourist. He did, however, look a bit peculiar. "One day the door opens, Riazanov enters, bringing with him a short little man dressed rather oddly for Moscow — in breaches and knee-length stockings, which were novelties at the time."³ Later Riazanov called Liftshits aside and asked him half jokingly: "He is no German spy, is he?"

Along the "Russian line" Lukács's position appeared to be quite reassuring: His living conditions had become stable and organized. As research associate of the Marx-Engels Institute, he was officially transferred to the Soviet Communist (Bolshevik) Party. Still, his first stay in Moscow had something temporary and transitional about it. His settle-

ment there was not final, even though the year to be spent there displayed signs of intellectual adaptation and readjustment in his local activities. Of his private life, too, one could say, "noch ist alles im Werden". His wife was away for a long time; they did not even consider the possibility of bringing the children to Moscow. The time had not yet come for a new exile in exile.

Lukács had some knowledge of Moscow. He had been there in 1921, participating in the Third Congress of the Comintern as one of the leaders of HCP. He had listened to Lenin, who deemed his article on parliamentarism "too leftist" and very bad. Lunacharsky introduced him to Lenin.⁴

Lukács was not unknown when he arrived in the Soviet Union. In the early twenties, some of the journal reviews that he had written in Vienna were republished by a leading journal of philosophy, *Vestnik Sotsialisticheskoy Akademii* (Gazette of the Socialist Academy). In 1923, the editors introduced him as "an outstanding theorist of the Hungarian Communist Party".⁵ These pieces of varying length had been written in the "shadow" of *History and Class Consciousness*. They took the form of occasional reviews, but their significance does not merely lie in the fact that they offered a subtle (profound and by no means small-minded) evaluation of the works of Adler, Schmalenback, Kuntze, or Mautner. Rather, the point was that they displayed the most positive elements of *History and Class Consciousness* in the practice of theory and criticism. The most important among them was the method and requirement of *historicity*, as the foundation of Lukács's approach to criticism. For instance, in his review of Lassale's letters (a significant antecedent to his — aesthetic — commentary on Marx in the early thirties), Lukács expounded in vivid terms the idea that radical Young Hegelianism, when turning away from the "conciliatory" Hegel and toward Fichte, loosened the methodological bond between history and the categories, instead of mooring the categories securely to history, instead of deriving them from historical reality. That was why they inevitably reverted to pre-Hegelian categories.

Lukács's debut had another important advantage for Marxist literature and for the nascent Soviet history of philosophy: namely, methodological *anti-dogmatism*. His reviews were warnings, a critique of vulgarization. They acknowledged erudition, the philological fact-finding merits of bourgeois science as well as the positive features of German

academic traditions. First and foremost, Lukács warned that a yet unsolved task of Marxist research was to explain in historical materialistic terms the *factual stock* of philosophical ideals; to explore in detail the philosophical, logical, and epistemological relations between the views of various thinkers, and to uncover the intellectual cross-influences, which was not at all a simple task, and only seemingly philological work. "The Marxist interpretation of the history of philosophy will not reach the necessary level unless the Marxists not only show their superiority over former researchers in their clear understanding of the socio-economic forces that eventually determine the emergence and solution of philosophical problems, but also gain ascendancy in purely philosophical questions."⁶

Yet it was not these reviews that made Lukács's reputation. His real debut was in 1923: the publication of a chapter of *History and Class Consciousness*, "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat", in three instalments in *Vestnik Sotsialisticheskoy Akademii*.⁷ The book, which has not been published in full, in Russian, provoked a heated controversy and came under sharp attack. We shall not go into a detailed description of the political and theoretical aspects of the reception. It is certain, however, that the way in which the text was received cannot be separated from the concurrent publication of works by Karl Korsch in the Soviet Union, and the fact that, in the closing pages of his *Philosophie und Marxismus*, Korsch sided with the author of *History and Class Consciousness*.⁸

The ideological nature of the reception, which was soon augmented by the reverberations of Lukács's study on *Lenin* (1924) was defined not so much by the lengthy series of rather "Jesuitical" articles by László Rudas⁹ as by the criticism of A. Deborin, already then and still a prominent personality in Russian philosophical life. Only Deborin was in a position to transform the philosophical debate into a political one. He managed to get his polemic against Lukács published in the form of a separate brochure, as a document to be considered by delegates to the Fifth Congress of the Communist International.¹⁰ From among Deborin's vulgar (and, therefore, efficient) critical observations, we shall cite only those that had retained ideological topicality up to the late twenties and early thirties.

The most severe charge levelled at Lukács involved his rejection of the dialectic of nature and, in general, his interpretation of dialectic, and

unfavourable criticism of Engels. (The ideological importance of these instances was to increase with the appearance in 1925 of Engels's *Dialectics of Nature*.) Concerning the world view of *History and Class Consciousness*, Debordin said of Lukács: "in one way or another he accepts *Historical Materialism*, yet rejects *philosophical Materialism*".¹¹ Debordin challenged Lukács's position with numerous quotations from Engels and repeated references to Plekhanov.

What was Debordin's opinion about Lukács's relationship to Hegel? Debordin argued that, by acting as an idealist and propagating the *identity* of subject and object, consciousness and being, theory and practice, Lukács advocated orthodox Hegelian ideas. The way in which Lukács discussed the interplay of theory and praxis reminded Debordin of Hegel's Absolute Idea (the unity of the theoretical and practical spirit). However, as far as the "scope" of dialectic was concerned, Debordin contrasted the stand of Lukács with that of Hegel. The latter, Debordin held, coincided with that of Marx and Engels: "In this issue there is no disagreement between Hegel, on the one hand, and Marx and Engels, on the other. They all regard the world as a *dialectical process of progress*, both history and nature, in both of which everything is finite, comes into being, changes and then disappears, in accordance with its internal *contradictions*."¹²

At the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, Zinoviev — speaking in line with Debordin's recommendations — condemned in no uncertain terms Lukács, Graziadei, and Korsch, whom he described as revisionist "professors" advocating Hegelianism. He also confirmed his position by exclaiming, "Bravo, Rudas!", when the latter announced his attack on the "revisionist" Lukács in a letter. Although, Bukharin and Zinoviev were at that time considered the leading ideologues of the Party, Lukács was absolutely correct in stating later that the "authoritative critic" of the day was in fact Debordin.¹³ After the Comintern Congress, I. Luppold, writing in *Pravda*, all but put Debordin's brochure on the list of compulsory readings for all party members, all Marxist theorists. The revisionist "Lukács", he writes, "is followed by great many Communists: Korsch, Fogarasi, Révai and others. It is typical of this trend that it turns away from the Materialist position of Marxism".¹⁴

As severe and sharp as the tone of the criticism was, the official condemnation had *no practical consequence* whatsoever. In attempting to explain how that could happen, suffice it to mention a single but crucial

factor: At that time, *philosophical materialism was not in the centre* of the ideological struggle in the communist movement, the problem of the Materialist dialectics was not *directly* connected with political alternatives. Although there were heated internal debates between the "dialecticians" and the "mechanists" in the philosophical life of the era of reconstruction in the Soviet Union, they all remained within the narrow bounds of a domestic-ideological political framework. The critics of Lukács's book were in large part members of Deborin's "dialectic" groups (G. A. Bammel, N. A. Karev, I. K. Luppel, J. E. Sten), but no direct theoretical or political connexion was established between the reception of *History and Class Consciousness* and the domestic debate with the "mechanists" on whether natural science or philosophy should have ideological priority.

After Lenin's death, in the period of reconstruction, there was considerable uncertainty regarding the interpretation of both the nature and content of Leninism, and its relation to Marxism.¹⁵ In 1925, the basic question was the *Bolshevization* of the parties and the propagation and implementation of *Leninism*. However, the Comintern defined the essence of this type of Leninism not as the sophistication of the philosophy or the materialistic understanding of nature, but instead, as the doctrines of Imperialism, the proletarian revolution, and the Soviet state. And Trotskyism, which was denounced as a "sort of Menshevism", an especially dangerous deviation from Leninism, in practice had nothing to do with Hegelianism.¹⁶

Ostensibly, a statement by Stalin in 1924 ran contrary to this view: "...none other than Lenin undertook the very serious task of generalizing, in line with the materialist philosophy, the most important achievements of science from the time of Engels down to his own day, as well as of subjecting to comprehensive criticism and anti-Materialistic trends among Marxists".¹⁷

At that time, however, Stalin was not the leading theoretician of the Party, and his remark was a reference to the role of theory in the *proletarian movement*. Considering his lecture as a whole, the remark is insignificant and confined to stressing the historical importance of *Materialism and Empiriocriticism*.

Under the aforementioned ideological conditions, *History and Class Consciousness* did not incur the danger of ostracism. Still, despite the positive reception of the booklet, *Lenin*, a measure of danger persisted,

for two reasons. (1) When Zinoviev listed Lukács among the ultra-left-wing deviationists, he in fact took sides in the factional strife of the Hungarian Party, favouring Rudas. (2) Lukács's name and the reception of his works were associated with those of Korsch and, consequently, with the factional rivalry within the German Communist Party. (It was no accident that Thalheimer, too, cited political arguments when criticizing Lukács's work.) For that very reason, a later development, Korsch's expulsion from the German Communist Party in 1926, was an alarming event.

Lukács continued to publish in respected Soviet philosophical journals, such as *Arkhip K. Marksa i F. Engelsa*,¹⁸ edited by Riazanov. In the mid-twenties, the contemporary Bolshevik reception did not compel Lukács to make a theoretical revision of his work, only to be more cautious in political matters and cherish some doubts. In a later autobiography, believed to have been written in 1941, he wrote: "Overcoming my philosophical (Hegelian) past was a more difficult and more time-consuming affair. My work, entitled *History and Class Consciousness* (published in 1923 and containing a collection of my articles of 1919–1922), is the summation of the philosophical errors of my initial years of political apprenticeship. Consequently, the fundamental orientation of the book is idealistic. It took a long time to overcome Idealism. As early as in 1926–1927 under the influence of *The Dialectics of Nature* by Engels and *Empirio-criticism* by Lenin, I had serious doubts about the correctness of my views, doubts that had as their practical consequence my refusal to permit the republication of my book. However, my ideas about these questions were definitely clarified only in 1930, in the philosophical debate in the Soviet Union..."¹⁹

In one of his later intellectual autobiographies — *My Marxist Development: 1918–1930* — far less capitulating or self-denying in tone, Lukács much more subtly described his triumph over his philosophical past during the next phase of his apprenticeship, which ended with the "Blum Theses". In it, he tried to retrace his detachment from *History and Class Consciousness* almost in microscopic detail, taking stock of all the essential moments of this theoretical process. The analysis of his writings after the Lenin booklet was meant to prove the inner continuity of "transcending" the book, the organic transition between the twenties and thirties. And according to this assessment, it was not the philosophical debate in the Soviet Union in 1930 that effected the final clarification.

(All the less so, as Lukács related the "great turnabout", the transcending of the social-political bases of his Idealism, to the "Blum Theses".)

All his writings dating from the latter half of the twenties were "not only outwardly occasional, mostly book reviews, but inwardly as well in that I tried to find a new orientation spontaneously, to define my future path by separating myself from foreign views".²⁰

In his late "self-review", which treats his book reviews of this period (highlighting Lassalle, Bukharin, Wittfogel, Moses Hess), Lukács demonstrated tendencies that effectively prepared the central philosophical endeavours of the coming decade. All the positive tendencies boiled down to new *Historical Realism* defined in *more concrete social and economic terms* (rather than in voluntaristic and falsely idealistic ones). Apropos of the review of the new edition of Lassalle's letters, we have already mentioned Lukács's progress in this direction. One has to add that, when Lukács, stressing the primacy of the objective dialectic of the actual historical process, drew a sharp dividing line between Lassalle's world view and that of Marx, his intention unlike in *History and Class Consciousness*, was not to get closer to the "real Marx". Rather, as he put it in his "self-review", he wished to refute the Social Democratic position, which claimed that Marx and Lassalle were classic Socialist thinkers of equal stature. The more concrete socio-economic analysis in the Lassalle review was more closely connected to the interrelation between the bourgeois and the proletarian revolutions, one of the most important philosophical projections of Lukács's actual political tactics. Lassalle blurred the difference between the two revolutions: "the unhistorical identification of events in various historical periods results from the *supra-historical nature* of Lassalle's *system of categories*, from his dialectical method elaborated in purely logical and not realistic-historical terms, from his Fichtean-Hegelian limitations".²¹

Although Lukács's review of Bukharin's popular coursebook was very close to the world view of *History and Class Consciousness* at several points, it nevertheless represented a step forward: He proved in more concrete terms the material, historical, and methodological primacy of the economic structure and motors of society *vis-à-vis* Bukharin's vulgar, fatalistically autonomized technology. Paradoxically, however, it was the points of *similarity* that anticipated the thirties. Most important among them was the critique of sociology. Lukács blamed Bukharin for trying to identify Historical Materialism with a bourgeois brand of

scientific Materialism, for transforming it into "science"-like sociology, into an objectivistic-fetishistic theory. The resulting false "objectivity", Lukács argued, banished from economy and from "sociology" the social relations between people, and oversimplified Historical Materialism just as much as Engels did when he defined dialectics as "a science of the general laws of the movement of the external world and of human thinking". The potential for progress in all this lies *not* in the criticism of Engels and *not only* in the rejection of sociology as an "independent science", but precisely in the *controversial character* of the ensuing idea: "...dialectic must resign from the *specific* fulfilment of content: It is concerned with the historical process as a whole, whose particular, concrete, and unique moments display their dialectical, essential features precisely by virtue of the fact that they are different in quality, that their objective structure is constantly changing, and in this way do they constitute *as a totality* the area of the fulfilment of dialectic. By contrast, a general sociology of the 'science'-type must produce its own *specific* laws if it does not wish to annihilate itself, if it does not wish to become a mere theory of knowledge".²²

These same theoretical and critical elements can be found in Lukács's review of Karl August Wittfogel.²³ His main objection was that Wittfogel failed to work out a consistent critique of the bourgeois scientific method, that he did not even touch on the sociological problem of the interrelation between the "scientific-rationalizing method and Capitalist economic development", which had been poignantly formulated by Tönnies. The main argument reminds once again of *History and Class Consciousness*: "For a Marxist as historical dialectician, nature as well as all the theoretical and practical forms of overcoming it are *social categories*, and this does not mean that a Marxist would think that something supra-historical, supra-social is to be found here."²⁴

The articles that Lukács wrote about Bukharin and Wittfogel were not published in Russian. Of all the reviews written in the second half of the twenties, the most important one with regard to Lukács's subsequent shift was the critique of Moses Hess (published in Russian in 1927), a sort of continuation of the Lassalle essay. Without wishing to disagree with Lukács's own evaluation of this paper,²⁵ we shall disregard here the tendencies that he himself considered to be signs of progress. For it was the way in which he shed light on the contradictory nature of the "magnificent" methodological *Realism* of Hegel's philosophy that

more markedly anticipated the future. The positive side of this Realism, Lukács argues, is that it conceives of philosophy as the mental expression of actual history; it strives "to understand that which is". And provided that "reconciliation" stems from the principle of the self-development of reality, from the categories being strongly founded in the historical processes, it is a positive component of idealistic dialectics. *The anti-utopian character* of this Realism is "magnificent": "any abstract Utopianism is forced, precisely at its most abstract and most utopian points, to make more substantial concessions to superficial empirical facts than does a true dialectical Realism: It is forced to absolutize the transitional forms of the present, to tie down development to these moments of the present: intentionally or not, it becomes reactionary",²⁶

In Hegel's Realism, however, the elimination of dialectic also appears, namely, in the rejection of utopia and the formal abstract *Sollen*, in "reconciliation"; this is where its reactionary limitation manifests itself. It acknowledges the Prussian feudal state as the present, as a final and firm result. Despite this discord between historical-dialectical Realism and the reactionary absolutization of "that which is", Hegel's idealistic dialectic possessed certain signal achievements: "[They] carry the potential of progressing towards materialistic dialectic, [they] provide the *methodological* opportunity to recognize and apprehend the present social reality as such, yet at the same time approach it critically; meaning here not moral criticism but a practical-critical activity. Naturally, this was only potentially inherent in Hegel. For the development of Socialist theory, however, it became crucially important that Marx *directly* joined Hegel methodologically at this point. . . ."²⁷

The recognition and cognizance as well as criticism of what exists was the central dilemma of the thirties. The reviews, however failed to clarify the philosophical path that Lukács was to take in order to arrive there.

Thus, Lukács was not unknown when he arrived in Moscow. But in 1929-1930, his name was not in circulation because of his earlier writings; he gained fame again through the *critiques of his critics*. He arrived in Moscow at the culmination of the Deborin and Bukharin debates: His name was frequently cited, but he was no longer the protagonist. The situation was new and paradoxical — it would have been comic, had it not been so tragic.

Naturally, there was a transition between the old and the new developing ideological situation. As for the precedents, it must be noted

that in 1928–1929, the dominant Deborin group *still* continued to criticize Lukács quite naively in the old fashion. In 1929, the Institut Krasnoy Professori (of Red Professors) published a collection of essays aimed at the newest critics of Marxism. Typically enough, Lukács was listed there in the company of Max Adler, Vorländer, Kautsky, Cunow, and the Russian *émigrés*. In his editorial foreword, Luppöl stressed that, most recently, revisionism tended to appear in the guise of orthodoxy. “In the Soviet Union, the classic example is the mechanists who try to pass themselves off as orthodox Marxists; in the West, an undoubtedly interesting and noteworthy example is G. Lukács, with his theory of dematerialization.”²⁸

The following “philosophical” criticism by L. Mankovsky, reminiscent of classroom papers in quality and pedantic in tone, “disproves” the vulgarized statements of *History and Class Consciousness* one by one on the basis of a system of tenets that reminds one of a coursebook in the vein of Deborin’s and Bukharin’s Dialectical Materialism. The conclusion drawn from the confrontation is: “*The philosopher of identity* — this is Lukács. He’d better not fight for dialectics. He’d better not fight for Marxism at all, since Marxism is not only dialectics but also Materialism. And Lukács has nothing to do with Materialism.”²⁹

It is an indication of the transition, the *already* changed situation and its dangers, that Fogarasi hastily tried to detach himself from the so-called Lukács–Korsch line. Hardly had the controversy begun when he published a review on Karl Mannheim’s *Ideology and Utopia*. First of all, he tried to track down the origin of Mannheim’s conception and appeared to find not only Emil Lask but also Béla Zalai and György Lukács (conveniently forgetting about his own past in the Sunday Circle). When Mannheim liquidated Marxism, Fogarasi claimed, he was not being original, but merely followed in the wake of Lukács, who, in *History and Class Consciousness* “raised the question of applying Historical Materialism to ‘itself’ with the hidden intention of belittling the historic importance of Historical Materialism”.³⁰ He neglected to mention that he himself had been following in Lukács’s step, since the early twenties.

These are all, however, mere episodes in the change from one ideological period to another. The dam was to break elsewhere, the current would drift in another direction. It is impossible to recount here the whole debate, the purview of this book allowing mention only of

details directly relating to Lukács and the political-ideological background.

On 27 December 1929, Stalin delivered a speech to a conference of Marxist agrarian experts in which he lashed out against the economists, charging that theoretical work was lagging behind practical achievements and that the basic tenets of Marxist-Leninist political economy were being slowly forgotten.³¹ Stalin's criticism gave an impetus to a survey of the position of the philosophical "front", which was carried out at the plenary sessions of the Communist Academy starting in April 1930. The actual political content and background of the controversy are intimated by the reproaches published in *Pravda* (7 July 1930) by M. Mitin, P. Judin and V. Raltzevich: Theoretical work had "fallen behind" socialist construction, "did not keep pace" with practice, and at any rate, philosophy as such had become *depoliticized*. Proof of the separation of philosophy and the political struggle was seen in the fact that the "philosophical leadership" failed to smash the theoretical foundations of *Trotskyism*. The theoretical disagreements between Debordin and his critics (which were soon to become real accusations) were centred around the interpretation of Lenin's legacy, but this Leninism was now reduced exclusively to Lenin's *philosophical* work, the place and role of his Dialectical Materialism, the role of his epistemology in the further development of Marxism. The aim of the controversy was *to Bolshevize Marxist philosophy*. Debordin and his colleagues, the "leaders" in power, were first of all attacked for disparaging the importance of Lenin's legacy because it was alleged, they equated Lenin with Hegel, played down Lenin's criticism of Plekhanov, and failed to apply the method of Dialectical Materialism to the natural sciences.³² (The latter charge reflects not the triumph of the 'dialecticians' after their defeat of the "mechanists" but instead, the fall of the "dialecticians" after their victory.)

In order to defend himself, Debordin, who had earlier advocated the view that Lenin was first and foremost a politician, while Plekhanov was a philosopher, and that they thus complemented each other,³³ employed a historically outdated and ideologically inadequate "quantitative" argument to prove Lenin's superiority over Plekhanov; Plekhanov was a theorist, while Lenin was a party leader *and* a theorist. Debordin argued that Lenin had been undervalued by none other than those who failed to realize that he was "a practical revolutionary in the first place, for whom *theory is especially a tool to transform the world*".³⁴ And this was only a

part of his self-defence. The following "historical" counter-argument was meant to ward off the charges of Hegelianism and apoliticalism levelled at him. To emphasize one of his merits, he recalled what he had written years before concerning *History and Class Consciousness*. "We opposed the Idealistic trends that at that time arose in some West European Communist parties. I am referring, first of all, to Comrade Lukács. The purpose of his widely known book was to turn Marxist thought toward Hegel's Idealism. Naturally, we can agree neither with an Idealistic interpretation of the Hegelian dialectic, nor with his criticism of Engels. That is why we considered it essential to concentrate our criticism on Lukács and like-minded thinkers (Korsch and others)."³⁵ The official report on the status and aims of the philosophical front included similar statements. "G. Lukács's philosophy, which was an attempt at interpreting Marxism in a Hegelian spirit, was sharply condemned. Fulfilling this task was all the more important, given that a Materialistic transformation of Hegelian dialectic was a topical goal." "While efforts had to be made to oppose petty-bourgeois vacillation and a variety of deviations from Marxist-Leninist philosophy, a struggle had to be waged on two fronts — against mechanistic vacillations, on the one hand, and against Idealistic vacillations (represented by Lukács and Marxists who had associated themselves with Freudianism, etc.), on the other."³⁶

The means of attack and defence were paradoxical, and not just owing to the new and strange cast, namely, because Deborin had by then become Lukács's partner in the dock, while Lukács had become Deborin's most important witness. Change had come at yet another point. Originally, the Bolshevik reception of *History and Class Consciousness* and the debate between the "mechanists" and "dialecticians" had run parallel to one another; in 1929, Luppol had acted relatively innocently when he combined his criticism of Lukács and the "mechanists" as the Eastern and Western versions of a "camouflaged" dematerializing "orthodoxy" one not resting on an expressly political platform. In the new situation, however, Deborin — in order to defend himself — dug a *false ideological trench* between the two revisionist deviations of the two-front fight, hardly suspecting that the outcome of his efforts would be a political trap: that in no time the second front would open against him and his group.

That was the outer shell of the affair. The description "paradoxical" applied to the ideological situation itself, to the very logic of such a

debate. Neither the besiegers of the bastions of the "philosophical establishment", nor its defenders recognized this immanent logic, yet they acted under its dictates (for power was at stake). They gave rise to such durable mechanisms and formulas as, the "historical" (retrospectively proven) justification of errors and merits; the invention of an appropriate characterization or label (e.g. "Idealistic Hegelianism") from which the victim could free himself only by foisting it on his opponents, for instance, by claiming that it was the defendant *himself* who had acted with utmost determination against the *very* vice that was the cause of the indictment (deviation or revision). However, in most of the cases, even that method was ineffective because the accuser followed the same logic: The defence backfired and turned into an indictment. "This is a sophisticated revision of Marxism", read the resolution passed on Debordin's line, "which was camouflaged with extraordinary care. It was carried out behind the facade of a Materialistic and Marxist phraseology and often given a Marxist-Leninist disguise. It often attacked both the open, clerical, and counter-revolutionary Idealism of the type represented by Losev, and the Idealist Hegelians, spearheaded by Lukács."³⁷

Thus, the man who had been a key witness turned out to be a false witness, with whom the defendant colluded. Not only did his former criticism of Lukács prove to be of no avail; it was completely reversed. It turned out to be quite useless as a shield, for the attackers immediately deemed it a mere disguise. And indeed, Debordin's antagonists were very adept at applying the charge of camouflage of Idealism masking itself as orthodox Marxism, to the revisionist enemy.

All this could be considered but one of the common ideological debates of the day, were it not for the fact that the ideological conditions were different from those during the Bolshevik reception of Lukács's work in 1924-1925. Changes took place on several fronts, although the scope of the present work precludes an analysis of their socio-economic basis, causes, and consequences (First Five-Year Plan, Fifteenth Congress, victory over the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition). The political content of the changes is signified by the "great turnabout" proclaimed by Stalin in 1929 (labelled Thermidorean reaction by Trotsky, who had sustained his final defeat in the factional fights), by Stalin's criticism of Bukharin, by the demand for the intensification of the class struggle, by the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a social class,³⁸ and by the call to strengthen the fight against Social Democracy in the Comintern.

Stalin criticized Bukharin's foreign and domestic political roles alike. We must recall at least in broad outlines the main points of contention concerning foreign policy, and the condemnation of Bukharin as the secretary of the Comintern's Executive Committee. Not only did they contribute in large measure to the "fall" of the "Blum Theses", but they also had a significant influence on Lukács's future activities as party ideologue.

Stalin departed from the statement that "every month, every day undermines and weakens the stabilization of Capitalism..., the elements of a new revolutionary upswing are multiplying in the countries of Capitalism".

From this he inferred his formidable sequence of tactical doctrines (which long remained normative in the movement): (1) a fierce struggle must be conducted against *Social Democracy* in general; (2) particularly against its "*left-wing*", which is also the social basis of Capitalism; (3) a firmer stance must be taken against the right-wing elements acting as the agents of Social Democratic influence *within* the Communist Parties; (4) especially against the inclination to adapt a *compromising attitude* toward the rightists — the asylum of opportunism; (5) the Communist Parties must be purged of the Social Democratic *traditions*; (6) relevant tactics must be adopted in the trade unions as well.³⁹ The fight against Social Democracy would not be successful unless it was levelled at "Left-Wing" with influence among the working-class masses. "Obviously, without smashing the left-wing Social Democrats, Social Democracy cannot possibly be overcome. Bukharin's theses, however, completely circumvented the question of 'left-wing' Social Democracy."⁴⁰

Denouncing the delay in the implementation of the resolution of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, Stalin paid particular attention to the affairs of the German Party while recounting certain phases of the history of the controversy, and he charged Bukharin with having shown leniency toward the compromising elements. This point reveals even more palpably how realistic was Lukács' fear of being expelled from the Party as a result of the campaign against the threat of opportunism in the Comintern. "Bukharin", Stalin said, "believes that, by waging a war in the sections of the Communist International against rightist deviation and the compromising attitude toward it, by purging the German and Czechoslovak Communist Parties of the Social Democratic elements and traditions, by expelling the Brandlers and Thalheimers from the

Communist Parties, we 'disintegrate', 'ruin' the Communist International."⁴¹

The ideological centre of factional rivalry concerning domestic policy was not doubt the *class struggle*, the interpretation of the "*rearrangement of the class structure*" in the Soviet Union. Bukharin, Stalin said, held the view that the Capitalists would eventually integrate themselves into Socialism, even though they were still resisting (as their power and economic strength had considerably increased during the NEP). Stalin's opinion was different: He claimed that their resistance was a sign of weakness and of the consolidation of Socialism. Soviet society had left behind the period of economic reconstruction, which was a peaceful process. "Now we have entered a new phase of construction, in which we *transform* the entire people's economy on the basis of Socialism. This new phase gives rise to a new restructuring of the classes and to an intensification of the class struggle."⁴²

Although Bukharin held kulak elements responsible for the revival of the former, "intense" forms of the class struggle (e.g., the murder of villagers who wrote to newspaper editors), he also ascribed part of the blame to the weaknesses and incompetence of the local Soviet apparatus. Stalin, however, cited the Shakhti case (damage caused by bourgeois intellectuals) and the resistance of the kulaks (hiding grain), in order to prove that it was the advance of the Socialist economy that had elicited the rear-guard action of the bourgeoisie nearing its doom: "the Capitalist elements refuse to leave the scene voluntarily". In such a situation, he claimed, one had to use Lenin's formula of "who defeats whom?" in formulating one's judgements.

Stalin struck an extremely ironic note when talking of Bukharin as a theoretician. He displayed a good sense of tactics when he referred to Lenin's critique (in the "Testament"), quoting only the parts that suited him, with the apparent aim of dethroning Bukharin. "Bukharin, so they say, is one of our Party's theorists. This is, of course, true. The trouble is that something is wrong with his theory. . . He has not matured as a theorist yet, . . . he has not comprehended dialectics although dialectics is the life and soul of Marxism. . ."⁴³

Stalin tried to discredit Bukharin by describing him not only as a conceited, "half-baked" theoretician, but also as an anti-Leninist who had only recently been Trotsky's disciple, fought against the Leninists, and "rushed to the Trotskyists through the back door".

On the philosophical front, the Debordin debate of 1930–1931 was the equivalent of the introduction of the “great turnabout”. It is therefore understandable that one of the key figures of the debate declared that creative Marxism was represented *not* by Debordin, but by Stalin, that the only authentic interpretation of Lenin was *not* Debordin’s but Stalin’s. But there was a more direct consequence as well: It was the first “professional” debate in which Stalin personally participated. He himself found the appropriate characterization that connected the bolshevization of philosophy, philosophical Materialism (and Idealism) with *political alternatives*. On 9 December 1930, Stalin delivered a speech at a session of a party cell of the Institute for the training of Communist teachers for college and university departments of philosophy and natural science. According to a report of an eyewitness, “he was the first to classify most profoundly, most consistently, most clearly, and most precisely the tenets of Debordin’s group as Idealism in the Menshevik”.⁴⁴

Understandably enough, not only Debordin’s “Idealism in the Menshevik manner”, but Bukharin and Riazanov, as well were sharply criticized during the period of the bolshevization of philosophy and the elimination of the former vacillations concerning the appraisal of the Leninist era. At various points in the past, they, too, had refused to acknowledge the Leninist philosophy as a new, superior stage of Dialectical Materialism. (In regard to the forthcoming phase of his career, Lukács called it a piece of luck that, in 1930, he did not strike a closer relationship with Bukharin: “He had been kind enough to arrange a contact for me, which I turned down”.⁴⁵ In fact, in his *Lenin as a Marxist* (1924), Bukharin had taken cudgels in favour of the unity of the world views of Marx and Lenin by proclaiming that, if Marxism was comprehended not only as a set of certain ideas, but also as a methodology, then Leninism could by no means be seen as the revision of the Marxist teaching. Quite the contrary, Leninism was then “a complete *return*” to Marx and Engels.⁴⁶ “Only a return?” Mitin (who did not seem to have read Lukács’s critique of Bukharin at all) challenged Bukharin. Did that mean that, in Leninism “there is no progress, no improvement and implementation of Marx’s teachings?”⁴⁷

Mordant criticism was levelled at the renowned Marx researcher, academician D. Riazanov, for his earlier provocative statement: “I am neither a Bolshevik nor a Menshevik, and I am no Leninist. I am simply a Marxist and as a Marxist — I am a Communist”.⁴⁸

Riazanov was soon to be charged with participation in counter-revolutionary Menshevik organization; in 1931, he was expelled from the party and dismissed as head of the Marx-Engels Institute.

When it came to the interpretation of Leninism, the critics lumped together both the "philosophical establishment" and personages of politically and theoretically very different stances: Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Preobrazhensky, Riazanov.

It belongs to the epilogue of the debate that Debordin eventually surrendered: In 1933, he exercised self-criticism at a scholarly session held by the Institute for Philosophy of the Communist Academy on the fiftieth anniversary of Marx's death.⁴⁹ There he kept silent regarding Lukács. The reception of Debordin's capitulation completes the picture of the specific nature of the logic and mechanism of the philosophical debates now ended. It reveals that a confession was of no avail at all. On the one hand, Debordin — the condemnation reads — acknowledged his mistakes too late, with much delay, because at first he had only recanted some of his views and not his whole conception. And on the other, *incriminating documents* (!) had in the meantime been recovered. This meant the correspondence between Debordin and Plekhanov (1909) including references to Lenin. "Although at the moment I do not have these documents at hand, they are *completely outrageous and abominable Menshevik documents* aimed against Lenin", Mitin declared.⁵⁰

The charge that Debordin and his group — according to the official report earlier quoted — had studied Marx and Lenin through the "glasses" of Hegel entailed relatively grave administrative consequences for Debordin,⁵¹ but no practical consequences whatever for Lukács, who could not have felt any external compulsion to agree with those condemning Debordin. "In 1930-1931 I worked at the IMEL as a research associate in Moscow. I was especially anxious to clarify my views in philosophical questions. As a member of the CPSU(B) I fought in the Institute's cell, in keeping with the party's line, against Debordin and Riazanov", Lukács wrote in his curriculum vitae of 1941.⁵²

Agreement, however, did not always mean unconditional identification with the critics in every respect, particularly not in a far-reaching perspective. Beyond the general conclusions inferred from the ideological debate about the Bolshevization of philosophy and Lenin's legacy — positive inferences in the eyes of Lukács — (Lenin, and not Plekhanov, was the true heir to Marxism), some of the more concrete

alternatives still remained obscure in 1930–1933. The notion of “Idealism in the Menshevik manner” did not answer the question relating to the content of Hegelian dialectic, to the relationship between Hegel and Lenin. These questions appeared in a new light when the conspectuses of the *Philosophical Pamphlets* (1929–1933) were published. Further — and this was perhaps the most paradoxical feature of the situation — however strongly Plekhanov’s orthodoxy may have been criticized from an ideological–political perspective the requirement that Dialectical Materialism be applied to the natural sciences as well, due to and under the well-known circumstances, foreshadowed the naturalized, dualistic theory and method that Stalin later proclaimed to be the philosophy of Marxism–Leninism. This Dialectical Materialism was in essence the spitting image of the recently condemned Plekhanovite orthodoxy. Debordin was haunting Soviet intellectual life in the official cloak of Leninism–Stalinism. Lukács refused to have anything to do with this “Leninism” either in its rudimentary or in its mature form. For him, Lenin remained the “Great dialectician”, the “Materialist friend” of Hegel’s dialectic, the Marx of the transition, of the age of Imperialism and the proletarian revolution.

The above discussion was intended to reveal that Lukács’s approach retained a presence as a critical paradigm in the Soviet philosophy of the period under study. It also becomes easier to understand the fact that the new circumstances of 1930–1931, so different from those of 1924–1925, already included *external* political and ideological pressures that drove Lukács to revise *History and Class Consciousness*, a challenge to which he only gave a superficial answer at that time.

Was there a real danger that Lukács could have been carried off by the current of the Debordin debate, that, after his failure as a politician in the Hungarian Party due to the “Blum Theses”, *History and Class Consciousness* could now make it impossible for him to act as a theorist of the “Russian line”? There can hardly have been any real danger. The single most important reason is not that his name, though mentioned during the debate, always came up in conjunction with his critic, or that Lukács criticized Debordin in the Marx–Engels Institute (although not in the press). The fundamental reason was that, as a theorist, he *no longer* had a concrete independent role, and *had not yet* acquired a new one. He was not forgotten *after* the “great turnabout”, to be sure. How could one forget the neo-Hegelian critic of Marxism, the modern revisionist whose

book had won the support of the renegade Korsch, and who first and foremost was the weak link in the chain of Deborin's argument. "The contamination of Idealism in the Menshevik manner along with bourgeois neo-Hegelianism is also detectable in the fact that it has not only overlooked but also deliberately hushed up the danger of a neo-Hegelian revision of Marxism..." Deborin wrote a study against the neo-Hegelian Lukács, but in it, he failed to expose the links of Lukács's neo-Hegelianism with a whole trend in modern Social-Fascistic philosophy, he failed to connect his criticism of Lukács to a critique of the overtly-bourgeois neo-Hegelians, he failed to analyse how the interests of today's bourgeoisie are politically and socially rooted in Hegel and finally, Deborin condemned Lukács move for his Idealism in general "than for his Idealistic dialectic".⁵³

This attack, however, did not directly "reach" Lukács in the literal sense of the word. When it was published (1932), he had already gone on to Berlin, as a party activist. But had he really clarified his philosophical views "for good"? Had he arrived at Marx?

His views were being moulded, not under the influence of the "truths" of the controversy in 1930-1931, but *in the course of it*. The eddies of the river held hardly any appeal for him; but its main current certainly did. "The ideological struggle centred on the question, was Socialism viable if it could be realized in a single state only? From this struggle Stalin emerged victorious, and one must concede that, however aggressive the organizational measures that he had applied in the party strife were it was first of all because his conception alone was suitable to stake out the direction and perspective for the construction of Socialism after the victory and termination of a world-wide revolutionary upsurge (what is meant here is not the concrete theoretical and practical errors of the actual construction, but the general theoretical orientation of the entire period). The next step, as we see it today, was to portray Stalin as Lenin's worthy successor at the helm in the new period. A theoretical prerequisite was to secure public recognition of Lenin as the person who had theoretically restored and improved Marxism in the face of the ideological deviations of the Second International, and not only as the great tactician of the revolutionary struggle. The philosophical controversy of 1930-1931 served this purpose — and served it successfully, despite all the moments that were later rightly questioned."⁵⁴

The years of beginning anew were years of apprenticeship. "Noch ist alles im Werden." The new political-ideological framework of the new period, however, had been reinforced. The fight had grown more intense, aimed at the inner foe disguised by a deceptive mask.

The Muscovites had changed inwardly as well.

THE "RUSSIAN LINE"

MAKING A DETOUR

THE "RUSSIAN LINE"

Had Lukács' interpretation of Marx, which I saw during the years of his exile in the German Democratic Republic, which placed his past in a contemporary ideological context? How did he proceed along the road on which he had set out some ten years earlier? At that time, the decisive *theoretical* impact, aside from that with "the publication of Lenin's philosophical notes (first of all his critique of Hegel's philosophy), and of the writings of the young Marx (though far only fragmentarily, if at all, published, often with unscrupulous texts)," As he explained, "The careful study of this material reshaped my thinking. Before that, I had tried to interpret Marx correctly in the light of the Hegelian dialectic, but now, with the help of Marxist-Leninist *Materialist Dialectics*, I began to make the achievements and limitations of Hegel and the contamination of bourgeois philosophy in his thought useful for the present. While several leaders of the Second International regarded Marx exclusively and primarily as economic reformer, it began to dawn on us now that he heralded a new era in the history of human thought, which was brought up to date by the work of Lenin. Recognizing the autonomy, the theoretical originality of Marx's contribution was the first step I took towards understanding and apprehending the new world view."

Which road did I think actually took in order to reach Lukács' interpretation from the angle of the "Leninist period", as stated at the recognition of the autonomy of Marx's work?

Lukács himself precluded the particularly subjective, narrowly positivistic interpretation of his relation to Marx when he recalled the period in which he wrote *History and Class Consciousness* (his first book on Marx). In his opinion, the book was "representative for what is reflected a period in which "an immature nihilism", a world-distorted perspective was in the theme of finding theoretical conviction. The great, true and often almost truly false tendencies of the age found their theoretical reflection in the

MAKING A DETOUR

Had Lukács changed? How did he clarify his philosophical ideas during the years of his theoretical apprenticeship, during the Debordin debate, which placed his *past* in a contemporary ideological context? How did he proceed along the road on which he had set out some ten years earlier? At that time, the decisive *theoretical* impact came for him with "the publication of Lenin's philosophical notes (first of all his critique of Hegel's philosophy) and of the writings of the young Marx thus far only fragmentarily, if at all, published, often with unreliable texts". As he explained, "The careful study of this material reshaped my thinking. Before that, I had tried to interpret Marx correctly in the light of the Hegelian dialectic, but now with the help of Marxist-Leninist Materialist Dialectics. I began to make the achievements and limitations of Hegel and the consummation of bourgeois philosophy in his thought useful for the present. While several leaders of the Second International regarded Marx exclusively and primarily an economic reformer, it began to dawn on us now that he heralded a new era in the history of human thought, which was brought up to date by the work of Lenin. Recognizing the autonomy, the theoretical originality of Marx's aesthetics, was the first step I took towards understanding and implementing the new world view."¹

Which route did Lukács actually take in order to reach Marx interpreted from the angle of the "Leninist period", to arrive at the recognition of the autonomy of Marx's aesthetics?

Lukács himself precluded the particularly subjective, narrowly gnostic interpretation of his relation to Marx when he recalled the period in which he wrote *History and Class Consciousness* (his first book on Marx). In his opinion, the book was representative in that it reflected a period in which "an immense crisis", a world-historical transition was in the throes of finding theoretical expression. The great, real, and often objectively false tendencies of the age found their theoretical reflection in the

book. As for the objectively false tendencies, a theory could be significant even if it failed to express the objective essence of a crisis and merely formulated the representative approaches to the fundamental problems. What lends these retrospective remarks importance is not their relevance to a real evaluation of *History and Class Consciousness* or to the interrelation between history and value, but to methodology. They may be instructive for the student trying to retrace Lukács's road to Marx in more detail. But, as has been seen, another dimension is also needed for proper orientation: the current state of the Communist movement and its theoretical consciousness. The Marxist Lukács was part of it and at the same time expressed it, both its true and false tendencies. It is therefore illuminating to see which elements of the Marxist legacy were revived (often thanks to Lukács himself) in different phases of the practice of the movement.

In spite of the continuity of his Marxist development, Lukács's crucial encounters with Marx's ideas always coincided with junctures of high tension, *with crises*, with the main crossroads of his age, at which world-historical *transitions* were trying to find their theoretical expression through the mediation of the movement and its relevant (at times in part false) consciousness. "Lukács considered history in terms of epochs . . .", Walter Benjamin once wrote. Method was the unerring source of his orientation: "...our underlying premise here is the belief that in Marx's theory and method the *true method* by which to understand society and history has *finally* been discovered. This method is historical through and through."²

This definitive statement radiating the certainty of finality seems to reflect the private joy of the individual at arriving home. The author had disposed of the theoretical questions of the revolutionary movement in his articles written on Marxist dialectics in the course of party work, and now he was ready to hand over the results as a present (to Gertrud Bortstieber) — and as a subject for debate with his contemporaries. And he did so with the satisfaction of someone who had come home — at Christmas 1922.

Ten years had passed. *History and Class Consciousness* did remain a living force, despite the debates, which did not follow the desired course, or perhaps, thanks to the debate, as Walter Benjamin commented.³ Yet, in hindsight, Lukács thought he had transcended the book. Was this due to the criticism that it incurred? Not in the first place. Rather, it was

history itself that had taken a new direction. And Lukács for the third time, as he saw it, started over from scratch. In 1933 he wrote: "The third phase of my studies of Marx was reached when I had fully identified myself with the revolutionary workers' movement due to long years of practice, when I had had opportunities to study Lenin's works and gradually understand their fundamental significance. Only now, after nearly a decade of practical work and more than a decade of theoretical struggle with Marx did the comprehensive and unified nature of Materialistic Dialectics become quite clear to me. It was, however, this very enlightenment that made me understand that studying Marxism in earnest would only begin now, and would never reach a standstill."⁴

This confession appeared at the back of a special issue of *Internationale Literatur* in 1933, sandwiched in between pieces by Berta Lask and Klaus Mann, who, along with such writers as Paul Eluard, Willy Haas, Karl Grünerg, and Stefan Zweig, contributed commemorations of the fiftieth anniversary of Marx's death. Lukács's great study on the *Sickin-gen Debate* was included in the main theoretical section, together with articles by Franz Petrovits Schiller and Mikhail Lifshits. It was, so to speak, the verification of the confession, the justification for a new start. Or at least it marked the earnestness of the intention to start anew. It was the first step along the way.

Something, however, seemed to hinder the momentum of Lukács's progress. Was there to be continuation? Was the pledge made in the confession printed in small type on the anniversary of the classic thinker then dead for half a century — "it would only begin now" — easily carried out? Exactly where were the threads of the third phase leading? In positive terms, they were seemingly running straight *towards* the aesthetic legacy that Lukács, together with Lifshits, uncovered as an integral part of Marxist universality. In negative terms, they were moving self-critically *away* from *History and Class Consciousness*, the theoretical foundations of which had allegedly collapsed for good not long before, upon the deciphering of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*. Finally, under the influence of Stalin, as it were, they took a critical stance *against* the classical Social Democratic legacy.⁵ It is well known that Lukács went quite a long way, both in positive and in critical terms, in the course of the thirties. But what did he abandon and what did he attain in self-criticism, which was in fact the centre of the new start? And this is where one comes across the paradoxical situation that

Lukács himself described: "It suddenly became clear to me that if I wished to give body to these new theoretical insights I would have to start again from scratch. It was my intention at the time to publish a statement of my new position. My attempt to do so proved a failure (the manuscript has since been lost)."⁶

Thus, Lukács was anxious to set down his changed philosophical position on paper. Contemporary documents confirm that this intention was indeed a serious one. In a letter to Lifshits written in the autumn of 1932 from Berlin, he said: "Everyday matters take up terribly much of my time, yet I try to complete my book. It is, however, very hard as all the things have far-reaching effects and they remain superficial in my judgement. Everything that I try my hand at nowadays seems to become distorted."⁷

Posterity has been puzzled by these remarks. One cannot help wondering why a plan to clarify a position already in manuscript form could not be "carried out" (published?) at that time or later. So far, however, we are only faced with a contradiction, with some obscurity, but not with a paradox. The further contents of the manuscript that "got lost" could only be vaguely guessed at from (another?) plan mentioned by Lukács in his memoirs. He claimed to have been in search of a new kind of criticism, of a link to the Marxist critique of political economy, of a profound philosophical understanding of the interrelation between economy and dialectics. "My first attempt to put this plan into practice came early in the thirties, in Moscow and Berlin, with the first draft of my book on the young Hegel (which was not completed until autumn 1937)."⁸ The true paradox is revealed only by the following passage: "... I was intoxicated with the prospect of a new start. But I also realised that extensive research and many detours would be needed before I could hope to be inwardly in a position to correct the errors of *History and Class Consciousness* and to provide a scientific, Marxist account of the matters treated there. I have already mentioned one such detour: it led from the study of *Hegel* via the projected work on economics and dialectics to my present attempt to work out an ontology of social being."⁹

Thus, the paths taken after the new start in the third phase were *detours*. Let us not forget: all this was taking place only a decade after the theoretical struggle with Marx! Lukács mentioned inward, spiritual conditions. Irving Fetscher, by contrast, suspected *external* causes, politi-

cal pressures. "One might rightly ask why, after the critique and self-criticism of *History and Class Consciousness* and the other writings of the twenties, Lukács did not start to write a philosophical book that might have rectified the well-known errors of extended their basis by means of more thorough examination of economy and the dialectics of nature. This abstention from theoretical work might possibly be connected with the constraints imposed on the freedom of theoretical debates in the Stalin era, which was anything but favourable for the development of Marxist theory. But Lukács wanted to remain a member of the Communist Party. . . . It was self-evident for him to retreat into a domain that was less directly affected by the terminology and other directives sanctioned by Stalin than the area of general Marxist theory: the theory and criticism of literature."¹⁰

Was the explanation really external? In fact, this was one version of the legend that the thirties were Lukács's "aesthetic period". It is a pat conclusion, somewhat sarcastic in tone, but one that leads to an impasse. Lukács finished *The Young Hegel* in the driest years of theoretical prohibition. In the early thirties he could safely have written a monograph on Marx as, for instance, V. F. Asmus did (*Marx and Bourgeois Historicism*, 1933).¹¹ But even if we insist on the assumption that he had to take *this* detour, then hiding behind the shield of literary science, he could nevertheless have devoted a book to Marx's general aesthetic theory as Lifshits did, without running any significant risk. When, however, he did do something like that by publishing his treatises of 1930 to 1933 after quite some delay (*Literary Theories in the Nineteenth Century and Marxism*, 1937), it became immediately apparent that he had refused to hide in the more neutral domain of literature, and instead remained in the danger zone of philosophy and the criticism of Social Democratic ideology. It likewise became apparent that his essays in "the science of literature" written at that time bore the stamp of Stalin's prescriptions in terminology and the directives of the Communist movement — which affected literature just as much as any other area of Marxist theory.

It was thus a paradoxical situation: a fresh start with a detour, changing from the wrong path to the right one without being prepared for it. The past had collapsed, the ecstasy was that of "just only beginning". Negation was the immediate reality and affirmation only a promise that was unattainable or at least delayed. And all this came in a

period when it became *vitally urgent* to clarify one's relation to Marx.¹² Yet the detour was not a tactical ploy. Neither was it an optical illusion on the part of a man looking back into his past.

Lukács renounced *History and Class Consciousness*. He had to renounce it and he wanted to renounce it, seizing every possible opportunity in 1932, 1933, and 1934, but doing so with a false consciousness. His mistake was not to refer in his publicly exercised self-criticism to the enlightening power of Stalin's works and to the Soviet philosophical debate of 1930–1931. It was worse. He sincerely believed in the practical danger of his book: He was convinced that “in the field of ideology, *the front of Idealism is the front of the Fascist counter-revolution and its accomplices, the Social Fascists*, that any concession to Idealism, however insignificant it may be, is prejudicial to the revolution of the proletariat. In this way I have realized not only the *theoretical falseness* but also the *practical harmfulness* of my book written twelve years earlier, and I fought boldly in the German mass movement against all this and against all other Idealistic trends”.¹³

The mechanical-sectarian *ground-plan* of this sincere self-criticism was theoretically false and practically harmful. Not one Michel or even Franz among the book's readers (who sensed that “metaphysics is lurking behind Lukács's tenets”) was directed to the MEGA (*Marx–Engels: Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe* (1927–1932), the standard edition prior to the MEW) and then to anti-Fascist resistance.

Public renunciation, however, came *after* the Fascist seizure of power in Germany at the beginning of his *exile* in Moscow. At this time, it was more important that Lukács *wanted to transcend History and Class Consciousness*. They early thirties seem to have been auspicious for this effort. Several people set out on paths that led in promising directions. Asmus was not cited above as a random example: His works represented a practicable way of “correcting”, and transcending *History and Class Consciousness*, which, although its author had sentenced it to death, nevertheless survived. They also marked a sophisticated trend in contemporary Marx reception. For Lukács, however, this road was blocked.

There was yet another straight road towards “correction”, the one leading to Marx the aesthete. It was a road full of promise and wide vistas, a road of discovery. Lifshits, as mentioned, set out along this road. And Lukács himself thought that he had also taken the first steps along it, toward “understanding and implementing the turn to a new world

view", towards a full comprehension of "true Marxism". "... I took up a research post at the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow in 1930. Here I had two unexpected strokes of good luck: the text of the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts* had just been completely deciphered and I was able to read it. At the same time I made the acquaintance of Mikhail Lifshits and this proved to be the beginning of a life-long friendship ... This is where I did my first work in co-operation with Lifshits. In the course of many a discussion it became clear to both of us that even the most competent and talented Marxists like Plekhanov and Mehring had failed to comprehend the universal nature of Marxism as a world view and to understand that Marx also set us the objective of developing a systematic aesthetics on the foundations of Dialectical Materialism ... As for me, I wrote around this time my article on the Sickingen Debate between Marx-Engels and Lassalle, which already revealed the outlines of this conception remaining, of course, within the narrow bounds of the problem."¹⁴

The acquaintance of Lukács and Lifshits was indeed an unexpected stroke of good luck as Mikhail Lifshits was the only person with whom Lukács was able to enter into a lasting, true friendship and spiritual communion after Leo Popper's death.¹⁵ Apart from the personal motives, their joint work was objectively possible only because both of them could draw on immediate precedents from the latter half of the twenties (Lukács's book reviews, Lifshits's first major essay on Marx's aesthetic views in 1927¹⁶). At the same time, their endeavours joined a current of thought *just* starting both within and outside of the Marx-Engels Institute: the publication and interpretation of Marx's and Engels's aesthetic legacy. That Lukács, whose past, viewed in *negative* terms, was present in Soviet ideological life as a critical paradigm, could take the *positive* step of joining this current as a theorist "starting afresh" did coincide with his disposition and intentions, with the *general* line of his orientation, but it would have remained latent, had it not been for the mediation of Lifshits.

The discovery of the aesthetics of Marx and Engels had a particular (far from exceptional or primary) place among the major contemporary endeavours in philosophy and the theory of art. Philologically, it was closely related to the publication of the thus far *unpublished* writings and letters of the classics of Marxism. A remark by Lifshits throws light on the real connection between the newly stabilized political-ideological

framework and scientific research: "The recognition of the 'Leninist period' (as it was called then) put an end to the amorphousness of ideas in Marxist literature, and promoted an upswing in critical activities that purged true Marxist theory of the elements of alien world views, of the rubble of the Second International. This process was precipitated by the analysis of the literary legacy of the founders of Marxism, by the publication of manuscripts and letters that had been collecting dust for decades in the archives of Social Democracy.¹⁷ The volumes of *Literaturnoie Nasledstvo*, for instance, kept publishing Engels's letters to Paul Ernst, Minna Kautsky, and Margaret Harkness, one after the other. The publication of the polemical correspondence between Marx-Engels and Lassalle on *Sickingen*¹⁸ [the latter's drama], first in this journal and then in a separate volume with a preface by Lukács, fitted in well the publication of the literary legacy of Marx and Engels, yet it was in some sense an exception. Although the letters of the three people involved in the polemic were indeed published in their entirety for the first time (in a new Russian translation), the material that appeared was not unknown — it was namely, *republication*. This exchange of letters had not been left by the German Social Democrats, Bernstein and Mayer, to gather dust on the shelves, and neither was it unknown to Russian readers.¹⁹

The correspondence had also been read by Lenin, who used its *political* implications in his debate with the liquidators (1911). In his commentary, he stressed for contemporary readers the idea that the bourgeois liberation movements had set an example to be followed by "left-wing bloc tactics": the alliance of the urban "plebs" and the democratic peasantry had lent strength and impetus to the seventeenth-century English and eighteenth-century French revolutions. "Apropos of Lassalle's tragedy, '*Sickingen*', Marx wrote that the conflict at the core of the play was not simply tragic but it was the very same tragic conflict that inevitably wrecked the 1848–1849 revolutionary party. Marx... took Lassalle to task for having committed a mistake by putting 'the *Lutheran-knightly* opposition before the *Münzerian-plebeian* opposition'". Lenin's reading was deliberately non-aesthetic. The point that Lenin sought to make was that it was erroneous to place the "Lutheran-knightly" opposition ("in early twentieth-century Russian: the opposition of liberal landowners") before the *Münzerian-plebeian* opposition ("in the same Russian language: that of the proletarians and peasants").²⁰

Lukács also had a thorough knowledge of the polemical documents exchanged by Marx, Engels, and Lassalle. Not only had he kept abreast of (reviewed) each Lassalle publication from the early twenties on but he also looked closely into the problem of the influence of Lassalleanism on the *German* workers' movement. It is thus no accident that this was the point at which he could join the interpretation of Marx's and Engels's texts in 1930-1931, and join it with scholarly interest *as well*. The precedents, Lukács's previous readings, are all the more important for us as they reveal both the indelible marks of the genesis and the actual process of change in his views; they shed light on *how*, in what way he had discovered the *aesthetic* implication of the *Sickingen* Debate.

As perceptive as Lukács was concerning the aesthetic questions of the drama, in 1922 he did not yet think of analysing Marx's and Engels's criticism of *Sickingen* in terms of dramatic theory or dramaturgy, or, for that matter, from the angle of the tragic. He hailed the publication of Marx's and Lassalle's correspondence as something that would help clarify the true content of their relationship and promote research on Marx. At the same time, he considered it to be of immediate *political* relevance, because neo-Kantianism was on the decline, Lassallean (neo-Hegelian) tendencies could easily come to a head, and further, opportunism (Cunow) was about to turn Hegel's philosophy against the Marxist critique of the state. The correspondence in general, and the controversy between Marx and Lassalle concerning *Sickingen* in particular, provided a clear *methodological* support for determining what role the Hegelian (dialectical) *method* played in the true cognizance of society and historical development by the revolutionary working class.²¹

Naturally, political considerations gained in importance when Lukács published a review on more recent Lassalle literature that described Lassalle as a theorist of the German Social Democratic Party. Lukács did not so much as mention the *Sickingen* Debate in that article, but he had a great deal to say about the false Lassalle images, about the blurring of the clear dividing line between Marxist (Dialectical Materialist) and Lassallean (Idealistic dialectical) methods, about the slogan "back to Lassalle!"; in short, about all the tendencies that emerged after Mehring and the other theorists of the Second International, during the World War and among the successors of the "old" Social Democrats.

In Lukács's judgement, Lassalle was a tragic figure. His tragedy lay in the fact that he consistently sought to advocate the most radical

German theory of the French Revolution (Fichte) in a period "when the concrete objectives of the bourgeois revolution could only be attained in the revolution of the proletariat".

One outcome of his Idealistic dialectic was that he severed theory from practice. For the Hegelian Lassalle, "the" theory, "the" science was something hovering above the historical process, akin to the autonomous state. The Idealistic dissociation of theory and practice "may become a glorious ideal of the '*Realpolitik*' of today's Social Democracy".²² Thus the founder of the mass movement of the German working class was at that time the appropriate theorist of Social Democracy, and this, in turn, was made possible by the erroneous nature of his theory. Lukács succinctly set forth this conclusion in his article "Lassalle's New Followers": "All the false doctrines of Lassalle (without his virtues) have been revived in the German Social Democratic Party . . . , all his *methodological mistakes*, all his views that cast him back to pre-Marxist Socialism are shaping up as a basis for the theory and practice of the German Social Democratic Party."²³

Lukács's aforementioned 'occasional' review from the mid-twenties, also published in Russian ("The New Publication of Lassalle's Letters"), aptly synthesized his former interpretations of Lassalle and at the same time carried them further. Even though he did get closer to the "real Marx", and moved farther away from *History and Class Consciousness*, he did not get any closer to the aesthetic contents of the *Sickingen* Debate. On the contrary: The point at which Lukács touched on the implications of the controversy for dramatic theory was merely a *point of departure*. From this point, his train of thought veered in the opposite direction, only to discover the logical, necessary connection between Lassalle's philosophy of history and "*Realpolitik*". This point of departure is the dialectic of necessity and individual action. Lassalle believed that a critical philosophical conception of history in which one "iron necessity" leads to another is no foundation either for individual practical revolutionary action or for dramatic action on stage. "This conception of necessity", Lukács argues, "not only shows that Lassalle remains at an unbridgeable distance from Marx's conception of history . . . , but at the same time signifies a profound relapse from the Hegelian dialectical unity of freedom and necessity in history into the Fichtean duality of 'absolute being' and 'absolute freedom'".

Lukács immediately brushes aside the incipient possibility of an aesthetic interpretation: "It is not only the Hegelian theory of tragedy (to touch briefly on the concrete but in this context not crucial occasion for the discussion) that is based on a unity of freedom and necessity; such a unity constitutes the core of this entire philosophy of history".

What he considers crucially important to note is that Lassalle consciously corrected Hegel by means of Fichte; that Hegel's abstract-contemplative conception of history, for all its greatness, was indeed incapable of giving directions for individual action: "historical dialectics was capable of doing so only in its Marxist form. But since Lassalle never advanced beyond orthodox Hegelianism, he was unable to find the path to action except by moving in the direction of Fichte, in the irrationality of the purely individual decision and — in political terms — in *'Realpolitik'*".²⁴

In his critical essay of 1925, Lukács moved beyond his 1922 position, even though he only touched only on the aesthetic "occasion for the discussion". This step forward was not only manifested in the fact that he pointed out the concrete work. It is far more important that he had earlier interpreted the disagreement between Marx, Engels, and Lassalle in the lengthy *Sickingen* Debate as a typical example of methodological differences that did not lead to a "final separation" of the opponents (if only for "diplomatic" reasons). This time, however, he pinpointed the core of the controversy (freedom and necessity) far more precisely and definitely, declaring that there existed an *unbridgeable* gulf between the two conceptions of history.

As has been mentioned earlier, the more concrete socio-economic analyses in Lukács's criticism of Lassalle in 1925 were closely related to the problem of the relationship between the bourgeois and proletarian revolutions, a highly topical question that absorbed him deeply at the time. This had the same tactical significance for Lukács, as did the relationship of the two oppositional groups for Lenin: the Lutheran, knightly and the Münzerian, plebeian. In his interpretation, the point at issue was the following: "The Marx-Lassalle controversy, which is under way now, is in the final analysis a debate to decide whether the present is the time of the bourgeois or of the proletarian revolution. The Lassalle renaissance is a theoretical attempt to halt the process of development at the bourgeois revolution."²⁵

All those who were not the followers of Marx's orthodox disciples (Luxemburg, Lenin) and discarded the view that the bourgeois revolution *had to transform* itself into the revolution of the proletariat inevitably turned to Lassalle, who would gradually become the leading theorist of left-wing revisionism, Lukács argued.

This brief account of an earlier period reveals that Lukács thoroughly knew the documents of the *Sickingen* Debate before he arrived in Moscow, and that he had taken a close look at Lassalle's ideals, virtues, and limitations, at his relationship to Hegel, Fichte, and Marx. Like Lenin, he concentrated on those issues of the controversy concerning the philosophy of history (not aesthetics) that he deemed crucially significant in the new context, he distanced himself from *History and Class Consciousness* and translated them into the language of the political struggles of the twenties, of the critique of ideology. How did Lukács proceed on the basis of these antecedents, after the fall of the "Blum Theses" and the Stalinist "great turnabout"?

Lukács began his essay with a brief history of the publication of the correspondence and referred to his own earlier review without recanting it: "The general attainments of Mayer's edition were analysed earlier by the present author (Grünberg's Archives, Vol. XI). Now he wishes to highlight a partial problem, as certain theoretical differences between Marx and Engels on the one hand and Lassalle on the other were more markedly expressed than in other polemics. . . ."²⁶

Drawing attention to continuity was no mere formality; Lukács did *not* take an aesthetic turn, in the manner of analysing the "practical problem", in his approach. He extended the line of thought that he had begun in the twenties without changing directions. First, he did not intend to place the controversy within Marx's and Engels's (his aesthetes') general system of the theory of art, he did not tackle it as a special part or example of it. Secondly, he considered the aesthetic implications again as a point of departure only, and not as the goal of his attempt to clarify the differences between Marx's and Lassalle's political ideas and philosophies of history. Lukács was quite right in declaring later that this study of his had been far less universal in its perspective than Lifshits's *aesthetic* approach.²⁷ This, however, was the outcome of a deliberate choice: "... of course we have to highlight the relations of the aesthetic implications of the debate to the controversial issues of politics and world outlook. It is not our assignment here to carry out a systematic

analysis of Marx's aesthetic views in his mature period; this is so not because the problem is of lesser importance, but because research in this field is still in the initial phase . . ."²⁸

This time, too, the interpretation of the *Sickingen* Debate carried a timely political message for Lukács, namely, how the historical-political limits of the bourgeois revolution were to be evaluated. Lassalle's political stance clearly reveals itself in the fact that, in his play, the self-criticism of 1848 rests on the "*Realpolitik*" of the wavering, hesitant core of intellectuals, on the tragic error of the revolutionaries, hence separating itself from the class struggle of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This starting point, as Lukács sees it, is *non-critical* and falsely ideological, as it lacks the analysis of historical necessity, of the objective economic moment. Lassalle halts at the immediacy of radical bourgeois criticism, conceiving of the overthrow of the old regime as a revolution *in general*, that is, as *normal* bourgeois revolution. For Marx and Engels, the main difficulty of the revolution lay in the economic, ideological, and organizational weakness of the plebeians, in the objective historical question concerning the ally of the revolutionary class, while Lassalle appeared to locate it in the morality and mentality of an autonomous intermediate stratum of "intellectuals" dissatisfied with the ruling regime.

It follows from this that the *choice of the subject* — Münzer vs. Sickingen —, the attachment to the Schillerian or Shakespearean *style*, is only ostensibly an aesthetic decision. In fact, Marx demonstrated the relationship between Lassalle's abstractly moralising Idealism and his political opportunism during the debate. "It would be completely false to see the question of Schiller vs. Shakespeare as a purely aesthetic one."

It is a logical consequence of Lassalle's world view and political standpoint that he idealizes and follows Schiller's style, that he builds his tragedy on the principle of the tragic error, that he chooses Sickingen as his hero. In the opinion of Marx and Engels, a play is more likely to fulfil the tasks of "depicting historical class struggle impressively and authentically, of presenting the real motive forces vividly, of unfolding the real, objective conflicts inherent in them"²⁹ when it uses Shakespearean tools.

Although going deeper and encompassing a wider scope than in 1925, Lukács puts his finger on the same nodal points in his analysis of the political contents of the controversy. As regards a concrete socio-economic analysis, he is just as far from *History and Class Consciousness* as he was at the time of his earlier Lassalle article. But he devotes far

greater attention to the *class aspects* in the *Sickingen* Debate. Of course, he rebukes Lassalle again for viewing the bourgeois revolution not from the vantage point of the proletariat but from that of the bourgeoisie, and moreover, for doing so instinctively, with *naïveté*. But after the “rise and fall” of the “Blum Theses”, his outlook underwent some change. Thus, his criticism is not principally centred on the relationship between the periods of bourgeois and proletarian revolutions, on the principle of the necessary transition to the proletarian revolution. Instead, he concentrates on the problems of the class bases, structure, and alliance in a *bourgeois-democratic revolution* (in Lassalle the movements of both the peasantry and the nobility are reactionary). At this juncture, Lukács comes very close to the spirit of Lenin’s interpretation of the *Sickingen* Debate, though he refers not to its text but to Engels’ *The Peasant War in Germany*. First, Lassalle “ignores or treats as more or less secondary issues the basic questions of the economy (peasants exploited by the nobles) and takes the movement to be revolutionary or reactionary on the basis of the legal aspect of settling the problem of property relations”. Secondly, “the revolutionary and reactionary ‘principles’ are confronted with mechanical rigidity. Lassalle completely ignores the living interaction between classes although that would be extremely significant here, where the basic classes of bourgeois society — bourgeoisie and proletariat — had not yet taken full shape, where social strata such as the ‘plebeians’, peasants, play a crucial rôle...”³⁰

We do not intend to slight Lukács’s accomplishments in the discovery of the aesthetics of Marx and Engels when we declare that there is no radical aesthetic turn in this study; that he discussed the relevance of the *Sickingen* Debate for literary theory only in the context of the political and ideological questions of the polemics (and not vice versa). The essay is important, though not as a first step towards developing a systematic aesthetics based on Dialectical Materialism (which was to remain a dream for a long time to come), but because the aesthetic implications of the controversy were too important to be ignored and so far either had been falsely interpreted — by Mehring — or were not discussed at all.

Quite understandably, the problem elaborated in greatest detail was that of *the tragic*. As Lukács sees it, the concrete historical essence of Marx’s conception of tragedy is the dialectical disruption of an old social order; tragedy is the expression of the heroic fall of a social class. At the

same time: "[Marx and Engels recognized] the Hegelian type of tragedy as one form of tragedy. However, they also considered the tragedy of the revolutionary born before his time, the tragedy of Münzer. By means of this differentiation, they also drew all the necessary aesthetic inferences from turning the Hegelian theory of the tragic right side up: Tragedy (and comedy) appeared as the artistic representation of certain stages of the class struggle in both the declining and the revolutionary classes."³¹ Although at this point Lukács also refers to Marx's writings outside the *Sickingen* Debate, his comments and the ideas that he cites can hardly be taken as an original reconstruction of the theory of tragedy set forth by Marx and Engels.

The early thirties brought no change in this respect, although Lukács devoted separate papers to the dramaturgical theory of Marx and Engels.³² The contents of these papers are limited for various related reasons. Although one can find remarks in Marx's and Engels's writings on both the masters and lesser figures of dramatic art and its false tendencies, "Marx and Engels naturally paid less attention to drama-turgy within general literary development than to literature within global social development".³³ Actually, Lukács did not go beyond these remarks and allusions of Marx. As has been noted, Lukács's commentaries are closed, both in aesthetic terms and in terms of the philosophy of history and world view of Marx and Engels. Therefore they have to remain general in purpose. He rested content with the following statement: [the classical thinkers of Socialism regarded] "drama as a particular form for representing economic development and the class struggle; through a concrete analysis of the age, they 'automatically' arrive at the genuine, objectively necessary tragic conflicts. For them, the tragic results from the objective historical situation, from the unresolvable conflicts into which the class position may cast the representative figures of history".³⁴

Finally Lukács refrains from using the abstractions of his textual analyses for an *original* Marxist dramatic theory of his own, or for an independent analysis of Shakespeare's and Schiller's art.

Mention must be made of one, perhaps the "most narrowly aesthetic" implication of Lukács's essays of this period. Lukács dealt with the antinomy between the shallow imitation of Schiller's *style* and the *style* of Shakespeare, not from the perspective of the controversy between Lassalle and the classics of Marxism, but from his own standpoint, for

these sections of his analysis later came to be summarily interpreted as the germs of his *concept of Realism* in the thirties. A closer investigation of the text proves that Lukács did not at that time have a definitive, mature, and what is more important focussed concept of Realism. It once again holds true that he subjected the aesthetic viewpoint to the criterion of political-ideological relevance, and not yet emancipate himself from the confines of the studied text. (Engels's definition of Realism.)

According to Lukács, the mock Schillerian style of Lassalle's tragedy is *idealistic and subjective with a revolutionary aspiration*, as Lassalle did not transcend the Hegelian bases. By contrast, the Shakespearean ideal of Marx and Engels is *Dialectical Materialist*: it is an authentic representation of the class struggles, the vivid portrayal of the real motive powers of society, the elaboration of conflicts inherent in them. The notion of Realism appears in a peculiar context of the philosophy of history. In its *negative-pejorative* sense, it is used to describe Lassalle's contemporary, Friedrich Theodor Vischer, the defender of the foundations of bourgeois society: "Vischer's moderate Realism, the cult of reality embraced by the liberal writers and artistic of the age" is none other than acquiescence in "the most miserable aspects of Capitalism in Germany". Marxist Realism is by contrast *revolutionary*. It is positive, above all in a political-philosophical (and consequently, aesthetic) sense; it is the negation of both Lassalle's subjectivism and Vischer's moderate Realism. Capitalist production is antagonistic to art. "This cannot be mitigated either by 'conciliatory' Realism, or by subjective idealization, but only by revolutionary Realism that exposes the intrinsic antinomies of Capitalist development through pitilessly cynical veracity or through the critical acumen of a revolutionary. This Realism is the poetry of a keen revolutionary insight into the bases of progress."³⁵ The perceptive reader will immediately realize that these lines were written by the author of *History and Class Consciousness*.

But Lukács was moving on — albeit taking a detour. In his view, "noch ist alles im Werden". The early reconstruction of the aesthetic heritage of Marx and Engels was ever more permeated with the ideological processes determining the "Leninist period". In theory, Lenin's concept of *reflection* became linked (initially in a superficial and abstract form) to formerly prevalent arguments in the philosophy of history, which already heralded the future. "The Marx quotations indicated", Lukács wrote in 1934, "that their insistence on Realism as a creative

method is a logical corollary of their demand that portrayal be the true representation of objective reality, grasping its essential moments".

The past, the genesis, the transition was also involved. "In the struggle against Idealism, against the imitation of the Schillerian manner in playwriting, Marx and Engels did not make the slightest concession to the apologetic pseudo-Realism exercised by their contemporaries. They asserted that Realism was none other than the faithful representation of the grand class struggles of a period, bursting with energy, of the essential moments of this process."³⁶

Lukács was making a detour: but he did not bypass the *tactical* turn that was taken by the Communist movement. His article "The Sickening Debate Between Marx-Engels and Lassalle" was most probably put to paper *before* Stalin's letter "On Certain Questions of the History of Bolshevism" (*Proletarskaya Revolutsia*, 1931, no. 6), while his entry on Lassalle for the *Literaturnaya Entsiklopediia*³⁷ (and some shorter writings on Marx that remained in manuscript) was completed after Stalin's criticism of Slitsky. Rarely has there been a better opportunity to analyse the interrelation between theoretical and tactical (political) planes *in statu nascendi* than by undertaking a comparison between these two Lukács writings.

Lukács's practical goal was *to oust* the theorists of the Second International and their disciples from the ranks of the *founders* of a Marxist aesthetics. "Nowadays, especially after Stalin's letter to the editors of the *Proletarskaya Revolutsia*, the fight against the ideological legacy of the Second International comes to the fore of all the debates on world views, among Materialist dialecticians."³⁸ Lukács did not withdraw from the ideological struggle going on in the movement. On the contrary, all his contributions to journals began and ended with the statement that the distortion and the growing shallowness of Marxism had been enhanced by the Second International when it pushed Marx's and Engels's aesthetic views into oblivion.³⁹ His aim was not only to demonstrate that a system of aesthetics *existed* in Marx's works, and consequently, that the cornerstones had not been laid by Lassalle, Mehring, or Plekhanov. The more important and at that time more urgent need was to prove that the most distinguished representatives of post-Marxist Social Democracy not only failed to create a relevant theory of art, and not only ignored the Marxist legacy, but also allowed their whole mentality to become stranded in bourgeois society and democracy. As a consequence, they hushed

up the revolutionary elements in Hegel's theory, made concessions to Kantianism, and eventually succumbed to opportunism.

Needless to say, this criticism also had antecedents in the former works of the author of *History and Class Consciousness*, the Lassalle critic of the twenties, the writer of the "Blum Theses". The Instrumentation was new — the tune was the old one. In this area Lukács did not have to make a new start. There were, of course, new elements within this continuity: Lukács now extended the line of "counter-revolutionary" Lassalleanism through Mehring to Thalheimer and Trotskyism.⁴⁰

Lukács's Lassalle-essays thus addressed themselves to the present not only indirectly, and at a theoretical level, by confronting a "conciliatory" Realism with revolutionary Realism based on a "sophisticated Materialist anatomy" of the real motors of the class struggle, by declaring that the rearguard fighting for the democratic ideals of the bourgeois revolution had long become obsolete. They were also topical because, by analysing the views of the masters of "classical" Social Democracy as a prime source of Social Democratic ideology, they warned that this ideology was *absolutely* incapable of comprehending the proletarian revolution, that a romantic critique of Capitalism was intrinsically limited, and that Lassalle's (and Mehring's) ideological heritage was *reactionary* in character. When condemning Lassalle and Mehring, Lukács, speaking in tactical terms, denounced them as the forerunners of Social Democracy, which the contemporary Communist movement regarded as the "precursor of Fascism" (to use a current slogan). (It was objectively and historically impossible to see the absurdity of this view at that time.) Besides this *sectarian element of anti-Fascism*, there was, however, an equally important element in *this same* criticism — altogether correct and justifiable — an attack on the vulgar sociology of art of Plekhanov, his pupils (Friche, Pereverzev), and their followers. There was a firm anti-sectarian tendency in the articles that the Communist Lukács's contributed to journals, namely, to fight against the doctrine of deriving aesthetic value-creation mechanically from the interest relations, ideologies, and psychologies of individual classes, which was at the time haunting Soviet art history, theory, and criticism, as well as the production of art with a Socialist bent.

Thus, the "ousting" of the theorists of the Second International mixed anti-sectarian and sectarian elements alike, and merged tendencies that widened the theoretical perspectives with those that narrowed

them. Of paramount importance, however, is the fact that Lukács, discarding the aesthetics of "classical" Social Democracy, created a theoretically valid, *genuine* continuity in aesthetics between the age of Marx and the Lenin era. And that was just as much real as the possibility of building Socialism in one country.

What kind of image of the literary theorist Marx did Lukács form at that time? What were the most pronounced features of this portrait?

Marx (and Engels) do not regard literature as a self-contained, sovereign ideological form, but as part of the developing social totality. A work of art is not merely the product of social development, but also one of its constituent elements.⁴¹ Nothing was further from the minds of the classical thinkers than to deduce ideological forms 'eventually' determined by the economy mechanically, by vulgar reduction, from the economy. All their "occasional" aesthetic observations are "specific, truly dialectical explanations of the real connections between literary form and content, between the economic situation and the current phase of the class struggle".⁴²

When judging a literary work of art, Marxist literary criticism, unlike bourgeois-idealistic formalism, always proceeds from a Dialectical Materialist approach to social content and form, which precludes both psychological and sociological schematism. More precisely, content is to be conceived of in the whole wealth of its economic, material, and dialectified determination; while form is to express this adequately. That is what the Marxist requirement of Realism, faithful representation of reality, means: not the servile imitation of details, but "style" is what counts, expressing the dialectic of the real motors of social progress, the appropriate and full comprehension of this process. Marx waged his literary war on two fronts. On the one hand, he fought against Idealism, which, instead of reproducing reality in the poetic imagination, tries to "construct" existence from the mental content. On the other hand, he fought against the shallow Realism that goes but skin deep, evading the representation of large-scale historical connections. "It is precisely the Dialectical Materialist deduction of the problem of form from the economic and social questions inherent in the contents of a work of art that means not schematism but an adequate treatment of all the concrete problems of form: the deduction of the form from the productive relations, from the class struggles of the given period, that is why it for the first time becomes truly illuminating ... View Marx's literary theory

from any angle you may choose, it invariably guides the eye to the basic problem: the question of Realism, the adequate reproduction of objective reality in our minds."⁴³

The Marxist view on the unequal development of art, the ideas that Marx outlined in the introduction to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* have salience in Lukács's interpretation. He opposes these ideas not only to the vulgar sociological approach to the relationship between the "material base" and literature, but also to the apology for the fetishization of progress. By the same token, he criticises the liberal "modern mythology" elaborated by Capitalist art, which maintains that its level of development is superior to that of so-called "primitive" states. Even though as yet only in a rudimentary form, one of Lukács's central aesthetic tenets concerning the irreversible *decline* of bourgeois ideology (literature and drama) already emerged in the early thirties. The bourgeoisie of the Imperialist period, Lukács contends, turns against its own great spiritual and artistic heritage ("Hegel is replaced by Alfred Rosenberg"), whose true heir is the proletariat. But Social Democracy betrays the true heirs on the one hand, by a value orientation that substitutes Zola for Balzac, and on the other, by repudiating or "complementing" the aesthetic and literary theory of Marx and Engels, which rested on a universal world view. "This Dialectical Materialist conception of the global development of literature, which constitutes part of the revolutionary progress of mankind unfolding in class struggles, disappeared in the Second International. As in all other areas, the world outlook of workers' parties becomes imbued with Idealism and mechanism. The study of literature breaks away from the examination of the economic development and the class struggles, or is vulgarized into the mechanistic consequences of the latter. The world-historical horizon of Marx's and Engels's literary conception is reduced to 'national' provincialism. In Mehring . . . the Dialectical Materialist approach is replaced by Kant's Subjective Idealistic aesthetics, and the great though contradictory representatives of bourgeois revolutionary development are replaced by Schiller. Lassalle's line is edging out the line of Marx and Engels."⁴⁴

Further refining some details in Lukács's early portrait of Marx as literary theorist, one could demonstrate that Lukács's image, born in a welter of controversies, is (up to 1934) rather sketchy from an aesthetic viewpoint. A more thorough analysis would also reveal that precisely his

aesthetic (and art-critical) performance in this period of a new beginning is startlingly heterogeneous: It carries reminiscences of some philosophical categories from *History and Class Consciousness*, together with the blurred outlines of a tentative aesthetic attempt that almost foreshadows the entire range of his thoughts on art theory as it would emerge in the coming decades.

Lukács called his meeting with Lifshits an unexpected stroke of good luck. In 1930–1931, they did proceed side by side for a time. Why did the paths that the two friends took in discovering Marx eventually diverge? Was Lukács perhaps discouraged by his friends methodology? Possibly not. His young friend, too, advocated the *universality* of Marx. He was fully aware that the works of the great classic thinker did not contain a self-contained aesthetic system. He did recognize that Marx was absorbed precisely in the opposite of the aesthetic quality, i.e., the Capitalist economy. He saw clearly that Marx addressed the question of artistic categories and form primarily in critical terms, with the aim of demonstrating analogies and contrasts to the absurd world of Capitalist production. Thus, all the potential elements for a critical analysis of the dialectical and philosophical interrelation between economy and aesthetics were in place. Did his illusions concerning the post-revolutionary situation affect them? There were mistakes in the way the two men viewed contemporary reality. Take, for instance, the idea of revival after the “demise” of the art of bourgeois society. Lifshits, more than anyone else, was keenly aware of the gravest danger of his time, even if he suffered from certain illusions about how to ward it off. “The struggle that has persisted for some fifty years since the death of Marx banished the nimbus enveloping the bourgeois form of social progress. It has overcome the most dire vestige of the past, the idyllic faith in the natural course of events, in the automatism of social progress, in the mystical guidance of human history ‘from on high’ (von oben herab), to use Kant’s term. We must prevent the historic movement from reverting to the old rut where there is a gaping gulf between human intellect and the spontaneous development of things. We must prevent the glorious revolution of our age from deteriorating into the ‘hangover’ frequently experienced after the revolutions of the past.”⁴⁵

Evidently, Lifshits recognized the threat of a “hangover” after the revolution.⁴⁶ Thus, there were no illusions blocking the common path, the greatest discovery of which was that there was a homogeneous

Marxist aesthetics (theory of literature), which, however, did not *methodologically* assume the form of a separate discipline in Marx's universal world view.

Lukács, as noted earlier, mentioned another unexpected stroke of good luck: while in Moscow in 1930, he obtained access to Marx's as yet unpublished *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts*: "Riazanov showed me the manuscripts that Marx wrote in Paris in 1844. You can surely imagine how excited I was. The reading of these manuscripts changed my entire attitude to Marxism and transformed my philosophical ideas. A German scholar engaged in the Soviet Union was working on the manuscripts, preparing them for publication. The manuscripts had been chewed by mice. Several words were missing, and so were letters in many words. In virtue of my philosophical training I worked with him to decide what letters and words had become illegible. In several instances a word began, say, with *g* and ended with *s*, and we were to find out what could have been in between. The version that was eventually published was, I think, very good; I know because I had been involved in preparing the edition. Riazanov was in charge of the work — and he was a great philologist — not a theorist, but a great philologist indeed."⁴⁷

Any time Lukács speaks of the shock that he experienced when studying the Paris manuscripts, he always refers to a double impact. On the one hand, he was "overwhelmed and revolutionarized" by the Marxist distinction between reification and alienation that rocked the theoretical foundations of *History and Class Consciousness*. On the other hand his reading helped to rekindle his interest in the questions of aesthetics. "Very shortly after my new studies of Marx — first of all the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts* — had opened my eyes to the mistaken elements in *History and Class Consciousness*, my theoretical interest turned towards aesthetic questions again."⁴⁸ One might therefore jump to the conclusion that Lukács drew the indispensable concepts for an analysis of aesthetic problems directly from Marx's 1844 Manuscripts, from the continuously published hitherto unknown works of Marx and Engels, and from the Marxist aesthetics, as reconstructed by Lifshits. This assumption, however, cannot be proven irrefutably, as we saw above. One would search in vain for the *explicit* formulation of the problem of alienation seen in a new light *in this period*. Indeed, Lukács hardly mentioned Marx's *Manuscripts* at that time. He did not write about the theme, which is irrelevant; but neither did he draw the implicit

philosophical and aesthetic conclusion — which is significant. The theoretical consequences of the shock were belated. For the time being, Lukács steered clear of this aesthetic nodal point (as well), avoiding the direct possibility of a new start and transcendence. (Lifshits's Marx interpretation touches on the aesthetic views in the Paris *Manuscripts* as well.)

Lifshits's road led to Marx — to the young Marx in the first place. Lukács did not follow him, this despite the theoretical identity of their views,⁴⁹ despite the timeliness of the young Marx in *philosophy* and *politics*.

MARX'S LEGACY

In 1932, fragments of the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts* (edited by Siegfried Landshut and J. P. Mayer) first appeared, and later the full text came out (MEGA).¹ In Germany this prompted a "rediscovery" of the young Marx, of the as yet unknown Marx, the real Marx: the philosopher, anthropologist, humanist, moralist. This gave rise to a rather paradoxical situation: In the Deborin debate, the "Idealistic" Hegelian Lukács of *History and Class Consciousness* was present as a critical paradigm. In Germany, where earlier he had not consented to the republication of his book, its renaissance came at a time when he was already anxious to transcend it. And it is precisely those manuscripts that made the interpretation of the philosophy of history of the young Marx timely for him, the deciphering of which precipitated — as he put it — the "collapse" of the theoretical foundations of *History and Class Consciousness*. In Germany, too, his work remained a living force, though in a changed form; its impact there was ambiguous.

Without making explicit reference to Lukács, the editors of the young Marx's writings, Landshut and Mayer, expounded a conception that can rightly be seen as a caricature of his book on Marx. Not, however, because they read the *young* Marx through the glasses of Hegel, because they regarded his early writings as indispensable to the comprehension of his entire life-work in terms of *Geistesgeschichte*, but because this deliberately non-economic, non-"diamat" philosophical reading precluded both Marx's real revolutionary thrust and Lukács's messianic-revolutionary outlook. "A search for the ideal, for the 'reason' in reality, a search for the unity of reason and reality, this is actually the philosophical thread of Ariadne. Marx took over from Hegel and that dominates his whole life-work",² Landshut and Mayer contended. They transformed Marx into a philosopher by positing that, in his work, Hegel's absolute reason is replaced by capital as subject, that social contradictions are tantamount to man's self-alienation and their resolu-

tion to man's emancipation, man's self-fulfilment. The political motive of this metamorphosis is clearly revealed by the following passage: "With a slight change, the first sentence of the *Communist Manifesto* might run like this: all that is called history is nothing else than the process of man's self-alienation."³

It is easy, then, to conclude that the entire Realism of Marxist cognition sprouts from the Idealistic belief that idea and reality, reason and reality will truly and completely converge. The world-historical task of self-alienation is to precipitate the self-fulfilment of man in order to define the focal point for critical cognition at which alienation and self-realization are concentrated. And this focus is the proletariat. But it was not the existing proletariat that constituted the precondition of conceiving Historical Materialism. On the contrary, Historical Materialism, a conception according to which the process of history was the realisation of the idea itself, was the precondition for the proletariat's comprehension of its role.⁴

Herbert Marcuse, who started working for the *Institut für Sozialforschung* in Frankfurt right at this time, interpreted Marx's Paris manuscripts in a different way, in the spirit of Lukács's views of ten years earlier. Marcuse's previous articles, in which he followed in the wake of *History and Class Consciousness* (criticizing Lukács's critics), and argued that a view of history based on dialectical totality eliminated the rigid antinomy between *Sein* and *Sollen*, between theory and practice,⁵ prefigured his subsequent move toward a philosophy of identity (the concurrence of ontology and the theory of knowledge) and radical anthropology in reading Marx. "All the stages of the ground-plan of Marx's theory", he claims, "imply a philosophical basis, and this does not contradict the fact that its aim and purpose is never purely philosophical but practical-revolutionary: the overthrow of Capitalist society by the economic and political war waged by the proletariat. That is what one must realize and comprehend: Economy and politics become the basis of the revolutionary theory; Marx gives a wholly definite philosophical interpretation to human essence and the historical materialization of the human essence."⁶

Marcuse preserved the revolutionary perspective and political economic content of the theory of the newly discovered philosopher Marx. He preserved and at the same time annihilated it. For he declared that the greatest achievement of the author of the *Manuscripts* was the

breakthrough from the economic fact (private property) to the human factor (man's attitude to the object, work conceived of as the basis of the economic fact). Marcuse's humanistic interpretation treated the political revolution of the proletariat in the recovery of the alienated human essence as the primary ontological-philosophical generality. This conception of Marx's theory has its roots in Hegel's philosophy, and Marx, under the influence of Feuerbach, seems to re-identify himself with its achievements, rather than free himself from it.

Lukács cannot have been overjoyed at the renaissance of *History and Class Consciousness* in Germany. In his criticism of Mannheim, however, he did not "attack" himself as Fogarasy did — i.e., implicitly. In fact, this would have been a propitious point in his thrice-begun journey at which to supersede, directly and critically, the Marx interpretation (Marcuse) that revived the ideas of *History and Class Consciousness*; to denounce the Social Democratic ideology (Landshut, Mayer, Hendrik de Man); to demonstrate how easy it would be to turn the political application (Arthur Rosenberg⁷) of Korsch's explication of Marxism in an anti-Bolshevik direction.

At the time of the reception of the young Marx in Germany, Lukács had great many things to consider. Ten years earlier, in the summer of 1922, the representatives of various Marxist currents had come together at Ilmenau, and then in 1923, at Geraberg (*Erste Marxistische Arbeitswoche*) for a conference, hoping that their discussions might lead to "pure" and "genuine" Marxism. Lukács, Korsch, Wittfogel, Pollock, Sorge, Fogarasi, Schmückle, Weil, and others first of all discussed Korsch's unpublished manuscript *Marxism and Philosophy*, and the questions of "method". *History and Class Consciousness* had not yet appeared.⁸

Lukács did not pick up the thread of the debate now, but he did not remain silent either. He was content with repudiation, with short critical comments, with a firm protest against playing off the young Marx against the old, with a sharp condemnation of dissecting Marx's life-work into periods — some revolutionary, some "unscientific" and fraught with Hegelian vestiges, with castigating the Revisionist falsifications, the Bernsteinian line of Landshut and Mayer, de Man, and S. Marck.⁹ Lukács chose to focus his critique on a delimited area: reviews concerning the new Marx publications. When the volumes of correspondence appeared in the MEGA, he above all defended the *Material-*

ism of Marx and Engels. And he did so by placing the stresses on those points that implicitly suggested the recantation of his one-time view on the dialectics of nature in *History and Class Consciousness*. "Today the Social Fascist theorists are collaborating with reactionary, bourgeois neo-Hegelianism. So nowadays dialectic is 'acknowledged'. But at the same time, they falsify Marx's dialectic, turning in into *Idealism* and doing away with its revolutionary core. With this aim in mind, J. P. Mayer did a poor philological job of editing the youthful works of Marx and Engels, falsifying them in an Idealistic fashion in the preface and the notes... He advocates the view that the ideological war waged by Marx was directed chiefly against *Materialism*, that the method of Marx and Engels has nothing to do with Materialism, etc. The correspondence provides an abundance of material out of which to build up defences against this new ideological offensive. It reveals clearly that Marx and Engels adhered unfalteringly to their philosophical line throughout their lives; to transcending both Idealism and Mechanistic Materialism, to establishing and developing Dialectical Materialism, to combating Idealism and Mechanistic Materialism (the main forces always being deployed to attack Idealism). The correspondence shows the richness of the construction of the method, especially in regard to the problem of the dialectics of nature in the later phases of Engels's development and Marx's active participation in his work."¹⁰

In the early thirties (and later), Lukács rarely missed an opportunity to reflect on the new publication of a volume of the classics of Marxism. He hardly missed an opportunity to observe how much Marx's writings had been ignored by German Social Democracy, how defective or misleading the texts edited by Bernstein or Mehring had been. He "forgot" about the publication of the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts*. He did not even write a review. He referred to it in passing, when discussing the sixth volume of MEGA.¹¹ It would be absurd to suspect repression of some sort. The reasons are more deeply rooted.

The reception of Marx in the Soviet Union in the first half of the thirties was an ideological process laden with profound contradictions. Battles were fought for the legacy of Marx (and the young Marx). Apart from a few exceptions, however, these battles were not dominated by a desire for *comprehension*, but instead by a false consciousness in the spirit of the *theory* of Social Fascism: the fiftieth anniversary of the death of the great thinker was an occasion to challenge German Social Democ-

racy. The highly contradictory unity of comprehension and controversy can be detected even in the writings of such significant theorists as Jenő Varga and Lajos Magyar.¹² The daily literature, the commemorative writings and memorial volumes published in the Soviet Union in this period condemned Max Adler, Otto Bauer, and Karl Kautsky in a typical militant style and in military terms. That is how Marx's presence was felt and that is how he was resurrected by means of a contrastive-thematic approach, by the enumeration of oppositions: Marx vs. Kautsky on *Bildungstheorie*, Engels vs. Bauer on Materialism, Marx vs. Adler on dialectics, etc. An outcome of the skilful application of this method was László Rudas's book, which began with the following syllogism: "Dialectical Materialism is the philosophy of Marxism, the world view of the revolutionary proletariat. A party like that of the Social Democrats, which serves the bourgeois counter-revolution with all its might, *cannot be the advocate of Dialectical Materialism for this very reason.*"¹³

Lukács, who naturally used the terminology of the age, accepted its directives, but took a different course in criticizing the Social Democrats. Indicative of this are the comments, not meant for publication, that he attached to Kurt Sauerland's would-be textbook.¹⁴ Dissatisfied with the literature of the twenties (Bukharin, Lukács, Thalheimer, Luppolt, Deborin), Sauerland wished to expound the philosophy of Dialectical Materialism by outlining each of its periods, beginning with the founders Marx and Engels, through the opportunist theorists of the Second International, and down to Lenin and Stalin (the Deborin Debate). In these typewritten notes, Lukács above all remonstrated on the analytic method and ahistorical approach of Sauerland: "This is a handbook of errors that are not deduced from the historical basis"; "The treatment of the subject is *neither* systematic (problems), *nor* historical". The more substantial reason for the controversial nature of the reception of Marx in the early thirties was that, *ideologically, Marx was timely and untimely at the same time*. He was timely, because of his anniversary, the series of his "new" works, his much-debated youthful works, his philosophy of history, his newly discovered aesthetics, his theory of the class struggle and crisis, his critique of the Second International, and Social Fascism. Yet, in the contemporary theoretical consciousness and practice of the Communist movement, all this did not suffice to usher in a Marx-renaissance. There was no decisive breakthrough. The main front in philo-

sophy, as has been pointed out, was located elsewhere; the *Bolshevization* of Dialectical Materialism had number one priority, and the fight against "Idealism in the Menshevik manner", against Hegelianism, and first and foremost against Trotskyism. The anniversary of Marx's death was the continuation of the fight against Debordin's line. This task was explicitly stated by Mitin at the Marx conference of the Philosophical Institute of the Communist Academy. Since in this period every controversy over Marx was also a debate on Hegel (and vice versa), which was made especially topical by the "contamination" of "the Idealism in the manner of Mensheviks" with Hegelianism, Hegel's philosophy was also assigned its new place in the picture: it related to Marx's Dialectical Materialism, they held, as alchemy related to modern chemistry.¹⁵

The Marx anniversary was an opportunity to renounce Social Fascism (outwardly) and Debordin (inwardly). But first and foremost, it was the initiating ceremony of the *fourth* classic of Marxism, the piquancy of which lay in the fact that the defeated Debordin also had a share in strengthening the Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin chain.¹⁶

That was the background against which Marx research and the edition of Marx's works, as well as the discovery of Marx's and Engels's aesthetics were taking place in the Marx-Engels Institute. There, during Lukács's brief sojourn in Moscow, the situation was undergoing a substantial change. One period was over, and a new one was beginning. The political, organizational and personal changes (dismissal of Riazanov, merger with the Lenin Institute by a party resolution of 3 November 1931, etc.) had an unfavourable impact on, for example, its cooperation with the *Institut für Sozialforschung*.¹⁷ F. P. Schiller has left us an excellent account of the status, structure, collections, and scientific work of the Marx-Engels Institute under the guidance of Riazanov in 1930, which captures the moment when Lukács began working there, joining the work of reconstructing the Marx texts.¹⁸ His attention was seized not only by the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts* but just as much by the "aesthetic" texts.

Between 1930 and 1933 Lukács was intrigued by Marx's "aesthetic" writings, not only in and of themselves and much less for their own sake than as points of departure. The direction in which he was progressing and the destination that he was to arrive at were only partly determined by these starting points. At the moment, the road that he was travelling did not point to a systematic Marxist aesthetics, and although the de-

tours were leading him farther away from *History and Class Consciousness*, these roundabout ways did not lead him to a new, more comprehensive interpretation of Marx's tenets.

Where did he arrive? At an investigation of the bourgeois class consciousness of the Imperialist era, more precisely at the critical analysis of *post-1848 non-classical German philosophy (and aesthetics) as the prehistory of the increasingly Fascisticizing class consciousness of the bourgeoisie*. Instead of a "corrected" *History and Class Consciousness* (in addition to the manuscript that "got lost"), he completes his "very comprehensive new studies" on Lassalle, Vischer, Feuerbach, and Mehring. It was with considerable justification that Lukács gathered them together in a single volume entitled *Literary Theories in the 19th Century and Marxism*¹⁹, because they form an organic whole centred around his main theme: the problems of German history and bourgeois class consciousness after Marx, the problems of philosophy and aesthetics in a post-revolutionary era.

A main station along Lukács's detours is his *Karl Marx and Friedrich Theodor Vischer*, a direct continuation of his Lassalle article of 1931, both in content and in character. It is its continuation not only because it was published at the same place and time, but also because it reflects the methodological and ideological peculiarities of the way in which Lukács comprehended Marx's aesthetics, and also because it reveals the process of textual analysis carried out in collaboration with Lifshits, the division of labour between them in their philological-theoretical work.²⁰

The point of departure was again the text itself: Marx's notes on Vischer. But Lukács did not rest content with the meticulous and insightful interpretation of Marx's abstracts. Of course, it was imperative for him to explore the change in the meaning of the categories of the comic, the tragic, the beautiful, the ugly, and the sublime, as well as that of Realism in post-Hegelian aesthetics, in a period when the bourgeoisie had turned from a revolutionary into a reactionary class; to proclaim that the apologetic aesthetes of Capitalism (the forerunners of Friedrich Hebbel and Richard Wagner), "who before and after the Revolution of 1848 represented various trends of the liberal bourgeoisie, were the polar opposites of Marx",²¹ But it was just as important for him to see what it was in Vischer's aesthetics that had aroused Marx's interest, in order that he might enlarge upon the dialectic of aesthetic objectivity and subjectivity, upon Marx's question concerning the way in which the

subject *actively participates* in the social creation and acquisition of natural beauty.

Apart from these, however, it was vastly more important for him to explore the process whereby the German bourgeois liberal class consciousness, and the trends in irrational thinking as well as *Lebensphilosophie* emerged; to understand why Vischer, nearing the politics of Bismarck, replaced Hegel's "logic" with an irrationally interpreted *Realpolitik*, why Hegelianism became an empty juggling with categories, and to what extent this was an ideological reflection of the bourgeoisie's having turned its back on the revolution. Vischer's attitude to the Revolution of 1848, "reveals in a conspicuous way the then openly servile nature of the liberal German bourgeoisie, while it was also made clear that the principle of the tragic had turned from revolution to counter-revolution, becoming the ideological glorification of the fact that the German bourgeoisie submitted to the Prussian monarchical sword".²²

In Lukács, the analysis of Marx's abstracts shifted to a description of Vischer's aesthetics and political stance, and his description of Vischer, in turn, shifted into an analysis of the direct and indirect effects of his world view, down to Lukács's own day. In this way, Lukács's essay not only answered the question of why Marx could have been interested in Vischer (and this feature directly relates his Marx interpretation to the contemporary context), but also provides an answer to the question of why Lukács took an interest in Vischer: "The Fascist Neo-Hegelian Glockner is right in saying that, in his post-1848 development, Vischer was an important forerunner of the most influential thinkers of *Lebensphilosophie* and Agnosticism of the Imperialist age, of the likes of Lotze and Dilthey, Windelband and Rickert. The inevitable treason of the German bourgeoisie in the Revolution of 1848, the reactionary political form in which the central demand of this bourgeoisie — German unity — was cast, drove the liberal ideologists in a direction whose end was marked by the Fascist world view, of which they were of course for a long time unaware. In this development, Vischer served not only as an important ideological link but also as an illuminating example."²³

Lukács confronts Vischer's views with those of Marx and raises the question of whether modern times need myths. The liberal bourgeoisie needs them, Lukács says, the revolutionary proletariat does not. As Lukács puts it, Vischer expresses the liberal need for myth. He plays a "unique role in the renewal of the theory of myth, which has reached its

apogee today in Germany in the official philosophy of Hitlerite Fascism".²⁴ Lukács challenges the need for false consciousness from the standpoint of the class consciousness of the proletariat, of the party and the revolution (and *not* from the viewpoint of "established" Socialism or the arts): "Proletarian revolution, whose vehicle and driving force are the working class and its vanguard and whose actions are based on sound knowledge of the economic processes, on awareness of the economic processes, is *ab ovo* capable of defining the aims of the revolution. It *does not* need 'false consciousness', it does not need myth."²⁵

Let us mention in passing that Lukács uses his anti-Fascist theory, which he formulates in the idiom of a clear *proletarian consciousness free of myths*, to challenge not just liberal ideology and the tendencies that range from Vischer through Nietzsche to the National Socialist theories of myth, but soon thereafter also against a left-wing anti-Fascist theorist who puts the blame for the rise of Nazi myth making on Marxism (meaning *vulgar* Marxism): Ernst Bloch. Bloch writes: "As the Marxist *propaganda* . . . fails to transform the mythical beginnings into real beginnings, a Dionysian dream, a revolutionary initiative, the impact of National Socialism sheds light on the culpable negligence of unduly popular vulgar Marxism."²⁶

Lukács contends however, that Bloch fails to differentiate between vulgar and genuine Marxism. Bloch mistakenly believes that he can discover, in the "obscure mystique" of ancient plebeian movements, the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie, "a legacy that has not been utilized by Marxism". In point of fact, however, Marxism which elevated the revolutionary traditions of the popular movements to a higher level, "fully overcomes *the old forms of their ideologies*".²⁷

The paper on Vischer displays rudiments of a new interpretation of *Capitalism*, which anticipates the transcendence of *History and Class Consciousness* and helps answer the question of why his own legacy and the related German critical theory became alien to him. Lukács abandons the view that bourgeois society is marked solely by inhumanity and reification, and argues that Capitalism is inherently contradictory, opposed to art, lacking in culture, and destructive of myths. Yet its inner contradictions are contradictions of *progress*. To be sure, Capitalism is marked by degradation and destruction. [Yet] "it also constitutes *enormous historical progress* in both the material and ideological senses . . . Of all stages in the development of mankind, Marx considers Capitalism the

formation that produces the material conditions of the revolutionary transition leading to *Socialism* and an end to exploitation... ”²⁸

Lukács will henceforth regard the contradictions of bourgeois progress, which he views from the standpoint of Socialism, as the central problem of the philosophical evaluation of the preceding world-historical period. He is in the process of giving up the conviction that all Capitalist economic development did was to create the possibility and necessity of the transformation of society, while that transformation itself can only be the sovereign action of the proletariat. He has renounced the view that reification persists after the Socialist reorganization of state and economy, but fails to answer — or even to raise — the question concerning what positive *Socialist content* is to replace the vacant negative forms of *alienation*.

Lukács was an ideologist who approached historical questions by epochs. In the early thirties, his thought was engaged, not by the relations of an appropriate theory and practice of history and the proletariat, and of its class consciousness free from myths, but by the *heritage* of the contemporary bourgeois class consciousness. By the past, that is? No, the *living negative* past: the decline of Hegelian dialectic, the legacy of Lassalle and Vischer. And Feuerbach: the decline of Materialism. Lukács's essay, "Ludwig Feuerbach and German Literature", written in 1932 but in slightly modified form, not earlier than 1937, is a critique of the post-1848 non-classical development of classical German philosophy, of the process by which the "old Materialism" fell prey to Idealistic distortion. This essay is noteworthy not so much for its virtues as for its errors. Lukács himself sensed his failure. Everything that I try to do nowadays becomes deformed", he complains to his friend. "For instance, I wanted to write a short little paper on Feuerbach's relation to literature. The outcome is this ill-proportioned paper I am sending you attached." ²⁹

Why is this paper ill-proportioned? There is nothing odd about the fact that Lukács wanted to publish something on Feuerbach in 1932, the sixtieth anniversary of the philosopher's death. Neither is it surprising that Feuerbach served only as a pretext and that the real aim was not clarification of Feuerbach's relation to literature but, conversely, the relation of German literature (Keller, Hettner, Herwegh, Wagner, etc.) to Feuerbach, that is, the exploration of the influence that he had exercised. The manner of presentation is remarkable in itself, but even

more remarkable is the fact that, in spite of the fresh knowledge of the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts* and *The German Ideology*, Lukács refused to place the relation between Marx and Feuerbach in the focal point of his essay; in fact, he avoided the problem of their relationship altogether. He was content to make a few passing remarks and to repeat the position expounded in an old article on Moses Hess. Accepting the erroneous identification of Marx and Feuerbach is "tantamount to eliminating the ideological dividing line between bourgeois and proletarian revolution".³⁰ Yet the clarification of this "unity" and the influence of Feuerbach would have been a practicable task, and one of pressing ideological importance. Nothing proves this better than the fact that, when deciding to write and publish a "short little paper" on Feuerbach, Lukács devoted a separate chapter to Marx's and Engels's "dialectical critique of Feuerbach" and seized the opportunity to point out: "Feuerbach's ambiguity did not remain without influence in the workers' movement, either. Plekhanov is strongly inclined to blur the contradictions between Marx-Engels and Feuerbach, and there is no one among the theorists of the Second International . . . to countervail his influence. Lenin's clear-cut and dialectically correct position was not appreciated. Under such circumstances, Deborin could easily construct a 'unity' between Marx-Engels and Feuerbach, and in close connection to this, between Plekhanov and Lenin. The clarification of this question was facilitated by the philosophical debates taking place since 1930."³¹

Lukács's Feuerbach essay, strongly reminiscent of his Vischer article by virtue of its terminology and structure, is lopsided: it discusses practically only the *errors* of Feuerbach and their *negative influence* on German literature, thereby eliminating the actual "ambiguity" of both the thinker and his reception. Lukács was of course aware of the significance of Feuerbach, and knew that the real heir to his thought was the proletariat (although he placed the emphasis on the criticism of Feuerbach's errors as an essential element in the process of appropriating this heritage). On the other hand, he knew that "the process of his influence . . . on German literature is tantamount to *the process of turning Feuerbach's views into their opposite*".³²

Yet he refused to embark on an assessment of the true historical role of Feuerbach as he was newly discovered by the ideologists of the German bourgeoisie. In this way, Feuerbach's fate remained a warning and instructive example. The outcome of the attempts to evaluate his

historical role is that "he is used for the current Fascistization of bourgeois philosophy as a secondary, insignificant figure."³³

This time, the tactical considerations gained ascendancy over the theoretical-historical aspects, and burst the bounds of the material, making the study "ill-proportioned". The one-sidedness of the piece is especially conspicuous if we compare it to another of Lukács's articles from the *thirties*, in which he addressed the living — now *positive* — heritage of Feuerbach. In it, Feuerbach is not only the forerunner of Marx and Engels by virtue of his Atheism and "liberating effect", but also the inspiration of Herzen, Belinsky, Chernishevsky, and Dobroliubov, and as such, part of the Bolshevik tradition. "The Feuerbachian philosophy as the supreme expression of revolutionary democracy", Lukács wrote in 1937, "has increasing importance for the present Popular-Front movement, the revival of revolutionary democracy."³⁴

The essay "Ludwig Feuerbach and German Literature" is an important station along Lukács's road. It is here that there emerge on the theoretical-philosophical plane those arguments and concepts that will solidify into the fundamental pillars in the Lukácsian critique of the crisis of bourgeois philosophy, of the destruction of reason. One such concept is "religious Atheism", which he touched on fleetingly in the twenties (review of Fritz Mautner) and mentioned in connection with the creation of myths in the Vischer-essay. For us here, the important point to note is that the description and the value system of the *essential philosophical* peculiarities of non-classical German ideology, the conceptual apparatus of a critique of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, were beginning to emerge in Lukács's thinking. A picture of the prehistory of Fascistization was taking shape in which "aristocratic gnoseology and religious Atheism became the religion of the 'learned classes' of German Imperialism".³⁵ Further, "religious Atheism", together with its philosophical connotation, is primarily a *social* category, a concomitant fruit of bourgeois intellectuals of the Imperialist period and of their spiritual behaviour. It lies somewhere between bourgeois apologetics and "pure" proletarian consciousness. [The] "insecurity of livelihood, the seemingly complete and helpless subjection to the blind forces of Capitalism, which Lenin justly regarded as the social source of religion, are becoming more and more strongly felt. There is no other way to understand the operation of these 'blind forces' than from the vantage point of the proletariat. Therefore, in the world view of bourgeois

thinkers and poets who cannot sever their ties to their own class and join the proletariat, yet consciously refuse to make concessions to the reactionary forces, it is inevitable that obscure and unclarified points appear. It is true that they renounce all forms of religion that have evolved in the course of history, but since they fail to expose the material and social causes of religion, the myth-creating power of religion continues to motivate them. The correct — and to some extent correctly verified — atheistic content appears in religious form (deliberately and unwittingly, consistently or inconsistently).’’³⁶

The roads that Lukács took during his first stay in Moscow and walked as an essayist until 1933 are many and diverging. But if we inquire where Lukács, as an ideologist of the Communist movement thinking in epochal terms, arrived, leaving behind the “*Blum Theses*” and *History and Class Consciousness*, we will find that all the divergent paths ultimately converge on a *single* destination. The “new start” in his studies of Marx coincided with the analysis of German *history* and bourgeois *class consciousness*, with the anti-Fascist critique of post-1848 philosophical trends and their impact, stranded between bourgeois and Socialist revolution. In addition, the discovery of the aesthetics of Marx and Engels coincided with the — tactically motivated and extensively published — critical approach to the ideological — aesthetic legacy of Social Democracy and the Second International, with the restoration of the *direct continuity* between Marx–Engels on the one hand, and Lenin and the “Lenin era” on the other.

Lukács never denied that he made his ‘detours’ within the ideological boundaries that were strengthened at the time of Trotsky’s defeat, Bukharin’s and Deborin’s criticism, and Stalin’s “great turnabout”. “Stalin’s criticism of Plekhanov gave me the idea of making a similar critique of Mehring. Both Plekhanov and Mehring had thought it necessary to supplement Mehring’s thought by extending it to areas of knowledge that go beyond social and economic questions.”³⁷ When he was abridging his grand Mehring-essay for publication as a *journal article*, he made separate mention of the “stimulus”, from Stalin.³⁸ No doubt one can glean several *negative ideological* elements from Lukács’s Mehring criticism (written in 1933), which, however, in no wise detracts from the fact that his study is not only a historically significant work in the Marxist Mehring-literature but also one of the most outstanding of any up to the present day. It is ridiculous to defend Mehring as is frequently

attempted today as an orthodox Marxist against "Stalin adherent" Lukács and simply deny the Kantian features of Mehring's aesthetics.³⁹

The idealization of Mehring is not a particularly original endeavour. A prevalent view in the twenties held that Mehring was the greatest Marxist literary historian from the era of the Second International, one whose aesthetics based on Historical Materialism and devoid of deeper contradictions should provide the proletariat with a completely correct artistic ideal and a literary-cultural system of values. This position preceding the discovery of the aesthetics of Marx and Engels is understandable for several historical and ideological reasons. It was also shared by Ernő Czóbel, who provided the prefaces for *The Lessing Legend* and Mehring's articles on world literature published in the Soviet Union in 1924 and 1925. (Czóbel, however, was aware that "one cannot say that Mehring was perfectly free of the fallacies of Idealistic thought".⁴⁰)

Lukács's interpretation of Mehring was born in completely different circumstances. The occasion was, however, identical. He was commissioned to write a paper introducing the publication of *The Lessing Legend*. Incidentally, it was also the prelude to the enormous labours, aimed at promoting aesthetic and philosophical culture in the Soviet Union, that Lukács was to complete in the thirties. Regardless of whether we consider this essay from the standpoint of size, structure, or content, it can no longer be called an ill-proportioned "freak". It is a sophisticated portrait of Mehring, suggestive of the *contradictions* of his world view, the unity of which is little disrupted by the previously mentioned tactically negative ideological elements criticizing Mehring's errors and their repercussions.⁴¹

Already at the beginning of his introduction and again at the end, Lukács emphasized that the tone of his piece was necessarily critical, which, however, in no wise implied the disparagement of Mehring's legacy. "When we conclude that, as regards the whole of his world view, Mehring was incapable of rising above the horizon of the Second International, and as such can only be recognized as a historical figure and not as a living force today like Marx, Engels, and Lenin, we must also emphasize that he was one of the greatest, most attractive, and heroic figures of his age."⁴² The Lukácsian criticism was soon to go beyond this point by not simply confronting the timely continuity between Marx-Engels and Lenin with Mehring's *merely historical* figure, but also con-

demning the left wing of German Social Democracy, which falsely conceptualized the particularities of the Imperialist era in the Lassallean Mehring (who preserved the traditions of radical bourgeois ideology). "... it is a unique paradox in the history of the German labour movement", he wrote, "that the most prominent, versatile, and brilliant theoretical leader of the left wing should become the theoretical forerunner, the father of the worst opportunism. It is a well-known fact, explored to its roots, that the revival of Lassaleanism in the course of the development of German Social Democracy during and after the war came to constitute one of the strongest pillars of extreme opportunism... Mehring's life-work, the main thrust of which was designed to save Lassalle in the teeth of Marx's and Engels's withering critique, had practically no other result than that it kept alive the otherwise persistent Lassallean heritage in the German workers' movement; what is more, it even lent it a leftist radical hue as it was left-wing itself."⁴³

The method of Lukács's critique in a strict sense was again focussed on pinpointing the *genesis* of faults and errors (opportunism) and their negative *effects*, which reverberated until his own day. The one-sidedness, however, does not derive from rebuking Mehring for trying "to save" Lassalle, Schiller, Freiligrath; from making Mehring responsible for the emergence of "German Trotskyism", for denying the possibility of proletarian art (Brandler-group, Thalheimer), or for calling the historical approach in *The Lessing Legend* provincial, ignoring the positive elements imbedded in Engels's critique, namely, the declaration that the book was "the only good account so far" of the formation of the Prussian state. The *false ideological* centre of the essay is where Lukács traces Mehring's deficiencies to a single cause, saying that Mehring was unable to break away from his own *bourgeois democratic* past and remained faithful to the radical ideals of the bourgeois revolutionary period. What could better prove the negative ideological one-sidedness of this criticism than the fact that, in a *second* preface to Mehring — this time to an early article — Lukács underscored the exemplary significance and relevance of Mehring's *democratic past* for the anti-Fascist Popular-Front policy?⁴⁴

Thus, at the *very beginning* of the thirties, Lukács's critique of the ideological history of Social Democracy concentrated on *classical Capitalism*, the *leftist* "forerunners" of bourgeois *revolutionary* sympathies, bourgeois *radicalism*, democratic traditions, and the Kantian-Fichtean

ramifications of *Hegelianism*. It was a peculiar road. It bypassed the contrastive-thematic method à la Rudas, which used the systematicism of "diamat" coursebooks to take issue with the theses of Adler and Kautsky. In this period, Lukács was *close enough* to the consciousness of the Communist movement, to the Stalinist condemnation of Social Democracy and its tactical directives to permit negative ideological elements to appear in his critical output. However, by analyzing the post-1848 trends of bourgeois class consciousness with a *historico-genetic* method, by confronting the Marxist-Engelsian heritage with non-classical German philosophy and aesthetics, he acquired *sufficient distance* from his political thought up through 1933 (retaining the *true* tactical element of the Bolshevization of philosophy, the promotion of the recognition of Lenin's epochal significance) to achieve several new theoretical results in the criticism of the Lassalle-Mehring line.

Looking back upon his fresh start and detours in Moscow, Lukács wrote: "Only when, after the official condemnation of the Blum Theses, I became acquainted with Marx's *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts* as a research associate of the Marx-Engels Institute, did it begin to dawn on me at how many points, in how many crucial questions I had failed correctly to comprehend and apply the real essence of Marx's tenets, to adjust them to the contemporary context and if need be, to improve them. I was fully aware that the point was not rectification of a few particular errors but the reformulation of my entire fundamental conception that required profound concrete social experiences and thorough-going investigations. I slowly came to realize that I would have to start the whole work anew, to discard the methodological defects of *History and Class Consciousness* altogether, to detach myself from them resolutely, so that the freedom of thought gained thereby could help me return to these problems one day and answer them appropriately and correctly."⁴⁵

Those "profound concrete social experiences and thorough-going investigations" did in fact grow in number. And while Lukács's fresh start did mark a radical break, at the same time, it represented a continuation. Still, his new intellectual liberation alone was not yet sufficient to permit him to return to those problems. New, more concrete social experiences were required. A new historical epoch was about to begin.

MOSCOW REVIEW

We have two old verbal snapshots of Lukács in the twenties: the observations of Elsa Ernst and Sándor Vajda. They display some similarities, but above all, differences. Both were taken at the same place: in a villa in Hütteldorf, a suburb of Vienna.

Here is the first picture of Lukács's room: "There was something like an army cot, a wash-basin, a wardrobe painted brown, a sofa with a faded cover, a large writing-desk, bookshelves, chairs of all kinds in it. And all this in a spectacular mess, so that we could reach someone only by climbing over the others. A glowing iron stove was pouring forth heat. Lukács rose somewhere in the room, pushed his way through to us, and greeted us with a helpless smile."¹

Let us now take a look at the other picture: "The walls of his room were lined with bookshelves packed with thousands of books. Thick tomes, volumes of journals bound with strings. There were complete volumes of Mehring's *Neue Zeit* in *Imprekorr* folders. There were books towering on the desk. He was usually sitting at the desk or the window, reading and writing. Both at the same time. The cigar was hanging from the corner of his mouth, or smoking in an ashtray. I rarely saw his coffee-cup empty... The atmosphere in the Lukács house was exhilarating."²

The lack of "nice" things, the pronounced absence of "decent" bourgeois surroundings, feeling ill at ease and embarrassingly alien — that is what Frau Ernst remembered. Vajda's attention was captured by the packed shelves, the Socialist and Communist literature, the friendly atmosphere, the informality of the highly respected scholar, which banished all timidity: Lukács at work, whom he was always happy to visit in order to get an article for the journal 100%, and whose quarters he always left feeling elevated in spirit.

The recollections of Paul Ernst's wife are a completely authentic account of the "new" Lukács and of her feelings of doubt and compas-

sion for the changed friend. "We were still friends, just as in the old times; but about his philosophical and aesthetic work, the promising beginnings of which we got to know at Schliersee's he did not want to hear anything any more. These beginnings, as we were alarmed to learn, were lost in the drift of events. And the saddest thing of all was that he was not sorry about it. He felt he was an instrument of a cause that was intrinsically alien to his being. So eventually we avoided these topics in our conversations, and then his trenchant and subtle mind, and sense of humour — usually accompanied by amused side-way glances — swung into play again, and we were in a free world with him, where the evil reality of fanaticism vanished in thin air. . . ."³

Indeed, Lukács did not want to know any more about his lost artistic philosophy of the Heidelberg period, and by the same token, he recommended a "more interesting and valuable" reading than *The Theory of the Novel* to Sándor Vajda. He was in search of a new aesthetics and of relevant new art (not yet finding much of it), the remarkable beginnings of which the Ernsts must have been informed about first of all by a journal in Jena. The article "L'art pour l'art and Proletarian Poetry" also revealed why he was reluctant to look back upon pre-revolutionary times after the "events" in question.

He began his article as follows: "L'art pour l'art (art for art's sake) is always a sure sign that a class has come to *doubt* its own existence and its possibility of creating an existence worthy of man; the limits of this possibility are always determined by the economic structure of society and the forms and contents of social life derived from it."⁴

Lukács's statement elicited firm rejection, and not simply alarm, from Paul Ernst, who retorted that the author identified the practitioners of *l'art pour l'art* with the bourgeoisie in a sectarian way and regarded their poetry as the poetry of *this* class. "Lukács postulates that the poet depends on reality", whereas artists such as Flaubert felt themselves to be the masters of reality who reshaped or re-created reality. Compared to previous societies "and probably to subsequent ones", bourgeois society was much freer, not giving much cause for complaint to the poets.⁵

In general, Paul Ernst vigorously questioned the statements of *Proletcult* in Russia, and doubted the culture-creating power of the masses, of the proletariat. Lukács received the aforementioned criticism with a "theoretical fit of rage". He wanted to make a big row, but later, when

he calmed down, he simply discarded Ernst's good old Sismondian "conciliatory" views and denied that Capitalism provided freer and more favourable conditions for the poets than had the system of patrons in "semi-Capitalist" ancient or mediaeval societies.⁶

Lukács believed that proletarian society possessed a renewing force in art. What could it offer for art over and against the helplessness of bourgeois existence? — he asked in his article. "At first very little. It is wrong for a proletarian revolutionary, for a Marxist, to overestimate in a utopian way the real existing possibilities". The art of the proletarian revolution began under adverse conditions, lacking such beginnings as bourgeois revolutionary art had had within Feudalism. And, in the initial phases of Communism, the structural forms of Capitalism were to survive despite all the other transformation taking place. "At the beginning, the immense revolutionary transformation that we are experiencing as an outcome of the efforts of the revolutionary proletariat can revolutionize the *immediate-sensual* reality (the subject-matter and forms of poetry) far less than one might superficially expect."⁷

However fanatically sectarian Lukács might have seemed to the writer of *Brunhild* (and his wife) at that time, he expected no "sudden miracles"; he tried to hold back from utopian ideas, and all he gathered from the "faltering" works of Russia's new, talented authors was that the artists committed to the Revolution were beginning to find their footing both socially and individually.

If readers should require explicit proof of whether the commitment to the cause had anything to do with Lukács's "being", we can refer them to Sándor Vajda's reminiscences: "Our conversations about Russian literature — to be quite frank, I listened and he expounded his views — about writers, periods, or works, which were always triggered by some concrete question, never failed to enrich me and offered much food for thought. Now he started something new about the classics, first of all Tolstoy, now about the new Soviet literature. As if he were showing me a masterfully cut gem always from a different angle, throwing light on a new polished facet every time. He kept encouraging me to study the new Soviet books from which I could learn about the new forms of a nascent new life, about new people and new relations emerging amidst new conditions. 100% must publish excerpts, he urged. But only in the beginning. Then he went on to castigate the Hungarian writers in Moscow who did not seem to be interested in the new Soviet literature."⁸

Between 1925 and 1929, Lukács certainly touched on aesthetic questions in other of his works as well; his articles and reviews published in *Új Március* (New March) and *100%* repeatedly addressed the phenomena, works, and representatives of Hungarian (less frequently, other) culture and literature. "L'art pour l'art and Proletarian Poetry" was unparalleled among Lukács's political and literary contributions to periodicals during this 'non-aesthetic' period because in it, he illuminated the particular artistic antagonism between the late bourgeois and Socialist *periods* at a *theoretical* level without the occasion of a concrete and timely topic. Lukács's theoretical orientation was unambiguous, but he still had little knowledge of Soviet literature. His *political* criteria were clear-cut, but not so his aesthetic evaluations. The only book that he mentioned was Libedinsky's *One Week*. He called it "a work written with the surest hand", "the most consciously proletarian and Communist work of art that I know of so far in the course of this development". It is noteworthy that Walter Benjamin, who at that time had more immediate and fresher impressions of the Soviet literary life, called the artistic current that Libedinsky belonged to the "new Russian Naturalism", tracing its origin not only to the Socialist Naturalism of the nineties, but also to the pathetic Naturalism of the German Baroque and comparing the proletarian literature to such features of the latter as the excessive clumsiness of the material, the unavoidable presence of political details.⁹

Did Lukács's views of the revolutionary art of the proletariat change a few years later? In 1930-1931, Lukács was not only an essay-writing scholar, philosopher, and aesthete in Moscow, but also a Communist journalist. The intricate detours of his theoretical new beginning led to an examination of bourgeois class consciousness of the Imperialist age, the critique of post-1848 German philosophy, aesthetics and literature, and the discovery of Marxist-Engelsian aesthetics. But at the same time, Lukács was also the "theoretical representative" of the proletariat in whose literary work the actual problems of *Socialist* construction and Soviet proletarian poetry always featured prominently.

A journalist is the instrument of the cause. After Vienna, in Moscow, did the danger increase that Lukács might become the fool of a cause believed to be good, the mere mouthpiece of sectarian tactics, that he might get for more deeply involved in the wicked reality of fanaticism than he had as the critic of the ideological heritage of the Second

International, of the increasingly Fascistic bourgeois consciousness, and as the theoretical interpreter of the "Lenin era"? Did he become aligned with those who "make their living by creating a self-illusion of their class" as Marx put it, or working in the Soviet Union under changed ideological conditions did he, rather, find the opportunity to join partisanship with universality in the area of literary publications free of narrow-minded sectarianism, to combat empty platitudes as a party ideologist? Finally, what did Lukács's Moscow review preserve from the aesthetic message of the latter half of the twenties? Can a sort of continuity be demonstrated between the "aesthetics" of 100% and the *Moskauer Rundschau*?

Up to the early thirties, Lukács paid marked attention to the increasing output of Soviet fiction translated into German (and Hungarian). A letter probably written in 1928 is an illuminating document of the transformation in his views. There, he criticizes the first issue of *Die Front* and dissects the articles by Gerhardt Pohl and Klaus Hermann. He protests that, by overestimating their anti-Capitalism, anyone could interpret Zola and Sinclair as Socialist writers and identify bourgeois opposition with Socialism. Still more important are Lukács's remarks on the dangers that Zola's Naturalism posed to proletarian literature, on its "poisonous" literary and ideological effects. Zola's stylistic tools are not good for anything but capturing the instinctive, elementary forces. "If, without a profound Marxist interpretation of all the problems of world view, conscious elements are employed in representation out of political considerations, these usually remain unattached to the rest, inorganic and artificial, as in Gladkov and sometimes even in Gorky."¹⁰

The other, greater danger, is Zola's romantic Symbolism. When Zola seeks to synthesize and classify his fragmentary observations, he invariably creates a mythology, due to his bourgeois fetishistic outlook, that is because he lacks a clear conception of the true motive forces of social development. Only Dialectical Materialism can provide one with the cognition of the social whole as a moving totality. Thus, Lukács rejects the Zola effect, which is most readily discernible in Gladkov (not even Gorky's art is normative for him at the time), and the tendency to complement *Naturalistic* representation with few Socialist ideological-political elements; he rejects the romantic synthesis of the fragments of reality. At that time, his criticism was not too far from that of Walter Benjamin.

In order to get an idea of Lukács's journalistic career during his first lengthy stay in Moscow one should turn first of all to the long-forgotten articles published in the *Moskauer Rundschau*, a political and cultural weekly that appeared in German between 1929 and 1932 (and later in English). This *Moscow Review* served as the intermediary between Soviet and German proletarian literature, regularly publishing the works of Soviet and German writers, reviews of the latest books, and reports on the events and debates of Soviet literary life. Lukács was involved in the publication of the weekly from September 1930 to December 1931, during which period he published fifteen pieces, the bulk of them reviews of Soviet novels.

That was the first time he had paid intense and regular attention to this literature. A list of the authors he reviewed (Sholokhov, Ehrenburg, Leonov, Karavaeva, Bogdanov, Panteleev, Vsevolod Ivanov, Vera Inber, Nikitina, Panfiorov) and those he just mentioned in passing (Gorky, Gladkov, Fadeev, Pilniak, Shaginian, Shapovalov, Ognev, Libedinsky, Semionov, Kia, Tarasov-Rodionov) immediately reveals some typical *formal* features: the scope of his interest is wide and narrow at the same time; the writers listed include classics of world literature and insignificant figures alike, and the literary genres are also diverse (novel, short story, memoirs, juvenile and children's literature). Allowing for the fact that the reviewer had access only to the works translated into German, that a weekly magazine has a regular work routine (together with its accidental moments), and also that the reviews were occasional, day-to-day commissions, one still has the impression that his collaboration on the *Moscow review* was somehow *accidental*. Why? Lukács's *outlook*, as manifested in the Moscow articles, is homogeneous, but his literary order of values seems to have been immature. (Gorky, for example, was no point of comparison for him yet.) His articles and reviews interpreted individual works and phenomena, but made hardly any mention of the tendencies and main currents of *Soviet artistic life* on the basis of concrete — or then accepted — organizing principles.

If, however, one reconsiders this impression of accidentalness one may arrive at the suspicion that Lukács viewed Soviet literature not from the "inside", not with the eye of one wishing to systematize it from a historical viewpoint, but with some *other* aim in mind. Indeed, he turned to the *German reader*. He acted as a mediator. His Moscow review mediated *Soviet literature*, rather than Soviet literature. What does this

seemingly odd and far-flung distinction (which is nevertheless rooted in reality) imply? It implies *dual* criticism aimed at reception. As an "art critic", Lukács described and evaluated the latest Soviet novels as the "ideological reflections" of the Soviet Union, of Socialist society (and its history), that is, as *sources of information*. Consequently, it was imperative for him to see if these works conveyed to the German people a real, authentic picture of the rising new world, its connections, processes, changes, and perspectives. Thus, when evaluating a work, he was above all concerned with its prospective political, ideological, and aesthetic effects.

In his review of Leonid Leonov's book (*Sot*) Lukács explicitly expressed the belief that the novel was a *document* of Soviet reality. "Abroad, the literature of the Soviet Union exercised its effect by virtue of its *subject matter* and *content*. Not only is this understandable, but it is quite natural, as well. It is understandable, as a wide readership — workers and some bourgeois and petty bourgeois strata — tries to envisage a direct and vivid picture of Soviet reality. Those who have understood the course of development leading to Socialism with the help of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism are pleased to meet with a vigorous illustration of what they have comprehended in theory. Those who were deprived of this by class barriers turn to literature to call concrete demonstrative material or vivid documents in support of their hesitant attraction or socially motivated aversion." This argument in favour of documentation is made aesthetically more refined, but remains fundamentally unchanged by Lukács' additional remark: "... it would be illuminating to take a look at the *formal* side of one or another of the products of Soviet literature".¹¹

No change is effected, as the point is merely to see if the old artistic form (in Leonov: Impressionism) fits or contradicts the new content (in Leonov: the building of Socialism in the nearly deserted north).

At the same time, the Lukácsian criticism had another function: it tackled not only the work (from the aspect of reception), but also its reception (from the aspect of the work). Lukács was the critic of the *Soviet* novel on the one hand, and of the *German* reader on the other. Analyzing the masterly style of Leonov, who — attracted to country life, yet belonging to the intelligentsia — was socially unattached, Lukács concluded that his novel was "a chaos of splendid snapshots". Still: "in no way does this lessen its impact. Quite the contrary. Those strata

whose social status in Capitalism had created this style will find this presentation of Soviet reality interesting, humane, and artistic. But all those who take a serious interest in literature have to consider this: Aren't these attempts at wrestling with form, which are born of a will to express the new content *adequately*, artistically far superior to those virtuoso feats in which the new content contradicts the old form?"¹²

Obviously, Lukács's reception based criticism became particularly trenchant when he supposed that the world view, artistic form, or message of the work under review would tally with the political and aesthetic expectations of the German bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, and intellectuals, and would "effectively" strengthen their false concepts, and ideological prejudices. This, of course, also reveals that Lukács eventually postulated complete coincidence between the *class base* of artistic creation and its impact. This is to say, the two functions of his journalistic activity — the criticism of both a work and, its reception — were intertwined in this period.

This construct entailing simultaneous criticism of the Soviet novel on the one hand and of the bourgeois readership of the Malik Publishing House, on the other, can be scrutinized in detail in Lukács's analyses of Ilya Ehrenburg's books. Lukács regarded Ehrenburg as one of the most gifted writers, one with a unique talent for expression, whose scathing sarcasm laid bare the dehumanized world of the Capitalist economy as well as the treacherous ideology of the modern Capitalist era. But, Lukács asserted, he owed his fame and success among the influential critics and bourgeois or petty bourgeois readers in Germany "not only — and not principally — to his artistic values". What then, was the secret of his appeal? Formally, the general interest in Russian-Soviet literature, and in addition the fact that Ehrenburg stood closer to both the pre-Revolution Russian literature admired in Germany and the contemporary European literary trends than did most of the new Soviet writers (e.g., Fadeev). The primary reason for his success, was his "righteousness" and "lack of bias". "He sharply criticizes the Capitalist world, but levels equally sharp and ironic criticism at the faults, aberrations, inequalities, injustices, and absurdities, that he has observed in the course of revolutionary development."¹³

His anti-Capitalist stance makes him popular with the intellectuals and the petty bourgeoisie. His trustworthiness is only that he is not an *émigré* Russian writer, but an eye-witness of the victory of the pro-

letariat, which he depicts with plasticity in "close-ups". Ehrenburg's "psychological" problems and "scruples" are familiar and understandable to members of this "outsider" stratum, who, belonging neither to the bourgeoisie nor to the proletariat, "*for this very reason* think they are above all parties and as such, are the impartial judges of the in-fighting of the former; who claim that they are engaged by 'more profound', 'more human', 'more perennial' problems than the immediate objectives of contemporary struggles".¹⁴

Ehrenburg has arrived at the self-criticism of his own social stratum, but refuses to join any of the major social classes, preserving his old affections and outlook permeated with *nihilistic irony*. (The description of the social nature of this attitude is analogous to Lukács' characterization of "religious Atheism".) Ehrenburg's sceptical superiority is, however, the wisdom of the butler (Hegel: "A butler never regards his master as a hero"), it is a lackey's condescension to the Revolution. Despite his perfectly authentic partial observations, his artistic failure is complete; the details lose their veracity, for, however sharp-sighted he may be, he is blind to the greatest revolutionary events of his age, he lacks insight into the essence of the whole. "But what underlies Ehrenburg's success throughout Europe is that he failed *exactly in this way*, and that is the token of his future success as well."¹⁵

It was a severe criticism of a style and an even more severe criticism of a typical social attitude, of the seemingly impartial "butler's view of the world" as well as of its anticipated impact. If we overlook this, we might be inclined to attribute Lukács's condemnation of Ehrenburg's art to his narrow-minded literary taste, especially if we remember that he never came to think better of him, considering his war reports politically mistaken because they suggested that every German was a "Fritz".¹⁶

When, in 1930-1931, Lukács was looking closely at the literary reflections of "the new forms of nascent life" that vividly portrayed the new conditions of War Communism, NEP, and the period of reconstruction, he could no longer depart from the assertion that the social transformation in the Soviet Union had hardly modified the subject-matter and form of proletarian literature, that is, the immediate reality. On the contrary: rapid Socialist transformation gave him the impression that here "tomorrow is in fact yesterday", that is, history. The Soviet novel was the *post festum* document of the past: "At the breakneck pace of Soviet Socialist development . . . nearly every novel whose conception is

acutely timely becomes a *historical* novel by the time it is published, as it discusses a phase of life already superseded. (Obviously, this holds even more true of the German translations of Russian novels.)¹⁷ This time, his criticism of political content is not aimed at assessing the extent to which the colourful illustrations, the concrete documentary material of Soviet reality reinforces the sympathy or aversion of the reader depending on his class origin and his theoretically elaborated ideological convictions. Apart from the appeal of concrete information, the new Soviet literature as historical document enables the present to exercise conscious control over the past. The reader cast in the role of "a prophet looking into the past" knows from his own experience what progress has been made since the completion of the novel, and he must judge "cautiously" — "showing tact towards history" — whether the perspective outlined by the novel was right or wrong. This is the viewpoint from which Lukács passes judgement on the juvenile novel *Factory in the Forest* by A. Karavaeva (to which he erroneously ascribes greater artistic value than to the works of Pilniak and Leonov), as well as on the writings of Vera Inber, Vsevolod Ivanov, N. Bogdanov and L. Panteleev, which vary greatly in character, quality, and genre. He contends that reviewing the latter jointly is justified because "recalling the superseded stage of development from today's vantage point affords both the reader and the writer with a prop to assess the class status, world view, events, and relations between environment and artistic expression".¹⁸

The great importance that Lukács attached to the task of edifying the reader is apparent in his review of Bogdanov's *The First Girl*, which he published (under the name of Sándor Vajda) in the Hungarian-language journal *Sarló és Kalapács* (Sickle and Hammer). The tone and text differ markedly from those of his works addressed to the German reader. (While Lukács frequently published the same review of a book in different periodicals, it was rare for him to write a completely different review of the same book.) In the Hungarian article, analysis was replaced by a brief outline of the story, while criticism was replaced by a more didactic formulation of the historical implications: "Bogdanov's short story takes place in the twenties... Since then, times have changed immensely. Many things that were only planned or suspected have come true... Today we are living in the crucial fourth year of the Five-Year Plan, the Soviet Union is the land of rising Socialism — then, there was civil war, uncertainty, villages full of counter-revolutionary elements;

then, the admission [into the Comsomol] of the first girl was a great event in the whole district. Today it may elicit an understanding smile. Today, millions of working women join the men in building Socialism..."¹⁹

Lukács's *Moscow review* also commented on several books whose authors viewed the emerging new world through the eyes of the enemy or at least of the defeated. Among them, the one that is mildest in tone tackles the memoirs of one-time Social revolutionary E. D. Nikitina, which — though apolitical — give a soberly objective and exciting account of the adventurous escape of thirteen political prisoners. According to Lukács, the book "has only a faint literary tint" (failing to show either the contemporary state of the movement or the historical circumstances), yet it is devoid of the lyrical, excessively heroic or sensational presentation so typical of similar works. Lukács seizes the opportunity to remark: "For the average German reader the workers' underground movement in Tsarist Russia appears to have been teeming with adventures and Romanticism... and this false image was induced and upheld by the novels and memoirs that they had the chance to read: Savinkov (Ropshin), Gershuni or, at a higher level, Leo Deutsch. The memoirs of the Bolsheviks (Piatnitsky, Shapovalov, Krupskaya) were the first to make a close link between illegal work as a militant method and technique, together with all its romantic moments, and the *political* struggle fought for the self-liberation of workers and peasants. It was Lenin's theoretical writings that made it quite clear that the changing content and form of illegality was not the determinant but the concomitant of the development of the workers' movement in Russia." Lukács was quick to draw the timely political lesson: "Back in those days, it seemed that the world of Tsarist Russia was fundamentally different from the 'Sphere of democratic culture'; today illegality is a global phenomenon in the workers' movement from Rome to Peking, from Budapest to Buenos Aires. Even those who keep their distance from the workers' movement cannot fail to see its close connection with politics and economy; the interest in illegal warfare is becoming more and more timely."²⁰

Due to its rigour, analytical method, and the specificities of its basic political and aesthetic principles Lukács's review "The Other Side...", which criticized the novels of Schalom Asch (*Masks*), Chetverikov (*Engineer Karisky's Revolt*) and Rösmann (*Fischbein Surrenders*) is more significant. First, he attacks the principle of *audiatur et altera pars*, a

prejudice on the side of reception. The overriding premise of Lukács's criticism is at once political and aesthetic: "It is formalistic, meaningless, and abstract, and hence, false to presume that the portrayal of *any* class by other classes is *necessarily* interesting and instructive, that the class in question might derive from it at least some *additional* stimulus for its literary self-evaluation. It is not so. It is always the progressive class that understands itself and all the opposing classes. (Within the limits demarcated by its economic position.) The retrograde, reactionary classes gradually lose their ability to know and criticize themselves, and when they describe their class adversaries, they unwittingly end up with a caricature rooted in their growing inertia."²¹

Lukács's argument appears to coincide with Marx's statement that only the forms of a historically superior society (and consciousness) can understand the past ones: "the bourgeois economy was incapable of understanding the feudal, ancient or oriental economies before the self-criticism of bourgeois society began"; by the same token, the Christian religion did not promote the objective comprehension of earlier mythologies before its self-critique was more or less "ready".²² The similarity between the two statements is seemingly enhanced by this remark of Lukács: "It is also true that the proletarian class struggle produced a thorough-going criticism of the Capitalist system and drove it to *temporary self-criticism*", but he immediately adds: "This, however, only applies to the case in which an already obsolete class is viewed by a progressive though not yet victorious class, and *not vice versa*."²³ There is a crucial difference between the two statements on the philosophy of history, which is not merely attributable to the different times at which they were written. While Lukács ascribes to the *progressive class* a natural capacity for correct understanding (consciousness), and to the declining class a dwindling capacity for self-criticism, Marx holds that the basis for a fuller understanding of the *previous stages* realized under "wholly definite conditions" is the self-criticism of the more advanced form. This by no means implies that the progressive class, be it the "rising" bourgeoisie or the proletariat, always has a true conception both of itself and of the classes opposed to it.

The final aesthetic conclusion that Lukács draws from the identification of progress and correct class consciousness is that "... the proletarian revolution is *impossible* to describe from any viewpoint other than that of the proletariat".²⁴ Just what is this "impossible" depiction

of the revolution like, for example, in the book of Schalom Asch, which, his critic claims, is not even a caricature or a hostile pamphlet on the October Revolution, but simply an ordinary impressionistic psychological novel by a "leftist" philistine sick of the revolution? Lukács acknowledges that Asch aspires to objectivity, portrays the figures of Old Russia (landowners, profiteers, manufacturers, etc.) with "energetic brushstrokes" and makes the reader grasp the necessity of their fall; that "sometimes he quite successfully creates authentic characters" and instinctively senses the social relations on the "bourgeois side", though he errs at times. The recognition of these positive features is however, immediately qualified by criticism: The writer's objectivity does not go beyond a *psychological* search for "human" greatness and fallacies on both sides of the divide.

At this juncture, we have a favourable opportunity to compare Lukács's review with Lenin's critique (1921) of Arkady Averchenko's "frantically mad White Guard" book, *Dozens of Knives in the Back of the Revolution*. The political and aesthetic essence of the dilemma is the same: How does the other side depict the revolution? In Lenin's opinion, it is precisely the white-hot rage that makes Averchenko's short stories at times artistically suggestive, a sign of the author's talents, especially when he writes about a topic he knows well from experience, having pondered it and felt it to his marrow. Lenin does not doubt in the least that the writer on the other side of the barricade is capable of *Realism* (Lenin does not use this term, but only implies it) if he knows reality well enough and is honest: [Averchenko] "describes in a strikingly competent way the sentiments and moods of the representatives of old, rich, satisfied and surfeited Russia, of the landowners and manufacturers. That is exactly how the representatives of the ruling classes must see the revolution".²⁵ And this in spite of the fact that Averchenko, unlike Schalom Asch, was unable to comprehend why the lords of old Russia were in the way, why their elimination was necessary.

Obviously, the essential difference between the two book reviews does not derive from the substantial difference between the writers and works (quality, aesthetic level) under review, or from the partial truths of the criticism (Lukács might be right, just as Lenin might be wrong), or again, from the various concrete criteria of evaluation, but from the *method* of criticism. It follows from the difference in methodology and outlook that, in Lenin's view, not even fanatical hatred prevents the

representatives of the former ruling classes from portraying the revolution truthfully ("that is exactly how they should see it"), even though they failed to recognize consciously its true social motive forces. By contrast, Lukács's response — ten years later — to any novel created on the other side of the baricades is best characterized by the old saying: "go tell it to the Marines". In Lenin's judgement, some of Averchenko's short stories were valuable and illuminating from the perspective of the literary self-awareness of Russian workers and peasants, and hence, worthy of republication. When, after appearing in Vienna, Asch's book was published in Budapest, too, Lukács published his review in Hungarian, word for word.²⁶

"Now we started something new about the classics, first of all Tolstoy, now about the new Soviet literature", Sándor Vajda reminisced, recalling his discussions with Lukács at Hütteldorf. There is a short piece about Tolstoy among the articles in 100% signed Sándor Vajda but probably written by Lukács (it bears the marks of his style at any rate).²⁷ Although only implicitly, the author aligns himself with the Russian Marxist tradition (Plekhanov, Lenin), which claims that it is not Tolstoy's reactionary prophecies and preachings, not his philosophy that is immortal, but his art, his lively characterization, which does not sprout from the mental problems of the characters but portrays them as outcomes of their material conditions of existence. Tolstoy was unable to force his own teaching on the characters of his fiction, so his novels refute rather than confirm his philosophy of life, quite contrary to his intentions. "The great poet of the Russian soil" passed judgement on the Russia of landowners, through the impotent hatred of millions of peasants.

The essayist of the *Moskauer Rundschau* sometimes mentioned the classics — Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky — in addition to the latest Soviet literature. The content of his statements about Tolstoy's art was in the same vein as the former ones. But the way in which he talked, and more importantly, the people he talked to about the same topic were different: the German public. Lukács gave a brief summary of the history of Tolstoy's triumph in Germany since the 1880s, and criticized the false, negative ideological elements in the assessment and impact of Tolstoyanism. He supposed that the conditions in Germany had matured to the point at which a real comprehension of Tolstoy's art was now possible.

That was exactly the central concern of Lukács at that time: notably, the manner of reception. "Can Tolstoy exert an influence today on the German worker or the German intellectual? Haven't the class conditions of his questions and answers become so outdated that they can no longer arouse keen interest? Hasn't all his life-work retreated into a historical past?"²⁸

What was really new in this essay, as compared to his article in 1900%, was not his explicit reference to Lenin and Plekhanov concerning the contradiction between Tolstoy's world view and art — ("we respect Tolstoy *only* for his poetry and firmly reject his world view") —, but *the way in which* he treated the virtues and shortcomings of the two — naturally interrelated — issues of world view and poetry. The Tolstoyan manner of artistic representation has not become outdated, Lukács says. For two reasons it is still capable of having an impact on the German worker. In the first place, it depicts the inhuman atrocities accompanying the disintegration of Russian serfdom and the advent of Capitalism (even though the writer is unable to comprehend the essence of Capitalism, or arrive at a revolutionary solution) — which are all directly connected with the reviewer's present. In the second place in contrast to Naturalism and the psychologizing approach, Tolstoy instinctively departs from the relations of *exploitation* (who works for whom) when describing his heroes and their relationships; that is, he portrays his characters as belonging to distinct social strata. "This type of representation has assumed specific importance in our days, when the emerging literature of the proletarian revolution highlights the class struggle as its central issue, when all the problems of literature regarding content and form (construction, characterization, techniques of description, etc.) are condensed in the question of class relations."²⁹

The Tolstoyan example! Only, it is an example of class representation, and not of style. It is not a norm either, but an example — and not only a positive, but also a negative example when we come to contradictory world view. It carries a warning with immediate relevance for the German intellectuals: "... in spite of the sharpest possible criticism of state and society Tolstoy *never turned radically against his class*".

The ideology of "non-violence" only serves to evade the necessity of this break. Tolstoy feels that the question of property lies at the core of all the ethical and religious questions, but as he is unable to solve it, he is forced to make a series of "repugnant compromises". "Some of his

works are sensitively self-critical in this respect; when he explores and depicts the socio-economic foundations of behaviours similar to his. This, however, only means describing the barriers, and not surmounting them."³⁰

In the early thirties, Lukács "did not want to hear anything" of his erstwhile start in aesthetics and the philosophy of history, of *The Theory of the Novel*. The closing train of thoughts in the completed chapter of the book that he planned to write about Dostoyevsky had linked Tolstoy (who "vaguely anticipated a breakthrough into a new historic era") and Dostoyevsky (the Homer or Dante of a new age?) as the past and future forms of the novel, in whose works "this new world is taking shape, detached from all kinds of fighting against the *status quo*, simply as an observed reality", and who no longer had anything to do with nineteenth-century European Romanticism, with the novels of the "perfectly evil" age.³¹ In the *Moskauer Rundschau*, Lukács opposes the one writer to the other in a radically new way, when reviewing the German publication of Dostoyevsky's literary legacy: Tolstoy's world fame is due to his reactionary ideology, he says, but the "*poetic essence*" of his works is not identical with his world view. "In Dostoyevsky's, however, that is *exactly* what is *at the core*. . . . What we find contradictory or reactionary in it is at the same time the guiding principle of his art."³²

Dostoyevsky, Lukács asserts now, is the representative of the petty bourgeois intellectual. In *The Devils*, "seized with a petty-bourgeois counter-revolutionary rage", he distorts the contours of his own characters "only so as to be able to slander the revolution and the revolutionaries".

Lukács seems to have completely and definitively forgotten what he had written about *The Devils* when a part of Dostoyevsky's literary legacy was published in the early twenties. Then he had demonstrated that there was a conflict between Dostoyevsky's political tendency and artistic vision. (The political condemnation of the revolution suddenly turns into a "poetic apotheosis of the absolute, psychic need for the revolution" in Dostoyevsky.) He seems to have forgotten about the complex dialectical relations that, as he showed, characterized the pamphleteer, the utopian critic of the lifeless alienated world of Capitalism on the one hand, and the poet on the other, as well as the conflict between them: "Therefore Dostoyevsky must necessarily fail in the struggle to transform the social element of human existence into a purely spiritual

one. His failure, however, is transfigured into a magnificent *poetic triumph*: no one has exposed the true social roots of the tragedy of certain types of people in their purest manifestations, no one has exposed them and disclosed them as insightfully as Dostoyevsky did."³³

Lukács's *Moscow review* was born in a period when this poetic triumph had vanished. Dostoyevsky's influence in Germany did not stimulate a metamorphosis toward revolution, but instead toward its polar opposite. Thus, there is no decisive difference between the negative, "repugnant" *examples* of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky and their social addressees. "Thus, Dostoyevsky, the content and tendency of whose life-work in fact designated him as the poet of the 'Black Hundreds' and tsarist Imperialism, became at the same time the writer of a part of the romantic anti-Capitalist opposition of petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals, of a stratum that — though hesitating between the left and the right — has a wide and smoothly trodden path before it, leading to the right, to reaction (today: Fascism), and only a narrow, uneven path leading to the revolution. Dostoyevsky . . . decades ahead of his time has provided the petty bourgeois intellectuals with an ideology by means of which they can distance themselves from the revolution."³⁴

One can, regretfully or with *Schadenfreude*, call Lukács's judgement the sectarian self-renunciation of a neophyte slipping into the evil reality of fanaticism; one may be outraged that he once called the author of *Crime and Punishment* the Homer or Dante of the future, while now he disparages him; one may objectively contend that his aesthetic value system hit rock bottom when he applied it as a party ideologist. Yet all our judgements will remain only partially valid unless we go beyond the surface of these seemingly concrete literary interpretations. This is not an instance of bad taste. Lukács sentences Dostoyevsky to death. (Incidentally, Dostoyevsky's image bears striking resemblance to Nietzsche's here; his ideological role could all but replace the latter's.) But his judgement is not essentially based on literary theory or aesthetics. Rather, it is a social consequence. By prophesying the sudden decline of Dostoyevsky's glory, Lukács condemns to death first and foremost the German petty bourgeois intellectuals, at a historic moment when the victory of the proletarian revolution over rising Fascism is imminent. That is why Dostoyevsky is not merely a literary case, an example marking out aesthetic values (similarly to Tolstoy), but suggests an ideological-political, or if you will, ethical alternative resembling the

dilemma of "religious Atheism": a choice between Fascism and Bolshevism.

A title like "Dostoyevsky in Germany" would fit Lukács's review perfectly. Offering a critique of both the author and the spirit of his reception, Lukács also criticizes the essays in the volume containing Raskolnikov's diary, the first version of *The Brothers Karamazov*, first of all for their psychologizing approach to literature. Methodologically, he sees the Freudian approach as completely useless: "For us it makes no difference at all whether, for example, Dostoyevsky had a 'castration complex' or not, and we think that professor Freund's preface with its psychoanalytic evaluation of the literary legacy can have only a medical relevance and none whatever to literary history."

Neither is his opinion of the whole venture less condemnatory. "The Dostoyevsky legacy, the collection and preservation of which is to the credit of the Soviet government, was published in Germany in such a way that it is characterized by a messy admixture of mechanical philology and literary snobbery; the explanations are partly characterized by useless philological meticulousness and partly by an essayistic style, by the far-too-well-known 'abstruse theorizing' about Dostoyevsky's 'profundities'."³⁵

Even harsher is Lukács's condemnation of the theoretical attempts on the "other side" of the essays published in the periodical of the Russian *émigré* intellectuals in Germany. These pieces on literary history and philosophy (by members of the former *Logos*—Circle) dealt, for example, with Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, with Soviet proletarian literature and the Russian Revolution, with Socialism and Christianity. Their spiritual level and message, he claims, are disgracefully low. Philosophy "on the other side" is dominated by the mystical answer given to the religious formulation of the question, and the spiritual profile of the *émigré* journal resembles the ideology of Kondratiev and his colleagues.³⁶

As Sándor Vajda recalled, Lukács — still far from Moscow — talked with enthusiasm of the works of Soviet literature as if displaying various facets of a masterfully polished gem. And although he did not believe in the miraculous and sudden birth of a brand-new art, he did believe, unlike Paul Ernst, that the revolution of the proletariat would bring immense progress in Russian literature. No doubt, the contributor to the *Moskauer Rundschau* still cherished this conviction. Yet, having become acquainted with the actual Soviet novels portraying the new form, new

people, and new relations of a "nascent life", criticism slowly came to outweigh praise in his reviews — and to a greater extent than one might expect from a critic regarding himself as "the instrument of the cause". So far, he had not found a single masterpiece in the art of the proletariat.

Did the gem itself turn out to be only roughly polished when viewed closely, or was it the light of Lukács's aesthetics that failed to show off its rich iridescence?

It is Lukács's review on the second volume of Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don* that affords us the best occasion to seek an answer to these questions, as it encapsulates the then salient ideological, politico-tactical points and beyond these, the "purely" aesthetic-theoretical characteristics of the whole *Moscow review*, as well. Sholokhov's novel could be seen as the triumphant example of a dream come true: a polished diamond among semi-precious stones. Yet it fails to be such, even though Lukács apotheosized the first part as an artistic sensation with unparalleled descriptions and portraits, rivalling the classics. Although Lukács declared that "the second volume of *And Quiet Flows the Don*, despite all its shortcomings, towers high over the bulk of the bourgeois literature of recent years",³⁷ he regarded the continuation as Sholokhov's artistic failure.

What standard does Lukács apply as a standard? He uses *class standards*, applying them to Sholokhov's book just as he did to the rest of the Soviet novels. This is the basic yardstick of his aesthetics, the means to gauge the quality and values of a work. Class determines the individual, class relations determine interpersonal relations, the fate of a class determines the individual fate. If the old truism holds in aesthetics — that style makes man —, then, Lukács says, one must add: man, in turn, is the product of his class status. The description of the relationship between social existence and individual character does not produce artistic values unless "the author sees the *class division* as a *process* and not as something given", unless he represents it "dialectically and not schematically, artistically and not merely as a means of agitation", "depicting it as a living force that determines the characters of the individuals, that makes the fates of the individuals, and representation as such, authentic through the development of character, through the interlacing of destinies".³⁸

It is not at all surprising that the critic of the *Moskauer Rundschau* should apply this very standard. In the course of analyzing the drama-

turgical views of Marx and Engels, for example, he had concluded that the tragic was the product of objectively insurmountable conflicts into which the representative personalities of history were thrown by their class status. It is no wonder, then, that he expressed the failure to represent the true side of the war in the first volume of Sholokhov's novel in *these very words*: "What was conspicuously, almost totally, missing from the picture was the representation and analysis of the *particular* response that the war aroused in the Cossacks of the Don region due to their *particular class position*."³⁹

Neither is it surprising that, by using the class measure consistently, Lukács not only equated the class base of a work and its reception, but derived the artist's consciousness and the process of creation from the same basis, as well. Marxist analysis, he claims, has to explore, on the one hand, the interrelated chain of class position — ideology — literary form, while on the other, it has to show "how the class position of the poet manifests itself in the process of creation, how class status puts its pronounced mark on the specific problems of literature as well, etc."⁴⁰

This logically results in the condemnatory judgement: Sholokhov's consciousness is the consciousness of a Cossack.

The fact that Lukács employed class as his supreme standard is nothing to be surprised at. What does surprise one is rather the fact that this type of aesthetic determinism conspicuously tallies with the *vulgar sociological* approach, mostly based on Plekhanov, that prevailed in the Soviet theory of art in 1930–1931. This coincidence is, however, a mere *illusion* reinforced by the startling similarity in terminology. To accept the superficial explanation that Lukács was quick enough to adjust tactically to the dominant ideology, would be to arrive at a rash conclusion, to fall into a trap.⁴¹ To be sure if we overlook what has been demonstrated above — namely, the fact that the critic of the *Moskauer Rundschau* addressed both the public in *Berlin* and German readers in Moscow, that it was possible for him to analyse Sholokhov's and Panfiorov's novels because they had been published in German — then it might seem logical to assume that (out of "self-defence" after a political "fiasco") Lukács constantly adapted to the mainstream of literary policy. Then it might seem logical to assume that he simply joined the anti-RAPP critics of Sholokhov and the panegyrists of Panfiorov, in order to contribute to the debates on Soviet literature, and further, that his aesthetic doctrines (class determination, anti-Psychologism, etc.) can be neatly deduced exactly from this effort.

Lukács, however, did not follow the tactical, ideological, and theoretical mainstream period quite so directly in his literary criticism, just as he did not directly adapt to it in philosophy, either. In point of fact, there is *continuation* here, and a particular sort of *new start*. Continuation — for Lukács refused to adopt the concepts of “psycho-ideology” and class inherited by vulgar art sociology from Plekhanov, and instead, reached back to his *own* earlier conception of class consciousness.

To Lukács’s mind, Sholokhov’s description lacks “the *social moment*, the class position of the Cossacks of the Don region”, for “there is practically no word uttered about the inner class differentiation of the Cossack villages”.

And even if the author correctly observed, some of the relevant factors: “in the all-round picture drawn by Sholokhov, they fail to assume their proper *comprehensive significance*”. He not only charges that the writer “sees reality through the eyes of the Cossacks”, but he also criticizes him for his poetic vision, “his dry chronicling” (enumeration of details and facts), “bare intellectualism”, “shapeless agitation”.⁴²

Lukács’s criticism is the diametrical opposite of contemporary RAPPist criticism, and not only because he terms the first volume of Sholokhov’s work an artistic sensation, and not “kulak reading”. He is opposed to all vulgar approaches regarding methodology: what he looks for is not the narrow-minded psycho-ideology of *one* class — a limited, static proletarian class consciousness — but the method of *totality* (in artistic representation). This, of course, cannot leave out either the viewpoint of the proletariat or class determination, but Lukács here returns to a central philosophical category of *History and Class Consciousness*. “One cannot postulate the totality of the object”, he wrote in 1921, “unless the positing subject is a totality himself; unless he is forced to conceive of the object as totality in order to be able to conceive of himself. In modern society this viewpoint of totality as subject is only and exclusively provided by the *classes*”.

The next link in the chain of thought is also significant: Marx has superseded the outlook of classic national economics that viewed Capitalist development from the standpoint of *individual Capitalists*. “Marx’s *Capital* represents a radical break with this procedure. Note that he acts the part of an *agitator who treats every aspect exclusively from the proletarian standpoint* [emphasis added]. Such a one-sided approach would only result in a new vulgar economics with plus and minus signs

reversed. His method is to consider the problems of the whole of Capitalist society as problems of the classes constituting it (Capitalists and proletarians), the classes being regarded as totalities (*Gesamtheiten*).⁴³

Lukács's articles on Sholokhov have a further immediate relevance to the foregoing, which also confirms that he did use the *philosophical* categories developed in the twenties as a literary principle and critical tool. This is the interrelation between natural and social factors in the first volume of *And Quiet Flows the Don*. The incredible beauty of the first volume derives from a description of the natural surroundings of the Don region, but it is precisely this artistic merit that prefigures the deficiency of the forthcoming part, as the picture of nature is devoid of the social element (classes as "totalities"). "As long as a backward village lives its quiet life relatively isolated from the outside world, only the intrinsically 'natural' processes of the little-differentiated Cossack village send slight repercussions to the social surface; in other words, representation is dominated by those moments of life that indeed embody the linkage with nature on the one hand, and on the other, constitute the elemental 'natural' moments of personal life." When, however, the *Quiet Don* stirs to life, and the social forces perpetually working underneath break to the surface as tangible springs of action, Sholokhov's earlier brilliant instruments of expression prove to be insufficient. He is unable to depict "how the Cossacks leave behind their former elemental lives, how this elemental force works later (as the inevitable concomitant of their social position) when their consciousness has already matured, and how it decisively influences their conscious acts and decisions in either direction".⁴⁴

One cannot help noticing that here Lukács applies as an aesthetic principle the well-known, much-debated (and misunderstood) idea put forth in *History and Class Consciousness*: the objective dialectic of nature is methodologically inseparable from the dialectic of society in which the subject is part of this dialectical interaction. The main question to answer here is not whether Lukács was right in renouncing Sholokhov or not. (Incidentally, he himself answered this question in the forties, when he again analyzed Sholokhov's novel, the heroic epic of the Civil War, and declared it to be a sublime continuation of Gorky's art.) Also, at this juncture, the *philosophical* truth of Lukács's assertion is secondary. What is important here is that he applies this statement to art. And in art, it is indeed true that "nature is a societal category. That is to say,

whatever is held to be natural at any given stage of social development, however this nature is related to man and whatever form his involvement with it takes, i.e., nature's form, its content, its range, and its objectivity are all socially conditioned".⁴⁵

Complementing the review of the second volume of *And Quiet Flows the Don* is his article about the second volume of Panfiorov's *Bruski*.⁴⁶ It is in fact its positive counterpart: in the latter's novel, Lukács has finally spotted a gem, so to speak. Despite all his serious reservations, he eventually concludes that the writer has succeeded in portraying dialectically the transformation and class struggle of a village in the Volga region. The formerly closed world of the village opens up in the second volume: the class struggle unfolding in the houses, streets, fields, and "communes of the have-nots" is becoming tied with ever stronger threads to the totality of Soviet reality, and reflects with ever richer and more variegated hues the struggle waged in the country as a whole for the construction of Socialism. In the first part of the novel, the class-related elements were only indirectly expressed and the class goals manifested themselves in the views of primitive peasants only in "human" (instinctive, eruptive), "natural" forms. In the continuation by contrast, the more intense, qualitatively higher forms of conflicts are prompting both the pioneers of Socialism and their antagonists to more conscious and far-sighted action.

The contrast between Lukács's evaluation of Sholokhov and Panfiorov is tangible, yet it cannot be directly explained by the positions that the two writers occupied in Soviet literature. (Certainly, Lukács must have agreed with the *Pravda* and *Komsomolskaya Pravda* articles criticizing RAPP, the RAPP leaders, and the Panfiorov group attacking Averbakh, just as he had earlier agreed with the criticism of Deborin.) Yet the contrast is not a political one. It is based, rather, on an analogy, on parallel criteria and methods: the objective tendencies of development in society as a whole, awakening to consciousness from the "natural" state; representation of class relations, organic interaction of individual fate and community, etc. The *Bruski* review employs a new philosophical argument — the dialectic of chance and necessity — which, in Lukács's judgement, is especially important for the composition of a novel. The events in the characters' personal lives that often strongly influence the main components of the plot line are, he writes, precisely those accidents, in the Marxist sense, in and by means of which the laws

of the development of totalities manifest themselves in an adequately constructed novel, these accidents and their points of convergence, chosen arbitrarily by the writer, after all, do not coincide with the nodal points of the main line of action.

No doubt there were some contemporary (literary) political motives underlying the articles on recent Soviet fiction by the correspondent of the *Moskauer Rundschau*. There were considerations dictated by the Communist movement. "I have never yet complained that political activity disrupted my work. On the contrary political activity only even stimulates my work, because it focuses issues more sharply, makes it possible to see more clearly what people's real aims are, and so on."⁴⁷

When a journalist is the spokesman of the cause held to be the right one, then the final outcome of his endeavours depends not only on the true worth of the cause, but also on whether his literary value judgement derives solely from tactical considerations or is in addition theoretically well-founded (i.e., not slavishly subordinated to tactics; subordinated to tactics); whether, in his literary criticism, the political moment is directly and mechanically present, or is implied indirectly through mediation.

In 1930-1931, in Lukács's "partisan aesthetics" both tendencies were present in an intricate interrelation. As the critic of the German reader, of the interpretative practice of the petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals, of the predictable ideological impact of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky — in short, of the "other side" — he tipped the scales, measuring with a political-tactical standard dictated by his revolutionary sectarianism.

Yet Lukács did not become the fanatical apologist of the existing proletarian literature. What he missed in the "documents" of the "nascent life" was not the romantic perspective, not the illusions of a class enamoured of itself. He confirmed the unfavourable opinion of avant-garde art that he had voiced in the early twenties, continued to criticize both Naturalism and Psychologism, and did not cease to denounce the insertion into fiction of direct agitation or of Socialist ideological tenets in their rudimentary, "shapeless" form. It is the reviews on the Sholokhov and Panfiorov novels that, among others, prove that the theoretical basis of his judgement was never purely sociological; he did not make a direct connection between his aesthetic values and his tactics, but discarding Plekhanov's orthodoxy, tried to adjust them to universal philosophical categories. But as regards theory, his *Moscow Review* was itself contradictory. Several categories of *History and Class Consciousness*

assumed a new aesthetic significance, but they (along with several other Marxist concepts, that he adopted) remained abstract and unspecified, so that they only loosely fitted the literary material. His theory itself was still developing, and it was centred on *Dialectical Materialist* representation rather than on the Realist, or Socialist Realist, method. Lukács hardly used these notions as instruments of criticism.

When he seemed to be reviewing only Soviet literature, writing about *And Quiet Flows the Don*, life in the Volga region, the class struggles in Soviet Russia, he addressed — though often indirectly — the German reader. He spoke of *historical* novels. After all, what in Russia was history was the possible future for a Germany stricken by grave political and economic crises. Lukács hoped that Germany, which was in the midst of class struggles, stood on the verge of a *revolutionary decision*. This is *one* reason why he thought that “the class struggle” was the “central topic” of the emerging literature of proletarian revolution; that its problems of form and content were “concentrated in the question of class relations”. This is *one* reason why he considered it imperative to take the road leading from spontaneity to consciousness; why this literature, he claimed, should both represent and strengthen *class consciousness*.

Similarly, the most important role of proletarian juvenile literature was to improve the class consciousness of children. In an article contributed to *Sarló és kalapács* from Berlin, Lukács firmly denounced children's stories with an alien class content. [Young people] “are inspired to false passivity by *Cinderella*: after all, the good ones triumph in the teeth of wickedness... Belief in ultimate justice, piety, or phantasms rooted in strange old times, in the ‘good old days’, oriental treasure hunters, wise caliphs in disguise, fill the minds of proletarian children reading the standard ‘literature’ for children... No magic is needed; today's prole child knows that no help can be expected from on high as things stand today.” In Lukács's judgement, the works that Social Democratic authors wrote for young people simply were not literature; they either lacked the requisite social or political implications, or resembled a third rate editorial. Nor did he find to praise in Russian, German, and Hungarian writings for adolescents: “apart from some early attempts in the literature of the Hungarian proletarian revolution, the requirements and education of class-conscious future generations have been completely forgotten”.⁴⁸

Lukács's first stay in Moscow coincided with decisive social and political changes in the Soviet Union. The fronts in philosophy were being rearranged, the old organizational frameworks of art and literature slowly gave way (internal split in RAPP, its official denunciation). However, the basis for the turnaround and the stabilization after the reconstruction was the reshuffling of the economy (elimination of the kulaks, collectivization, industrialization): The first Five-Year Plan was under way. The introduction and early successes of long-term economic planning attracted immense attention (as well as doubts and criticism) all over the world. The prestige of the Soviet Union was growing, especially in the countries where the Capitalist system seemed to be shaky, its final collapse already in sight due to the Depression. The conviction that the causal chain of "crisis — new world war — new Socialist revolutions" was unavoidable was gaining strength in the Communist movement.

Henri Barbusse's travelogue of Russia was written before the turnaround (1927), when the Five-Year Plan was still only a hope and the evaluation of the Soviet Union in the West was mostly based on the bloody incidents of the Civil War, the horrors of GPU terror, the Georgian question (the quelling of the Menshevik revolt in 1924). Barbusse's book was published in German in 1930; Lukács warmly greeted the chronicler fanatically devoted to the search for truth, who had written a reliable account of Soviet development amidst a welter of "slander, confused perplexity and lack of good will". He praised the travel account, and not only because it showed that, in the new Soviet system, "there is a new type of man in the making, partly mature already, who hardly resembles the former inhabitants of the country even in his outward appearance". His appreciation of the book was also attributable to Barbusse's method. Barbusse had the courage to praise the Soviet Union unconditionally, and refused to select only certain "true" details that might become tools for slander. "Barbusse uses this — largely methodological — outlook to take up the cudgels for the *whole of this development*, to emphasize strongly its significance for world history."⁴⁹

Anyone who wishes to study public reaction to the first Five-Year Plan as well as the instruments of agitation and propaganda that were used to spread news of the Great Plan in the Capitalist countries can take as a typical historical source. M. Ilin's didactical "story", which in effect

came under the heading of "tabloid-press political guidelines". A version revised for the German public appeared in 1932. At the end of his work, Ilin gave an account of his impressions in Berlin: flood-lit palaces and filthy crumbling slums, apartment with central heating and dirty holes where 10 people were jammed into 15 to 20 square metres, closed-down factories and crowds queuing up for jobs. On 1 May 1919, Ilin was in Wedding, where fighting was taking place on the barricades. "Many things are forbidden in this town. One can often hear: that is not allowed. And that must be why you bump into a policeman on every corner in Wedding."⁵⁰

No one could possibly ignore these things, and Lukács certainly did not ignore them when, in his last review to appear in *Moskauer Rundschau*, he gave a brief evaluation of Johannes R. Becher's epic poem, *The Great Plan*, on the construction of Socialism. The reviewer identified the topic of the poem very clearly: "it is not so much an epic description of the Five-Year Plan as it is its lyrical reflection in the brains and nerves of the German workers in their hearts and minds".⁵¹

Which are the positive features of *The Great Plan* that Lukács found worth pointing out? It steered clear of the unfortunate extremes of bare narration of facts on the one hand, and abstract enthusiasm on the other. It recreated the *atmosphere* of everyday Soviet life upon which a nation was being constructed.

"The atmosphere, he suggests, is not that of a state but that of a *process*; the realized totality is in motion, making rapid progress: The Socialist transformation of one-sixth of the globe is being unveiled in its *interaction* with the international revolution and counter-revolution."⁵²

Becher's main asset, the review says, was that he could envelop lyricism in narration in such a way that it *immediately* switched over to *agitation*, to a call for revolutionary action. Thus the hymn of the Five-Year Plan was a great artistic feat by virtue of its political tendency.

The reasons outlined above as well as the close personal connection between reviewer and author only partly explain why Lukács praised Becher's epic poem in this way. The poem, as Trude Richter later aptly remarked, "is an odd mixture of ascetic, proletarian-puritanical form and an impersonal international sympathy for the country of the Soviets, and yet it is in many respects an abstract work".⁵³

Standing up for *The Great Plan* was more than a merely personal and aesthetic matter. It was a party assignment for Lukács. Becher sent an

urgent note to the International Association of Revolutionary Writers on 16 August 1931, asking them to arrange for prominent authors to review his poem in *Pravda*, the *Moskauer Rundschau* and possibly *Inprekorr*.⁵⁴ At that time, a right-wing paper was already clamouring to have the book banned in Germany. In his letter of 14 November 1931, Becher sent Lukács's review from Berlin to Moscow for the second time.

The *Moscow Review* ended in Berlin.

"FASCISM OR BOLSHEVISM"

GERMAN PROLETARIAN LITERATURE — GERMAN INTELLECTUALS

“FASCISM OR BOLSHEVISM”

change. Lukács had been assigned to Berlin by the “honorable daily duties”. This was once again not his own decision, although one may suspect that he had in some way persuaded the secretary of the International Association of Revolutionary Writers (led by Bela Illés) to transfer him to Berlin in order that he might help Johannes N. Becker to combat the ultra-leftist trend gaining ground in the Association of German Proletarian Writers (BPRS). There is no need to enlarge upon the in-fighting between the leftist opposition (Bela Illés, Alfred Kermán, Müller-Vogt, Karl Bräuer-Rostfänger, Aladar Kocsis) and the Becker-group (Bina, Andor Gábor, Winifred, Lukács) over the proposed programme drawn up by Komput and Bräuer-Rostfänger in the spirit of the *proletcult*. What is important to stress here is that Lukács was on party assignment, and that, in this factional struggle, he represented the anti-stalinist position of the BPRS leadership not merely out of party discipline but also out of theoretical conviction. He also enjoyed the backing of the leaders of the German Communist Party (Leo Pöhl, Heinz Neumann, Ernst Thälmann, Hermann Kretschmer, Willi Münzenberg).²

Lukács's position (and role) in Berlin was a dual one in several respects. First and foremost, it was legal and illegal at the same time. He was a well-known “German writer” but it was also known that he was a Communist and a member of the German Party. This duality resulted from strongly articulated orders in Vienna: “My position in Germany, then was that I had received official permission to continue my official activities as a writer. But I also said that I should refrain from participating in politics.”³ Of course, despite this order, Lukács did in the “semi-legal” of politics, as he featured in Party papers and newspapers even under the pseudonyms Keller or Dr. Hans Keller. His literary essays and articles appeared in the press under his own name.

GERMAN PROLETARIAN LITERATURE — GERMAN INTELLECTUALS

Summer 1931, Berlin — a new venue in Lukács's life. His role had changed: He was again a politician, a leading party activist with "innumerable daily duties". This was once again not his own decision, although one may suspect that he had in some way pressured the secretariat of the International Association of Revolutionary Writers led by Béla Illés to transfer him to Berlin in order that he might help Johannes R. Becker to combat the ultra-leftist trend gaining ground in the Association of German Proletarian Writers (BPRS). There is no need to enlarge upon the in-fighting between the leftist opposition (Reha Rothschild, Alfred Kemény, Möller-Vago, Karl Biró-Rosinger, Aladár Komját) and the Becher-group (Biha, Andor Gábor, Wittfogel, Lukács) over the proposed programme drawn up by Komját and Biró-Rosinger in the spirit of the *proletcult*.¹ What is important to stress here is that Lukács was on party assignment, and that, in *this* factional struggle, he represented the *anti-sectarian* position of the BPRS leadership not merely out of party discipline but also out of theoretical conviction. He also enjoyed the backing of the leaders of the German Communist Party (Leo Flieg, Heinz Neumann, Ernst Thälmann, Hermann Remmele, Willi Münzenberg).²

Lukács's position (and role) in Berlin was a *dual* one in several respects. First and foremost, it was legal and illegal at the same time. He was a well-known "German writer" but it was also known that he was a Communist and a member of the German Party. This duality reminds one strongly of his period of exile in Vienna: "My position in Germany then was that I had received official permission to continue my cultural activities as a writer. But I was told that I should refrain from interfering in politics."³ Of course, despite this order, Lukács lived in the "whirligig" of politics, but he featured in Party actions and documents only under the pseudonym Keller or Dr. Hans Keller; his literary essays and articles appeared in the press under his own name.

Lukács's role as a Party official is quite precisely summarized in a short curriculum vitae that he wrote in 1941 "In 1931 I went to Berlin, where the German Communist Party appointed me to head the group of Communists within the Association of German Writers. In this capacity I succeeded in organizing a United-Front movement involving left-wing bourgeois, Social Democratic and Communist writers; the followers of this movement became the majority in the largest regional branch of the Association in Berlin; on that occasion I was elected vice president of the Berlin organization (the chairman was a leftist bourgeois writer). These successes encouraged the Party to send me to other organizations of intellectuals as a leading official, and in this capacity I took part in the work of the Association of Proletarian Writers, held lectures at the Marxist Workers' Academy, as well as in some major towns."⁴

There is hardly anything to be added to this, especially since the basic documents on the work of these organizations (and Lukács) between 1931 and 1933 are now accessible.⁵ It must be emphasized, however, that Lukács's endeavours as a literary politician in Berlin involved two interrelated areas. One task was to enforce the cultural and artistic policy of the German Party, to develop the strategic programme of the BPRS. So as to lay the groundwork for the emergence of a German proletarian literature, to strengthen the organization and train its cadres. (The new programme had been drawn up in cooperation with Keller⁶ but met with no official approbation — that is exactly what had happened to Blum's Theses.) The other task involved the Popular-Front policy against Fascism, in particular the organization and "intellectual propaganda" that he carried out in the Defensive Alliance of German Writers (SDS). Although frequently the focus of controversy both fields of Lukács's activity were *dominated by practical anti-sectarianism*.

A letter of Lukács, dated autumn 1931⁷ reveals that the daily efforts to organize the "prominent" German writers took up all his time, leaving hardly any for philosophy. To illustrate the difficulties and conflicts that he encountered in the course of his "intellectual" work, it is worth quoting a little-known episode — the epitome of frustrating misunderstanding. In late 1929 and early 1930, Walter Benjamin, Bertold Brecht, Herbert Ihering, and Bernard von Brentano were planning to launch a journal under the title *Krisis und Kritik* in order to enable the experts of the bourgeois camp to describe the crises in science and art, and the Marxists to explicate certain questions of Dialectical Material-

ism with appeal to bourgeois intellectuals. Lukács probably joined the preparations in mid-1931. A serious conflict between the two sides is suggested by a draft letter to Lukács found in Brecht's notebook. The full text runs as follows:

"D[ear] L[ukács],

I deeply regret that the work around the journal apparently has gotten stranded. It is perfectly true that during our few meetings — which would not have come about but for our persistence — both Brentano and I have always been sceptical about the propaganda *methods* you recommended; also, we have always been opposed to an excessively abstract definition of 'intellectuals' as its interpretation seemed impractical to us for political purposes. In our opinion, a journal of the kind that you last proposed was not efficient enough; what is more, it was downright mistaken under certain circumstances. A manifestly preachy attitude and the stress on our superiority are not sensible now, even if we are aware that, due to their deteriorating economic position, the intellectuals would be willing to come to terms with us over certain issues.⁺

Dear Lukács, you yourself made us — me and Brentano — feel your condescension very strongly, and Brentano's passionate outburst demanding that you yield to his arguments and listen to him must have shown to you how far dictating might lead. This (otherwise quite insignificant) scene would not have taken place, had we [the text breaks off here]

⁺ It is no doubt mistaken to believe that the intellectuals, however slightly shaken by a crisis, will drop into the lap of Communism like ripe pears."⁸

If we disregard the letter's (typical) subjective elements suggestive of the mood, emotions (vanity), and personalities of those involved, along with the fact that Brecht *interrupted* the letter, then we can uncover here the actual and essential difference between the two proposed methods of intellectual propaganda: on the one hand, cooperation, the forging of a unity in *controversies* through the *theoretical* exposition of one's — Marxist — position (Lukács); and on the other, practical rapprochement as free as possible of polemics and theoretical confrontation (Brecht, Brentano). It seems, however, completely unfounded to conclude that the idea of launching the journal was wrecked by Lukács's "haughty

rejection". It is likewise an untenable exaggeration to claim that, in this case, Lukács failed to realize the necessity of this means of finding allies for the struggle against Fascist ideology.⁹ These conclusions are contradicted not only by several anti-Fascist actions of the SDS, but also by the fact that the talks on starting the journal did *not* stop, and even promised positive results in early 1932. On 14 November 1931, Becher informed the leaders of the International Association of Revolutionary Writers: "by 15 January we shall have come out with a new journal in cooperation with a few bourgeois writers (Brecht, Brentano, Ihering) monthly running to 80 pages. We hope to achieve record performance with the new journal".¹⁰

The Brecht-Lukács affair might appear typical of Lukács's personality and behaviour as an activist, giving the false impression that he was doctrinaire. This compels us to devote a few more words to the "superiority" and "abstractness" of a "brave and clever man" (to use Anna Seghers's words).

Luckily, we have more than one witness to summon. Let us ignore the more famous ones here, calling instead upon a person who met Lukács in another domain of practical work: Trude Richter, the secretary of the BPRS. Just what was that superiority and philosophical abstractness like, after all? Let us illustrate it with another episode, which took place one Sunday in Berlin: "Lukács's theoretical superiority was beyond doubt to all of us . . . Yet his speeches and articles were cast in such an abstract intellectual language that a simple reader or listener often failed to comprehend it. And not only the simple one. I remember a Sunday evening when we all came together at the Gábors's in Seesener Strasse and discussed Realism. Lukács embarked on such an elevated, extremely abstract train of philosophical thoughts that none of us could follow him. When at last he took a break, Gábor interjected jokingly, as he always did: 'Saint Francis preaching to the fish'."

In Trude Richter's judgement, Lukács's sense of superiority never sought personal targets, it was never contemptuous of others. She recalls that she could call him between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. any time with any problem. "I didn't need to be told twice. That is how our countless telephone conversations began.

'Are you still talking?'

We were always still talking. The operator lost her patience eventually. Lukács never did."¹¹

For Lukács, the Communist movement had always been a *platform* — in Vienna, Berlin, and Moscow; a platform in a university lecture room, and not one in a secondary school classroom. Certainly, linking philosophy and party practice for pedagogical purposes was not always successful, but it is quite certain that he firmly refused to lower his theoretical standards in order to cater to the “level” of the public, that he shunned pragmatic simplifications emphasizing the primacy of practical tasks. There might have been something provocatively didactic about Dr. Hans Keller, but Becher’s contemporary sonnet nonetheless immortalized Lukács’s effort to teach the *whole universe* by revealing the truth, values: “You have shown again that the dignity of writing (is a clean path. This is our honour. To see inner Part and outer Whole.) (Your teaching helped us come of age.) Thank you. The best form of gratitude is:) The poem that has attained a certain rank and is accomplished.”¹²

And Lukács did teach: in the workers’ academy of the Party,¹³ in all the training forums of the BPRS. The latter included a central course for lecturers in which he regularly analyzed the most topical issues of literary theory and policy (content and form, taste and judgement, world view and literature, etc.). The course’s workshops and evening debates over new proletarian novels often highlighted the fundamental principles of Marxist criticism, the problems of difference between worthless poems and ones “that have attained a certain rank”, between correctly and defectively developed epic characters in novels.¹⁴

The same issues were thrashed out on the pages of *Die Linkskurve* (the theoretical journal of the BPRS) as well. Just as throughout the entire period of Fascism and the construction of Soviet Socialism, Lukács enunciated, both directly and indirectly, in both theoretical and tactical terms, his position concerning all the existing — though not always real — dilemmas of the age. Although there was a duality of genres between his theoretical writings and journal articles, and there was some incongruence between the scholar and the politician, this period was nevertheless more typically one of *unity*.

A reliable inventory of the theoretical activities that Lukács carried out in Berlin was set down by Andor Gábor in his bio-bibliography: “Between 1931 and 1933, Lukács lived in Berlin, acting as one of the leading ideologues of the German Party’s intellectual work and the literary movement of the proletarian revolution. He took part in editing

Linkskurve, the journal of the Association of Proletarian Revolutionary Writers, and published several normative essays on the fundamental questions of the literary movement of the German proletarian revolution (on Willi Bredel's novels, problems of political tendency and partisanship, reportage and portrayal, etc.). In these essays, Lukács raised his voice equally against the prevalent urge to surrender to bourgeois literature and against deviations into *proletcult*, and argued for Socialist Realism at the same time. In addition to these periodicals several others published Lukács's writings, e.g., the journal of German free-thinkers, *Illustrierte Neue Welt* (articles on Goethe, Feuerbach, Marx), Moscow's *Literatur der Weltrevolution* (on Bernard Shaw, the question of satire), *Der Rote Aufbau* (on the slogans of Liberalism and Marxism), *Welt am Abend* (on the heritage of classical literature), etc. He held lectures and courses at the *Marxistische Arbeiterschule* and the Association of Proletarian Revolutionary Writers on topical questions of literature and philosophy (courses: introduction to the Marxist theory of literature; Franz Mehring; Hegel; Goethe; etc.). He delivered lectures on Fascist literature in other towns of the Reich (Düsseldorf: The literary theory of National Socialism; Cologne: The literary crisis of contemporary Fascism; Frankfurt: The Fascistic falsification of Hegel, etc.).¹⁵

The list itself does not reveal that Lukács's writings for journals and his "partisan" aesthetics also implied the *criticism of the aesthetic-literary consciousness* of the German proletarians (in particular, of its representatives within the party), that is, a critique of ideology. The following episode clearly demonstrates both the nature and necessity of this critique: "Erich Weiner, a well-known German Communist writer turned up at the Association of German Proletarian Revolutionary Writers in despair. The reason that he was so upset was tragicomic. Some workers' organization — if I remember rightly, it was a trade union — commissioned him to write a hymn. The melody that they prescribed predetermined the size of the poem at 18 lines. But the commissioning organization specified that these 18 lines should 'incorporate' 22 current slogans. The highly experienced Weiner accomplished the task, though it was no sailing. But when the poem was ready, the union asked him to 'incorporate' another two slogans that had come up in the meantime. Such was Weiner's state of mind when he came to see us..."¹⁶

In retrospect, it would have been better, had there existed a unified and stable relationship between Lukács's criteria for aesthetic and

ideological criticism. Then, the question as to what extent "external" factors distorted his artistic judgement could not be raised as dramatically as it is today. Then, it would be easier to dispel the legend according to which the prejudices dictated by his ideology and world view predominated over his conservative and bad taste. Lukács did serve a cause, but he was not a mere instrument of the cause.

In the early thirties, Lukács's aesthetics were still in the making. *Totality* emerged as its central concept, gradually assuming a new meaning, different then that in *History and Class Consciousness*, and generating strong aversion. It was — and has ever since been — attacked from all sides. The indictment reads as follows: What underlies the *false ideological* ideal of social totality and the aesthetic requirement to represent it authentically ("Great Realism") is no longer the world-transforming aspiration of revolutionary practice, but the apology of the existence of an established, centralized totalitarian Socialism. Another of the charges involved the reverse of this accusation: the false ideological ideal of totality is nothing but mere nostalgia for "good old" progressive Capitalism, for decent bourgeois norms, and for Arcadia as such, at a time when it had long been shattered (the Expressionists had just assembled the shards); at a time when the mission of proletarian art was not the faithful (cool) reflection of totality, but a call to change the entire world. During the polemics of the early thirties, Lukács frequently had to respond to the latter charge. Recalling the winter of 1931–1932, he wrote in July 1938 to Anna Seghers: "... I incurred bitter reproaches... and I was accused of overestimating bourgeois literature to the detriment of that of the proletariat."¹⁷

Let us now reconstruct this winter in Berlin, focussing our attention on Lukács's ideal of totality as he conceived it *then*, on his false ideological presuppositions, and on his critique of ideology.

In light of what has been said of the *Moscow review*, one cannot be surprised that, in the controversies over German proletarian revolutionary literature, over the alternatives of reportage *vs.* portrayal, tendency *vs.* partisanship, narration *vs.* description, Lukács stood on a heavily leftist "partisan" ideological platform. In his eyes, the most urgent tasks facing the proletariat were: *internally*, to purge the movement of the Social Democratic ideological legacy of the Second International (theory of spontaneity, Reformism, Economism), and *externally*, to combat Social Fascism. (It was at the time of this debate that he tagged Kassák

a Social Fascist — quite unjustly.) Writing about the novels of Willi Bredel and Ernst Ottwalt and polemicizing against the views of Otto Gotsche, he defined this demand of literature and criticism in tactical terms. His starting premise was the imminent victory of the German proletariat and class-conscious revolutionary practice. How is this *false ideological* premise integrated into the theoretical ideal of totality, and how did it function at the level of criticizing concrete works?

Lukács's central question is: What *method* can produce a *great* proletarian work of art? He answers that a proletarian revolutionary artist must apply *Dialectical Materialism* in literature, and must concentrate on the essential motors of *global social processes* in his representation of reality, as this alone enables him to participate in the ongoing class struggle *at a high artistic level*. This dialectical method on the part of the "loyal soldier" of the class expresses the objective class basis and the *correct class consciousness* of the proletariat, since only the latter can expose the real (true) human relations concealed behind the appearances of the fetishistic material forms (facts) of Capitalism. The system of philosophical concepts is *History and Class Consciousness*, more precisely, the attempt to apply it to *aesthetics*, is even more readily obvious if we note that Lukács's criticism was levelled at the scholarly method at the bourgeois spirit of *objectivity* in both narrative literature and reportage, which only criticizes isolated facts, severing part from whole and appearance from essence. This is where he placed the stress, and not on the mere mixing of novel and reportage, or on the rejection of reportage (as a genre). "Scientism" in relation to art is here a concept of ideological criticism, and not of comparison. Thus, Lukács was later correct in characterizing as a "misunderstanding" the belief that he had always fought against applying the method of reportage to novels, plays, or short stories. Some of his opponents, however, "distorted this effort into a fight against reportage".¹⁸

Thus, the weak point of dialectical totality as Lukács conceived it in the early thirties was not that he adopted a "bourgeois" position while, say, Gotsche took a "proletarian" stance; still less, that he allegedly dismissed the radical programme of abolishing reification on the basis of the consciousness of the proletariat; neither was it that his "partisan" aesthetics had preserved several of the philosophical categories of *History and Class Consciousness*. In principle, the limitations of his literary criticism derived from the fact that, in his aesthetics, precisely the

aesthetic *application* of the philosophical positions was as yet ill-defined. All that he provided were some blurred contours and theoretical rudiments, which were to blossom only later. The categories destined to conceptualize the aesthetic specificity of art (extensive and intensive totality, particularity, etc.) were still missing. He set Dialectical Materialism in its entirety — the method of presenting the class contents, the interaction of the classes as a closed epic process — over against the metaphysically rigid reportage and the Naturalistic method of the narrative novel. These views were apparently insufficient to transcend and criticize in aesthetic terms the limited scope of *proletcult*, Naturalism, and the narrow-minded (and rightly condemned) theory and practice that regarded propaganda as the sole function of art. This is not to say, however, that the works reviewed by Lukács — e.g., novels by Bredel and Ottwalt, or Brecht's *The Measures Taken* (*Die Maßnahme*, 1931) — are significant works of art.

Today's unbiased reader of the one-time controversies over the possibilities of German proletarian literature immediately realizes that it was the representatives of two left-wing approaches who clashed in the pages of the *Linkskurve* (as so frequently happened in the course of the Communist movement). At the core of the controversy was not a conflict between avant-garde and traditional (Realist) forms or between the adherents of, say, Brecht and Gorky, but something far more fundamental. Gotsche and Ottwalt were the apologists of the *spontaneous* artistic-literary consciousness of the workers, they were its conceptual ideologists, whose ideas sometimes touched on demagogy; their *proletcult* (sectarian) devotion to the left was permeated by the belief that literature was not an "aesthetic" question but a means of agitation for the political goals of the rising class, the proletariat. (See the Weiner episode.) By contrast, Lukács differentiated between the immediate, political (agitative) effect of a work of art and its more indirect aesthetic (propaganda) effect, and stuck consistently to his old conviction, which he had voiced at the time of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919: "A Communist cultural programme differentiates only between good and bad literature, and refuses to discard either Shakespeare or Goethe because they were not Socialist writers. It also refuses to allow dilettantism to gain ascendancy in art in the disguise of Socialism. A cultural programme is Communist when its aim is to carry the best and purest art to the proletarians, and it does not permit their taste to be spoiled by 'editorial

poetry' that has deteriorated into a political tool. *Politics is only a means, while culture is the end.*"¹⁹

Lukács's leftism was determined by the neophyte-sectarian elements of the political line and the overtly abstract way in which the goal of literature was defined. Regarding the latter, however, we must note one reservation. In his aesthetically most important essay of the Berlin period (*Zur Frage der Satire*)²⁰ he made a great stride forward in defining the dialectical categories (appearance—essence, form, type, everyday life, poetic reality, etc.) in more concrete aesthetic terms. Among *contemporary* literary figures, Lukács did not find a great German proletarian writer who applied the method of Dialectical Materialism to literature and described reality as a moving totality. Thus, he cited the past, the Tolstoy–Gorky line, in order to show that the ideal could indeed be attained. To this he added some achievements of recent Soviet literature (Panfiorov).

One might rashly conclude from this that Lukács's contributions to journals in Moscow and in Berlin were identical in every respect. Even if we bear in mind the continuity between his theoretical–aesthetic positions, we would be seriously mistaken to overlook the substantial difference between the critic of the *Moskauer Rundschau* and that of the *Linkskurve*. In Moscow, Lukács acted as a mediator for Soviet literature, and the target of his criticism was its reception, the notion of Socialism as conceived by the German petty-bourgeois and intellectual readers, by the ordinary people. In Berlin, by contrast, he worked chiefly *within the party*, which involved a different *tactical* line, and conveyed the achievements of Soviet Literature and criticism only by way of examples (the conclusions of the criticism levelled at RAPP, Tretiakov, Averbakh). His thinking slowly came to be dominated by artistic–aesthetic questions: those of the conditions, possibilities, and deviations of an as yet immature German proletarian literature. His sectarianism was more directly influenced by the German historical–social situation, by the class struggle at the crossroads, by the danger of Fascism and the hope for revolution.

The real continuity in Lukács's work between 1931 and 1933 can be found in his evaluation of the bourgeois intellectuals. And this point reveals another *controversial* duality between his anti-sectarian *practical* policy concerning the unity of the intelligentsia, on the one hand, and his *theoretical* appraisal of the ideology of German intellectuals, their relation to Fascism, and their spiritual behaviour on the other. His examina-

tion of the role and progress of German intellectuals has a significance extending far beyond his two-year stay in Berlin: It belongs among the fundamental questions of a whole era, and as such, requires detailed analysis. Lukács appears now less as a party activist and writer of journal articles than as a philosopher and an aesthete.

As we saw earlier, Lukács, as the author of *History and Class Consciousness*, was a presence in contemporary German philosophy both in Berlin and in Frankfurt. However, this presence is paradoxical not because Lukács disliked it from his perspective in Moscow, but because it was curiously fused with the comprehension and interpretation of Hegel's and Marx's heritage. It has now been largely forgotten that a knowledge of Hegel was the precondition of a profound analysis of world affairs and the truly important achievements in philosophy in that era. The Hegelian philosophy of society and history became paradigmatic in the thirties, especially by virtue of its role, as the *source* of Marx's dialectic and critical analysis of the bourgeois world, in both the negative and positive senses.

In that decisive period, Hegel and Marx were anything but fashionable, anything but the objects of universal acclaim. The thinkers of the age were convinced that the gap between object and subject, reality and reason, was wider — and Hegel's statement: "Wer die Welt vernünftig ansieht, den sieht sie auch vernünftig an" (to him who looks of the world rationally the world looks rationally back)²¹ — more anachronistic than ever before. As Europe had hardly recovered from the destruction caused by the Great War, and another war was in the making, scholars began to doubt the capacity of rational social science to explore the past or offer a prognosis of the future. For them, the Whole was shattered, in fact, burnt away to nothing. It became untenable to adhere to the requirement of *totality*, which until then had been the guiding principle of the philosophers' approach to world history. In 1931, Adorno warned anyone planning to work as a philosopher to give up the illusion of earlier philosophies, namely that thought can grasp reality. Autonomous *reason*, the cornerstone of Idealistic systems of thought, had collapsed, he argued.²²

The philosophers of the age believed that it was above all the *individual* who was threatened by the philosophy that regarded reason, totality, and the Absolute Mind as superior in importance. They likened its cruelty toward the individual to a butchery of onrushing soldiers by

machine-gun fire. Max Horkheimer, for example, asked whether history can of necessity have an objective Reason that is superordinated to the individual, and he replied in the negative. His answer indicates his approach to Hegel's "metaphysics" and is in addition revealing of Marx's and Engels's (and Lukács's) attitudes toward Hegel. As Horkheimer puts it: "When Marx and Engels took over the dialectic (from Hegel), they used it in a Materialistic sense. They adhered to the conviction (of Hegel) that there was room in historical development for dynamic structures and tendencies that transcend the individual. However, they rejected the existence of a spiritual power in history. There is no room in history for unchanging and sovereign ideas, for it is nonsensical to speak of a spirit that exists independent of man. . . . Marx argues that an analysis of the psyche — including character and the intrinsic universal human substance — is insufficient for the comprehension of the historical acts of men, since people are organic parts of historical patterns that have dynamics of their own. At this point Marx's method is identical with that of Hegel. . . . The difference between the two thinkers is that, in Hegel, metaphysical logic can be applied to comprehend the Absolute Mind, the manifestation of this dialectic while Marx contends that not a single logically prearranged intellectual tool can offer *a priori* understanding of history."²³

Horkheimer set both the worth of the individual and reason *per se* over against the Whole, the substantial, and he regarded the idea of totality as the ideology of pre-established harmony. He reduced the "cunning of reason" to myth, and regarded the conception of history that spoke of the existence of universal laws governing the structures and processes of society as narrow and dogmatic metaphysics. To quote Horkheimer, history has progressed from a worse society to a better one and can still improve, yet its course is paved with anguish and misery for the individual. It is possible, he added, to examine but not to justify these facts.²⁴

Facing a deepening economic and political crisis and the rise of Fascism in Germany in the early thirties, the philosophers associated with the Frankfurt School rejected Hegel's tenet according to which liberty gains objective existence in the "community of being", just as they rejected his belief that the source of the individual's liberty lies in his obedience to the law, the law that is his "substance". Terrified to see a society that was alienated, shaken by crises, and split by violent

political turmoil, the representatives of critical theory compared the doctrine of the "peaceful" unity of objective and subjective wills to a death mask of the liberal economy. They were convinced that it had to be *rejected* if one were to outwit the "cunning of reason". They believed that the greatest threat to individual liberty lay in accepting the rationalized bourgeois state, the corporate community, and the allegedly rational law. They felt duty-bound to challenge the myth that the universal idea finds comfortable shelter in the background and sends passion in its stead to the deadly combat, and they defied Hegel's contention that, because the phenomenon is in part without validity and in part affirmative and the special is reduced in importance by the universal, "the individual is sacrificed".²⁵

The systematic efforts to expose the evils of Capitalism and carry out sociological (antipositivistic) research on social phenomena and concomitant ideologies, as well as to *retain* Hegel's method of negation, were inevitably combined with epistemological criticism of alienation and commodity fetishism. The theorists who coupled philosophy with political praxis and economics with dialectic were not only those who undertook a critical description of the commodity functions of works of art in bourgeois society,²⁶ the Marx of *Capital*, and the Lukács of the twenties: They also included the young Marx, who was discovered in the early thirties.

Thus, one possible course of action for anti-Fascist, anti-Capitalist German philosophy was rejection of the existing order with the dialectic of negation. It revolted against the Absolute Mind, against the docile unity of object and subject, the superiority of totality, the rationally arranged and alienated Capitalist world. What it wanted was not a rational world but a transformed one. It defended the freedom of the individual from the encroachment of the community, it prevented the subject from being sacrificed on the altar built from the laws of objectivity. But in Berlin the author of *History and Class Consciousness* did not follow the Frankfurt course.

To be sure, the "collapse of his Idealistic prejudices", was not provoked solely by his reading of Marx's Manuscripts. Before his departure to Berlin, he indeed had the opportunity to reassess his earlier "Hegelian" Marx interpretation of the twenties. Let us stress, however, that the awareness of such a reassessment did not transform itself into action either in Moscow before 1931 or in Berlin in 1931-1933. It was

only much later, again in Moscow, that this imperative could be transformed into concrete action, and then it was the action of an ideologist of Soviet Socialism.

True, on arriving in Berlin, Lukács was encouraged from several directions to clarify the Hegel issue. We know of some of his concrete attempts. Lukács's arrival coincided with the centenary of Hegel's death. Lukács felt *compelled* to oppose the academic Hegel renaissance (in the pejorative sense of the word). As he put it in a letter to Lifshits: "Unfortunately, a week ago I was commissioned to write in no time a major work on the occasion of the Hegel anniversary. Our men are going to publish a collection of essays to mark the Hegel centennial. My study is supposed to be ready by early October. I am attempting to retrieve from the mess of my notes what I have written for myself on the Thermidor issue, but you can imagine how such a hasty work will look like when I have an absurdly short time at my disposal, just two or three weeks, and have to work under such conditions."²⁷

Ultimately, the planned volume of essays could not be published, yet we can obtain a reasonably precise idea of how it would have looked like: "In 1932, Lukács delivered a paper in Frankfurt am Main on Hegel's commentaries on Stuart's *Political Economy*. (At that time, in the capacity of vice-chairman of the Berlin branch of the Defensive Alliance of German Writers, Lukács delivered several lectures.) As far as we know, that lecture has not been published in any form, and neither does it feature in the most important bibliographies of Lukács's life-work. Perhaps even more important is the study entitled: 'Thermidor: the Young and the Old Hegel', which Lukács wrote for a volume of essays, which has not been published. There were press previews of the study, which must have been unique for both bibliographer and philosopher. Announced for publication in mid-December (1931 or 1932) it would have run to about 400 pages at the estimated price of 6.5 marks. It was praised in the press as the first Marxist handbook on Hegel. The publisher's advertisement stated that the work would 'open new vistas in the theoretical literature on Marxism'. The full title would have run as follows: 'Hegel and his Heritage. Contributions to the Marxist critique of Hegelian Philosophy'. With the collaboration of noted Marxist scholars. — Internationaler Arbeiterverlag GmbH Berlin. — The table of contents listed the following studies: G. Lukács [sic!]: 'Der Thermidor: der junge und der alte Hegel' — K. A. Wittfogel: 'Die geschicht-

liche Entwicklung der Revolution und die Dialektik in der Geschichte' — Kurt Sauerland: 'Der neue Hegelianismus' — Dr. Gerber: 'Die Frage des Krieges bei Hegel und Clausewitz' — A. Emel: 'Das System der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie und Staatsrecht (Kritik durch Marx)' — Dr. H. Duncker: 'Die Bedeutung der klassischen deutschen Philosophie für die Entstehung des Marxismus' — Adoratsky: 'Hegel, Marx und Lenin'.²⁸

Lukács had numerous opportunities to challenge the image of Hegel as it appeared in bourgeois scholarship. In the Marxist Workers' School, "he analysed some aspects of the Hegelian legacy on the occasion of the centenary of Hegel's death. Polemicizing against neo-Hegelianism, he elaborated the topic entitled 'Hegel-Marx-Lenin' at the end of 1931 and early 1932".²⁹

It is not known whether the Frankfurt lecture on the Fascist falsification of Hegel is identical to the lecture mentioned for 1932. An eyewitness, Dr. Marta Krelischeim, recalls that, on 26 January 1932, in Frankfurt, Lukács delivered a lecture at a debate before the Kant Association, under the title "Über den jungen Hegel". A heated discussion ensued, in which one of the contributors, Mannheim, essentially shared Lukács's views.³⁰

Thus, Lukács fulfilled topical requests in Berlin (and interrupted the writing of a study on Mehring). He discussed Hegel "in a hurry", and the critique of German ideology understandably predominated in his papers. Let us quote a statement from someone in the enemy camp, Carl Schmitt, to illustrate the direct *political* topicality of this critique and the role of the Hegel issue in the realization of the world-historical changes: "An diesem Tage (dem 30. Januar 1933) ist demnach, so kann man sagen, Hegel gestorben". But Hitler's would-be philosopher of law was also perfectly aware that was only true of Fascist Germany, for earlier "Hegel had passed through Karl Marx to Lenin and to Moscow".³¹

During his stay in Berlin, Lukács's choice of themes was influenced by yet another centenary, that of Goethe's death. In particular those articles on Goethe³² that he published in left-wing journals were written in the spirit of the anti-Fascist struggle.

On the threshold of the victory of Fascism in Germany, the defence of the Hegelian-Goethean legacy, classical German philosophy, and the dialectical traditions was an urgent *party-approved aim*. Only today's rash judges ill-versed in history can blithely speak of Lukács's "escape

into the past". For 21 March 1932 he planned a lecture at the Marxist Workers' School under the title "Goethe as seen by Marxism". The police banned the programme for reasons of national security.³³

In his writings of this period, Lukács anticipated theoretical conclusions that, on the one hand, represented a continuation of his earlier intellectual progress and, on the other, foreshadowed later major studies on Hegel (and Goethe): the development of the world outlook of the *young* Hegel; the Thermidor problematic; dialectic as a method of exploring the *contradictory nature* of existence; the interrelation of the French Revolution and the Hegelian dialectic: "The revolution ... has become a constituent part of the Hegelian dialectic". "Hegel's dialectic was based on the intellectual evaluation of the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution in England (Adam Smith, Ricardo) — even though in an idealistically distorted form."³⁴

To a certain degree, Lukács's fulfilment of his party assignment reflected the conclusions that he drew from the Bukharin–Deborin Debate (admittedly Lukács never referred to the debate in print). But in view of the ideological situation in Germany, the left-wing thinkers had to concentrate on the defence of Hegel's *philosophy of history* and Hegel's dialectic as a source of *Marxism*. And when a pro-Fascist bourgeois theorist declared that Hegel had died, it would have become impossible for Lukács to fulfil his party assignment, had he acted as a critic of Hegel's *Idealism*. On the contrary, he stressed that it was not the Materialist approach but the Idealist dialectic that had worked out the "active aspect" of consciousness. And in the age of Goethe, due to Germany's backwardness, the philosophical struggle did not take place between clearly delineated Materialist and Idealist camps, which made it difficult to choose between Mechanical Materialism and Idealistic ideas, Idealistic dialectic. To this can be attributed the contradictions in Goethe's world view, his dialectic and pantheistic views, his "refined" Empiricism, his acceptance of the mechanistic approach, etc.

What was about to — and did — happen in Germany demanded a response. In the thirties, Lukács tackled the issue of the relationship between German intellectuals and Fascism as a serious theoretical problem.

Over the course of the thirties, Lukács often recalled Thomas Mann's shocking, eerie vision: the "gentleman from Rome" refuses to dance. He strains every nerve and resists Cippola's hypnotic powers for

a long time. But in the end he obeys the command — and dances to the whipsacks of the magician. And he dances with joy, though contrary to his will. He is defeated because of his reluctance. "Wahrscheinlich kann man vom Nichtwollen seelisch nicht leben; eine Sache nicht tun wollen, das ist auf die Dauer kein Lebensinhalt; etwas nicht wollen und überhaupt nicht mehr wollen, also das Geforderte dennoch tun, das liegt vielleicht zu benachbart, als daß nicht die Freiheitsidee dazwischen ins Gedränge geraten müßte."³⁵

It seems as if Lukács had detected the most profound message of *Mario and the Magician* in the negative deed of the "gentleman from Rome" — as if the short story ended with the finality of defeat. He never once mentioned Mario. As if he had not fired the shots. But in Thomas Mann, the two shots killing Cipolla mark "a dreadful end, a most disagreeable end. But liberating end at the same time".³⁶

For Lukács, however, the "gentleman from Rome" had a symbolic meaning — and not accidentally, either. He viewed him as the artistic representation of a behaviour pattern that revealed with tantalizing profundity and authenticity the relation of the bourgeois intellectual to Fascism. And Lukács's attention was now concentrated first and foremost on this behaviour, this fatal dance triggered by mere reluctance. What interested him was not Mario's liberating shots but the preceding ignominious defeat; not the inevitable end of the Cipollas but the relationship between their power and the reluctance of others to do something (which was tantamount to succumbing to their power); he was looking into the "magic trick". Indeed, the real theoretical-philosophical problem is implied by the "magic" — which is, of course, not the hypnotic power itself, but what makes its paralysing effect possible. The tragedy is not simply that it happened, but that it could happen. For Lukács, the genesis of "magic" is what counts — and not from the standpoint of the magician but from that of the "gentleman from Rome". He was intrigued by the process of not wanting to do something and yet doing it. What interested him was *la responsabilité des clercs*.

The role of bourgeois intellectuals and bourgeois philosophy in the emergence of Fascist ideology was not only (and not principally) a question of moral judgement for Lukács. In seeking a theoretical answer to the question of how the Fascist world view rose to power in the homeland of Hegel, Goethe, and Beethoven, how the emergence of Fascism as such was at all possible, he formulated one of the fundamen-

tal historical-philosophical questions of his age. This question — reformulated several times over the course of the thirties and forties but always remaining a central concern — had a relevance far beyond that of an analysis of the genesis of *twentieth-century German ideology*. It had a far-reaching theoretical relevance. The actual question that Lukács asked is this: What role does a negative ideological, false consciousness play in history and society? How can retrograde and reactionary ideas become (independent of the personal intentions of their authors) a material force? How are they joined to the “evil side” of history, the bloody practice of the oppressive classes? The answers that Lukács offered in the thirties and forties were diverse and sometimes erroneous. This, however, in no wise diminishes the value and timeliness of the warning: The work of the philosopher and ideologist, the thinker and scholar, is objectively inseparable from social responsibility. The responsibility of the intellectuals is a socio-historical and not a subjective or exclusively moral matter.

Throughout the thirties, Lukács remained a *critic of German ideology*, and the Lukácsian critique was a peculiar response to the world-historical situation. It expressed the tactics, strategy, and theory adopted by the Communist movement at that time. Yet Lukács did not merely criticize the global crisis and ideological processes of the Imperialist era. He went further than just unmasking the Fascist falsification of the progressive bourgeois cultural heritage, classical German philosophy and literature. He appears now as the *critic of the ideological criticism* of the status quo, of what had actually happened. But Lukács's criticism was in certain regards also *falsely ideological*. What made his criticism singular was that, as an active thinker who wanted to identify himself with the existing Communist movement, he was seeking an urgent answer to the dilemma he thought to be fundamental. In 1933, he put it as follows: “The dilemma: *Fascism or Bolshevism* is not a ‘fabrication’ of the Communists, it is the signature of our age.”³⁷

Evaluating the position that he had adopted in the crisis, he wrote in 1947: “Before the war, the false dilemma: ‘Fascism or Bolshevism’ largely contributed to the ideological weakening of the progressive forces.”³⁸

Lukács sharply criticized the ideology and political illusions of the intellectuals before Fascism rose to power in Germany.³⁹ Already at that time, he articulated his view that the “non-Fascist” German intellec-

tuals who hoped to guide the bourgeoisie to the road of "true democracy" were ideologically surrendering to Fascism. "The immense sociological, legal, philosophical, etc. literature produced about the crisis of the state, the party, Parliamentarism, and democracy all but blazed the trail for the ideology of Fascism."⁴⁰

In mid-March, two weeks after the burning of the Reichstag, Lukács emigrated to the Soviet Union, travelling via Prague, to Moscow.⁴¹ It was here that *as an ideologist*, he first tried to face up to the changed global situation that came about with the rise of Fascism. In the essay entitled "Grand Hotel 'Abyss'", he also sought, *as an intellectual*, to assess the responsibility of the intellectuals for the consequences of National Socialist rule in Germany.⁴²

The false consciousness of the intellectuals as the producers of ideology and their illusions about their leading role stems, Lukács holds, from their vacillation between proletariat and bourgeoisie, between revolution and counter-revolution, from their petty-bourgeois status. He argues that this false consciousness is manifested in their tendency to regard social changes solely as ideological changes and find their causes in ideology alone and not in the material-economic spheres. The anti-Fascist left-wing intellectuals — however radical and revolutionary they may be — foster, with their very opposition and contrary to their will, the preservation of bourgeois power, which is no longer able to defend itself overtly without making demagogic use of Socialist slogans. "By borrowing some elements for their social criticism from the ideology of the revolutionary class, they become an instrument for the demagoguery of the ruling class on the one hand, and on the other, they themselves... come to share the petty bourgeois illusion that they are not one of the basic classes but are rather, above all classes of society."⁴³

Lukács's interpretation of the class position and ideology of the intellectuals was both theoretically and politically the polar opposite of the interpretation of liberal society and its elite groups as set forth by Karl Mannheim around the same time. Lukács again saw proletarian revolution, as the only way out of the crisis of Capitalism. By his logic, this meant that the leftist bourgeois intellectuals of the *period of decline* could not overcome their pessimism and despair and avoid surrendering unwittingly to Fascism unless they decided to join the revolutionary class.

Lukács's judgement of the critical function of the *freischwebende Intelligenz* — the intellectuals "floating above social strata" as Mann-

heim put it — was thus a *negative* one. The true critical function of the German intellectuals was *affirmation*. Their criticism was *erroneously ideological* — it nurtured a false consciousness. It was illusory opposition.

The critical function is at the same time a modern role; to use Mannheim's word, it is planned. Its creator is the bourgeoisie of the Imperialist era. This bourgeoisie allows the intellectuals to "float" freely. "The movements of opposition, first of all in literature and art, receive a wider and seemingly freer scope for their activity than in earlier periods. But it is just as obvious that, for this very reason, this freedom becomes more illusory than earlier."⁴⁴

Already in the thirties, Lukács described many of the characteristic features of both the mechanism and the manipulative methods of the bourgeois system, which were to assume full significance only after the Second World War, mainly in the United States.

The bourgeoisie, Lukács writes, does not bribe or buy off the intellectuals openly and directly. "What makes the shrewd, unintentional bribery, the integration of the ideological opposition into the whole parasitic system possible, is precisely the illusion that it has a wide scope of activity and can passionately and radically criticize the status quo without running any material or moral risks."⁴⁵

According to this assumption, the radical intellectuals of the opposition are halfway between the oppressive and the revolutionary classes. Although they realize that the antinomies of bourgeois society are in the final analysis unresolvable, they either await the hour of doom in utmost despair or fail to go beyond purely ideological criticism of the existing state of affairs. They *refuse* to subject themselves to the commands of Fascism, but are unable to brace themselves for the decisive move to the side of the proletariat. However sincere and radical their contempt for the disintegrating bourgeois system and its decaying culture may be, they support it ideologically. They are responsible. They can be called to account for not being able to wage an effective ideological war against Fascism and for holding their own stratum and that of the petty bourgeoisie back from rapprochement with the revolutionary proletariat. Lukács contends: "Any ideology, however, that prevents the masses from recognizing . . . the only position that suits their true interests, promotes — intentionally or not — social demagogu"⁴⁶ that is, Fascism.

Lukács does not deny that the best bourgeois intellectuals have integrity, that they frankly despise the Capitalist culture, that their intellectual honesty prevents them from extreme decisions, from giving up their radical scepticism. Breaking away from the bourgeoisie and at the same time transcending the "dogmatic" theory of the proletariat and advocating their supra-class position is, however, a false illusion. The "'Grand Hotel' 'Abyss'" was built to house this view: "Several intellectuals, having arrived at the end of the tedious and distressing road along which they struggled in vain to overcome the unsurmountable problems of bourgeois society on a bourgeois basis, having reached the brink of the abyss, settle down comfortably in this hotel rather than shed their splendid garments and risk the *salto vitale* to get over the abyss."⁴⁷

Lukács used to know the Grand Hotel, which he is now viewing from the outside, very well from the inside. It was at the time when the music of the wanderer's songs of Stefan George "the aesthete" suggested to him new forms of communication between the souls, forms that were "greater but rougher, more fraught with abysses" than those of the previous period. And when he pondered the beauty of solitude: "We understand everything, yet our most profound understanding is a devout surprise, an understanding of nothing intensified to religiosity; we long to break away from the tantalizing solitudes with savage force, and when we think we are closest to each other, we merely take refined pleasure of eternal solitude."⁴⁸

From the outside, from the vantage point of the proletariat, the Grand Hotel looks quite different, of course: It is the symbol of the behaviour and *alienated self-consciousness of bourgeois intellectuals* arriving at a crossroad. At this time, Lukács was still advocating the theory of "Social Fascism", drawing an analogy between Social Democracy ("the main social support of the bourgeoisie") and the illusory opposition of the most distinguished residents of the Grand Hotel, so that the difference between the two sides was virtually reduced to nullity. He completely dismissed bourgeois democracy, especially as it manifested itself in the Weimar Republic; his argumentation precluded a differentiation between *citoyen* and *bourgeois* positions. To his mind, the only way for the ideologists comfortably settled at the brink of the abyss to serve anti-Fascism rather than Fascism was to take the leap. The dilemma of whether to fall or leap was to be resolved by the *consciousness of the intellectuals*, by the recognition of the primacy of economy over ideology,

the abandonment of illusions, etc. On this side, the transcending of a false consciousness, the surmounting of the barriers in world view were impossible with "the victory of Realism"; even for artists and writers. The main merits of Lukács's essay on the "Grand Hotel" that have retained their relevance until today are the outstanding description of the mechanisms of an illusory opposition, the witty and valid analysis of Capitalist manipulation and indirect apology. All this, however, does not suffice to make us forget that he judges the achievements of the writers enjoying and portraying the *danse macabre* of world views (and, Lukács adds, are themselves swept off by the whirl of this dance) to be esoteric and their impact to be deceptive and dangerous. He applies the method of limited sectarian *political analysis* combined with a *critique of epistemology*.

Did Lukács find no conceptual possibility for the *most outstanding* representatives of the bourgeois intelligentsia to combat Fascism effectively in the early thirties? Yes, he did, first of all in the afore-mentioned *salto vitale* (he quoted Brecht as an example). But he slightly mitigated the rigidity of this requirement by postulating a slow and anguished *transition* in the case of sincere intellectuals who were *self-critically* able to come to terms with their consciousness and slowly rid themselves of the bad habits of their bourgeois thinking. (These intellectuals not only belonged to the anti-Fascist front but were *de facto* nearer to Marxism-Leninism than their social-Fascistic tactics with quotations from Marx and Lenin.)⁴⁹

And this is the point at which Lukács's criticism of the bourgeois intellectual's path to the brink of the abyss joins the revision of *his own* past; where the bitterly ironic description of the elite residents of the Grand Hotel cherishing the illusion of intellectual freedom and independence relates to *his own* sense of responsibility that forces him to revise his past and worry about the endangered ideal of freedom; where a radical rejection of pseudo-radicalism is linked to the renunciation of *his own* earlier radicalism. Lukács also wants to make what he said of the genesis of Fascist magic *subjectively authentic*. In other words, *necessity appears as personal fate* now. Lukács introduced his analysis of the ideology of Fascism with the following confession: "I wrote this book immediately after Hitler took over, in the first weeks of my forced exile. Yet I do not exaggerate when I assert that this book has been in the making for over 25 years. As a pupil of Simmel and Dilthey, a friend of

Max Weber and Emil Lask, and an ardent reader of Stefan George and Rilke, I personally experienced the whole process of development, which I am describing here, on each side of the barricades, certainly before 1918 and sometimes after it, too. I must therefore strongly remind the reader, who may be appalled by the conclusions of the book and shrink from the recognition that bourgeois thought progressed steadily toward Fascism in the Imperialist era that this assertion is not a slapdash construct put together for polemical purposes but the summation and generalization of a whole period of life. Some of my youthful friends, honest romantic anti-Capitalists, have been devoured by the storm of Fascism. I have seen many great promises of philosophy and poetry wither, wavering between the antagonistic camps, because only in the conclusions that they drew and not in the premises of their thinking were they able to detach themselves from the parasitic nature of the period, as their break with the Imperialist bourgeoisie was only superficial, and failed to penetrate to the roots of their existence and thought.”⁵⁰

We have no reason whatsoever to doubt Lukács’s sincerity, just as it would be mistaken to assume that he recanted *History and Class Consciousness* simple out of tactical considerations. Convinced that the criticism of the German intellectuals also applied to him, he felt that he was no exception. *Some months after the burning of the Reichstag, at the beginning of a new period of exile, the post festa* sense of responsibility of a Communist intellectual and Marxist ideologist played the paramount role in the gesture of subjective confession, warning, and self-criticism.

Already on the other side of the Abyss, Lukács was watching the death dance of the critical spirits in the Hotel with detachment. But apparently, he was not alone there. Ernst Bloch seems to have written of the same Grand Hotel: “ist nicht mon bijou”. Bloch also felt there was avoid beyond the windows that frame nature. The apartment house of the rich is the tenement of clay of a past “culture”, a mausoleum with few corpses. Above it is the bourgeois sky: total boredom. Bloch’s micro-sociological description evokes the past and present of the well-to-do who would kill time in hotels; it is the chronicle of decay. Not only of the old-style fat bourgeois but also of the young one with an athlete’s body or of the Fascist. Concerning the future he says: “Russia has turned the grand hotels into sanatoria. Europe is on the threshold of similar changes. The new apartments to be built by classless society along the sea shore and in the hills will be roomy, comfortable and

modest. There comes a time when the memorials of the rule of the bourgeoisie will be demolished.”⁵¹

In 1935, however, Lukács is of the view that he and Bloch are not standing on the same side. True, after Hitler’s accession to power, Bloch — along with numerous bourgeois intellectuals — reached the left side. As left-wing as he was politically, he did not renounce his earlier philosophical considerations: Although he was thoroughly influenced by Marxism, he failed to subject the Imperialistic manifestations of Idealism to critical scrutiny. Yet he had gone much further than the average intellectual. “Bloch is far from overestimating the erudition and culture of the present time. He differs in the positive sense from those bourgeois anti-Fascists who struggle against the ideology of Fascism yet attempt to save the Imperialist ideology.”⁵²

Lukács cannot espouse Bloch’s critical attitude, as it marked by a romantic opposition to Capitalism and Bloch concentrates on criticizing the liberal stage in the development of bourgeois society. Looking for the *legacy of the age*, Bloch himself partly falls victim to the same reactionary trends in philosophy that he — as an anti-Fascist — criticizes with sharp irony and wit.

As noted above, in the early thirties, Lukács’s system of thought united his criticism of German intelligentsia with that of the German Social Democrats: his critique of both these ideologies rested on the same method and concepts.⁵³ This false ideological analogy is at the heart of both the content and the structure of Lukács’s key study on Expressionism (1933),⁵⁴ so it would be a misunderstanding to regard it as an ‘aesthetic’ essay criticizing merely an artistic current, even if this misunderstanding rests on massive historical and theoretical traditions.

The central false ideological moment in Lukács’s criticism of the German intellectual in the Imperialist age, of the Expressionists, and of the ideology of the German Independent Social Democratic Party (Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei — USDP), is the assumption of their *kinship* or even identity in certain essentials, such as their illusory opposition and their role in preparing the mass basis of Fascism. “The methodological connection between Expressionism and the USDP ideology... is based socially on the fact that the Expressionists have become the poetic mouthpiece of the very section of the mass movement that the USDP had driven back to the bourgeois path. At the same time, the Expressionists are more strongly attached by their existence to the

petty-bourgeois than to the proletarian section of the movement; as a consequence of this, their spontaneous and confused efforts instinctively gravitating toward proletarian revolutionary action are weaker among them than among the proletarian followers of USDP. Also, the above-analysed abstracting method of the Expressionists, which abandons the real battle-field of the class struggle, is the spontaneous expression of their class position, a projection of their ideological and creative methods — and not a political manoeuvre, not a trick or treachery. The objective kinship and near-identity of their methods derives from the fact that both trends — USDP and Expressionism — continue to depend for their class base on the bourgeoisie.”⁵⁵

When arguing against the sham antagonism between the German intellectual and Social Democracy, against a romantic opposition to Capitalism “floating” above the workers’ movement, against the imaginary radicalism of Idealistic bourgeois philosophy and the affirmative spirit of contemporary ideological criticism, Lukács was searching for the alternative of the *Communist-Materialist dialectic*, of worldwide proletarian revolutionary anti-Fascism.

For Lukács, anti-Fascism was not a question of the choice of an occasional topic or scholarly discipline. The issue of anti-Fascism was present, whether directly or indirectly, in each of his works on aesthetics or philosophy in the period under scrutiny. Can we ignore the fact that, when speaking of Goethe, Lukács protested against the *Fascistization* of Goethe; when commemorating Georg Büchner, he defended the true Büchner against the *Fascistized* one; when analyzing Hegel, he revolted against Hegel’s *Fascist falsification*?

Anti-Fascism was not just one of the many *incidental* motifs in Lukács’s aesthetic writings: Whether directly or indirectly present was one of the decisive conceptual constituents. It is quite possible that those who simply disregard this fact (the Lukácsian position undoubtedly focussed on the most essential theoretical relations, often ignoring details, and as such, appeared to be a selective method) will see his views and appraisals his analyses and judgements of this period as unrefined, often rigid, and only partially valid. Lukács, as he himself put it, plunged into the struggle “*à corps perdu*” “not giving a darn about his prestige, infallibility or fame after death”.

He consciously accepted *this* one-sidedness: “on the one hand, you have to fight against the trends that are prejudicial to further develop-

ment, but on the other, you must put up with the fact that mistakes are always committed in the ardour of the fight. Once Lenin made this wise comment to Gorky, who was complaining about the rigour of militant Communism: in the heat of fighting one cannot weigh which blow is still absolutely necessary and which is already one too many".⁵⁶

Of course, what else could it be called but one-sidedness when, in his "Grand Hotel 'Abyss'", he termed Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* "sophistry elaborated with brilliant tools", and labelled Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain* "a novel of the parasite's world view". Here, it should be noted that his condemnation is strikingly similar to that of Brecht, who in 1926 mocked Mann as "a successful type of the bourgeois manufacturer of artistic, vainglorious and useless books".⁵⁷ In Lukács's writings in this period one may also find harsh critical remarks about the works of other prominent representatives of bourgeois democracy, including Heinrich Mann and Arnold Zweig.⁵⁸ For him to lash out in this manner at these writers was just as unnecessary as it had been to label Dostoyevsky the writer of the Black Hundreds in the pages of the *Moskauer Rundschau*.

It is nonetheless a sheer legend that, between 1933 and 1935, Lukács concerned himself solely with Expressionism and avant-garde art. In point of fact, the ideological and aesthetic criticism of contemporary bourgeois *Realist* literature had equal weight in the bulk of his anti-Fascist journalistic writings. Lukács exposed in microscopic detail the *corpora delicti*, the cultural and intellectual situation of German writers after barbarism had seized power. His attention was especially captured by two types, first and foremost by those who — like Hans Fallada and Ernst von Salomon — sympathized, as rebellious petty-bourgeois ideologists, with "the revolution from the right" but later joined the Third Reich. The militantly nationalistic and romantically anti-Capitalist movement "produced some genuinely gifted writers... who tried to provide an authentic and realistic picture of the present by means of chaotic ideology, and consequently, contradictory artistic techniques; subjectively, their militant conviction was honest and they were fired with an earnest hatred for the Capitalism of the Weimar democracy".⁵⁹

These writers were ruined by the Fascist regime. Hauptmann, the representative of the *liberal* bourgeoisie capitulated to Hitler, prostituting his literary talents.⁶⁰

To the other group belonged the anti-Fascist writers who were unable to shed the constraints of abstract bourgeois humanism and rationalism, and whose anti-Capitalism lacked the recognition of the economic laws underlying the Capitalist system (Stefan Zweig, Lion Feuchtwanger, Sinclair Lewis).

Thus, before 1935, Lukács did not find a single representative of *contemporary* bourgeois Realist literature from Thomas Mann to Feuchtwanger whom he could regard, both ideologically and artistically, as a perfect *ally* in the anti-Fascist struggle, just as he could not discover a single "great proletarian work of art" in the "nascent" Soviet or German literature. What he admitted in 1948 was true not only of his judgement on Thomas Mann but also in a wider sense: "It did take a long time before my union with the revolutionary workers' movement taught me to overcome my abstract-sectarian views as a Marxist neophyte. Only on this new... foundation did I tackle Thomas Mann's oeuvre again, this time more profoundly and objectively. My essay, 'Thomas Mann of the Legacy of Literature' (*Internationale Literatur*, 1936) marked the beginning of this new position."⁶¹

With the emergence of the Popular-Front policy, Lukács gradually found *real* allies, though not yet all the potential allied forces. One such force was made up of the bourgeois humanist intellectuals in exile, who included Realist artists such as Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger, Arnold Zweig, Anatole France. (All the reservations that Lukács, even as late as 1936, had harboured concerning Thomas Mann's bias in favour of "pure myth", now vanished.⁶²) "Liberal intellectuals with certain democratic tendencies emigrated from Germany fleeing Fascism, but upon the impact of the forthcoming formidable events they made massive progress toward revolutionary democracy... Thus the turn in the political outlook of German *émigré* intellectuals heralded the crucial change that was to come in the history of the German people."⁶³

Needless to say, there is a world of difference between Lukács's new conviction that Liberalism or revolutionary democracy represented valid choices for the intellectuals and his older belief that the choice was one between the *salto vitale* and the *salto mortale*. It is likewise true that, in 1935, his "political outlook" took a new turn, as he came to espouse the policy of the Popular-Front. And that is why he pointedly replaced the alternatives of "Fascism or Bolshevism" with those of Fascism or Democracy.

HISTORY AND BOURGEOIS CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

With the Nazi seizure of power and the defeat of the revolutionary forces, history veered sharply in a new direction. In Germany, the consciousness of the ruling class was Fascistic when it came to power. And in the history of Lukács's thought, history and the class consciousness of the *proletariat* gave way to history and the class consciousness of the *bourgeoisie*. In 1933, Lukács *set down* the history of the genesis of Fascist philosophy in Germany. He assessed it against the background of the movement and its relevant (partly false) consciousness, and he did more consistently and at a higher theoretical level than did any of his contemporaries.¹

This turn, however, had a personal, subjective aspect as well. Lukács regarded a renewed criticism of *his own* earlier Idealism as a necessary prerequisite to the anti-Fascist ideological battle against bourgeois class consciousness and Social Democracy in the German mass movement. When he thought some parts of his book might be published, he added explanatory notes — a self-critique — to the abridged text: "The author was especially reluctant to refrain from publishing his critique of Neo-Hegelianism, with special reference to the connections between this trend and the emergence of the philosophy of Fascism. He regrets this not only because the question has objective importance, but also for *personal* reasons. Some neo-Hegelian philosophers, headed by Siegfried Marck, have showered compliments on him for years, though tempered with criticism. But old Bebel's saying — he who is praised by the class enemy must have committed a mistake — proved to be right in this case, as well. The serious Idealistic mistakes of his book *History and Class Consciousness* (1923), his polemic against Friedrich Engels, the restriction of the dialectical method to the cognizance of society, the criticism of *Abbildungstheorie* with the 'argument' that processes cannot be portrayed, the vestiges of Luxemburgism together with ultra-leftist traditions surviving from 1921–1922 — all this provided the neo-Hegelian

gentlemen with an objective reason to use his book for their own aims in their fight against Marxism-Leninism and Dialectical Materialism, quite contrary to his intentions. That is why the author deems it imperative to stress that he regards the adamant fight against the Idealistic mistakes of *History and Class Consciousness* as an inseparable part of an effective struggle against the contemporary Idealistic trends".²

But of the two contiguous fronts of criticism and self-criticism, Lukács chose as his main target of attack: the philosophy of Fascism.

In moving to the offensive, his method was to unveil the *genesis*, the inevitable Fascistization of the (philosophical) consciousness of the bourgeoisie in the Imperialist age, to reconstruct critically the history of the decline of bourgeois philosophy. At first sight, one might get the impression that, in 1933, Lukács continued where he had left off in 1923 or 1933, that is, he continued his earlier critique of classical German philosophy with a history of *non-classical* German philosophy. The impression of continuity is not quite without foundation, and yet it is superficial. *How did the Philosophy of Fascism Emerge in Germany?* was new not by virtue of its subject-matter or terminology but by virtue of its outlook. The metamorphosis is conspicuously revealed even by a short comparison between the outlook of this book and that of *History and Class Consciousness*.

How did Lukács describe the evolution of classical bourgeois thought in the early twenties? The cradle of modern critical philosophy, Lukács says, is the reified structure of consciousness (in which its antinomies are born and developed), and its foster-parent is Kant. Kant's philosophy radically infers all conclusions from the premise that rational knowledge is the product not of the world but of the knowing self, of the mind produced by itself. This "Copernican revolution" gives rise to several questions (e.g., the necessary correlation between bourgeois Rationalism and Irrationalism) that can be reduced to two major groups: "There is, firstly, the problem of matter (in the logical, technical sense), the problem of the *content* of those forms with the aid of which 'we' know and are able to know the world because we have created it ourselves. And, secondly, there is the problem of the whole and of the ultimate substance of knowledge, the problem of those 'ultimate' objects of knowledge which are needed to round off the partial systems into a totality, a system of the perfectly understood world."³

As compared to the earlier dogmatic philosophy, critical thought reveals not only the fact that the bourgeoisie is gradually coming into full understanding of certain *particular* moments of its social existence even as it is losing the ability to grasp society as a *totality*, but also that the problems entailed by bourgeois development (reality as totality and as being) have come to be posited as *problems*.

The next link in the chain of Lukács's arguments is the question of the subject in classical German philosophy. Taking the subject of the cognitive act as the methodological starting point, one has to answer the question as to *what kind of* subject can be postulated as the creator of the totality of these contents. Or, to put it in another way, one has to discover the level of objective existence at which the subject and object coincide or are identical. The problem receives an ostensible solution in the Kantian answer that the unity of subject and object can be found in *practice*, in activity. Yet Kant's ethic cannot explain the subject of "real action", the *concrete* essence of the identity between subject and object. Eventually, it turns out that, in bourgeois philosophy, action in fact presupposes calculation, which faces a rationalized world whose system of laws provides grounds for foresight. Thus, the subject "becomes a mere receptor of the chances of the recognized laws", that is, his behaviour is purely contemplative. So, when critical philosophy turns to practice, it perpetuates rather than resolves the antinomies. It has worked out their essentially unresolvable nature — and this is its virtue, not its shortcoming.

Is there a chance to supersede the antinomies? This, now, is the dilemma of the dialectical method of Hegel's philosophy. In principle, supersession would be possible "only if the subject (consciousness, thought) were both producer and product of the dialectical process, only if, as a result the subject moved in a self-created world of which it is the conscious form and only if the world imposed itself upon it in full objectivity, only then can the problem of dialectics, and with it the abolition of the antitheses of subject and object, thought and existence, freedom and necessity, be held to be solved".⁴

Classical philosophy proceeds along this road to reach the new substance, which is *history*. If we regard the totality of reality as history, as *our* history (no other exists!) that we ourselves have created, then we may arrive at the assumption that reality is the "real action" of the subject. In the final analysis, however, Hegel also fails to discover the real subject

of history, the concrete "we". In this regard, the world spirit and its concrete realizations, the national spirits, are mythological and abstract, and methodologically untenable. Apart from this, Hegel fails to explain the relationship between the Absolute Mind and history (the postulation of the *end* of history), among other things. The "mind" as demiurge only *seems* to make history. "But this semblance is enough to dissipate wholly the attempt of the classical philosophers to break out of the limits imposed on formal and rationalistic (bourgeois, reified) thought and thereby to restore a humanity destroyed by that reification. Thought relapses into the contemplative duality of subject and object."⁵

The only aspect of classical German philosophy that points beyond bourgeois society is the method of dialectic, the method of history. This method is bequeathed to the class that has discovered in itself the historical identity of subject and object: the *proletariat*.

This is a brief summary of Lukács's judgement of classical bourgeois philosophy as explicated in *History and Class Consciousness*. He surveys its mainstream up to Hegel — and does so with good reason. Lukács's book has nothing to do with standard histories of philosophy, or with their homogenized "totality". At the time that he wrote this and only this line of thought was relevant to him, and then only as the *prehistory* of the class consciousness of the proletariat. What he needs are only the main characters: Kant, Hegel, Marx. Owing to his revolutionary standpoint and method, Lukács concentrates on the main supporting pillars. His laconic diagnosis registers the *inherently contradictory basic structure*. The reified structure of bourgeois thought, he asserts, is essentially unchanged; the changes relate only to form. They mean a step forward and a step backward. The real results of progress — history as substance being included in the method of dialectic — cannot materialize in the present; they are programmes for the future. They come about and exist immediately as *heritage*.

Such a description of the contradictory structure, of the contemplative duality of subject and object, makes sense only when viewed from the perspective of the proletariat's mission (to resolve the antinomies) and its revolutionary practice (which overcomes reification), of the formal-rational structure acting as the identical subject-object of history. The *real* history of bourgeois philosophy thus comes to an end in the class consciousness of the proletariat. This end implies supersession (of the antitheses) and preservation (of the dialectical method). It is not,

however, the edge of the world bordering on nothingness. Bourgeois society continually reproduces the same dualities. "Hence classical philosophy... had nothing but these unresolved antinomies to bequeath to succeeding (bourgeois) generations."⁶

Ten years later, Lukács could and should have resumed his work at this point, with the antinomies of non-classical philosophy reproduced on an Imperialist foundation. This, however, was impossible for several reasons. The most important reason was that Lukács had discarded the "Hegelian" doctrine of the proletariat as the *identical* subject-object of history. This does not mean, however, that the proletariat ceases to be the demiurge of history. Lukács could not simply continue where he had left off because the proletariat — more precisely, the proletariat that actually existed before and after the revolution *at the same time* in the given world-historical situation — was not methodologically present as an Archimedean point in the analysis of the new phase of bourgeois philosophy. This point was occupied by the Fascistized class consciousness of the bourgeoisie coming to power in Germany.

The history of classical German philosophy in *History and Class Consciousness* is laconic, not so much for lack of space as out of conscious methodological considerations. The period under study produced great philosophical theories and towering thinkers. It is again due to a methodological presupposition and not to the objective differences between the intellectual development in Germany before and after 1848 that, in 1933, Lukács dealt at all with the problem of *quantity*. He emphasizes in the foreword to his book that he does not wish to give a full and systematic description of German philosophy in the Imperialist age, but rather, to select the thinkers who most markedly represent the tendencies that eventually led to the ideology of Fascism. "The author of this book is fully aware that this line of development included a far greater number of German authors... It is evident that, say, Klages is somewhere between Spengler and Bäumler. In our judgement, however, it would have been useless to blur the clear outlines of the mainstream of development by embarking on treatments of too many intermediary figures."⁷ Quantity thus played more than a merely formal role in the genesis of the work: *each and every* bourgeois philosophical current of the era is inevitably part of the prehistory of Fascist ideology. Lukács infers the inevitability of Fascistization on the basis of a sectarian alternative of the Communist movement which holds that there are two

possible ways out of the acute crisis of bourgeois society: either the increased dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the revolution of the proletariat, either Fascism or Communism. [Any thinker that] "failed to arrive at or move closer to the camp of the revolutionary proletariat had of necessity to veer in the direction of Fascism in thinking and action, whether voluntarily or not. These thinkers became the pioneers of Fascism by virtue of their objective historical position and within that, of their class status. 'They do not know it but they do it', as Marx put it".⁸

This methodological approach to the total Fascistization of the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie precludes the possibility of giving Marx a leading role in the book. Understandably enough, the idealised "true" consciousness of the proletariat as a point of comparison is missing. For if it were taken as a starting point, it would be hard to explain why this class, awakened to consciousness, sustained a defeat both as the object and subject of history, even if only temporarily. Again, it is this omission that fortunately prevents the prevailing practice in Soviet philosophy from entering into Lukács's work. There Marx is given only a walk-on part in the exploration of the history of the decline of bourgeois consciousness.

The summit of classical bourgeois thought, which has more than intrinsic relevance, is Hegel's philosophy. His method — that of dialectic — is our heritage. The terminal point of the history of the genesis of Fascist philosophy is Alfred Rosenberg. All the threads of the genesis converge in his thinking. His importance is retrograde: he is the heir to the forerunners, but his heritage is not ours. Besides proclaiming the demise of non-classical philosophy and voicing the hope of the imminent proletarian revolution, Lukács's book also reveals how his conception of the *structure* of non-classical bourgeois consciousness had changed. "The 'solution' to the problems that declining Capitalism has chosen by adopting Fascism in Germany is only a sharpening of its contradictions, a deeper conflict, the powerful undercurrents of which inevitably drift toward the ripening of the proletarian revolution. Despite all the apologetic, agnostic, sublimated, and mystical 'syntheses' of Fascist philosophers, these contradictions can be detected in the philosophical systems, as well. The deepening of the real contradictions is also widening the gap among the thinkers. The simultaneously and inevitably emerging countertendency in the apologetic philosophy of the declining

bourgeoisie — the eclectic belittling of the contradictions — is objectively incapable of halting this process even in philosophy. In this respect, Rosenberg is indeed the philosopher of Fascism, as the philosophy of Monopoly Capitalism has reached its peak in his work: it is there that the expansive force of the contradictions bursts the empty balloon of the philosophy of Monopoly Capitalism.”⁹

The structure of the bourgeois world view that prepares the ground for Fascism differs from that of classical bourgeois thought. It is a fundamentally contradictory structure built on changing *contradictions* instead of constant antitheses, which — despite the critical attitude — are the apologetic philosophical reflexions of the declining Capitalist society. In *Lebensphilosophie*, for instance, romantic anti-Capitalism takes on an abstract, sublimated, and subjectivized forms as the antinomy of *rigidity* and *life*. What is implied here is no longer the clash of two social systems, as had been the case in Romantic criticism, but the contrast between two attitudes, two viewpoints and reality. “In Dilthey, descriptive psychology is merely another methodological standpoint as opposed to analytical (mechanistic) psychology. ‘*Durée réelle*’ in Bergson is something that can be grasped by intuition, that is, by type of behaviour other than that used by the subject to perceive rational (mechanical, measurable) time. In Rickert, the non-recurrent nature of history, the uniqueness of historical object (‘individuality’) is just as much the product of the activity of the subject ‘positing’ the object as in the ‘regularity’ of nature that is here the opposite of uniqueness.”¹⁰ This ambiguous character of thinking, the pitting of the mechanical monotony of Capitalism against creative life grasped intuitively, is none other than the ‘sublimated’ transcendence of stifling Capitalism, that is, submission. The genetic line of life-philosophy runs from Nietzsche through Simmel and Rathenau to Spengler, Keyserling and Rosenberg. Rosenberg uses the conceptual elements of life-philosophy for political purposes, mixing them in an eclectic concoction. “Rigidity and life, polarity and primaevial phenomenon [*Urphänomen*], etc. whirl in chaotic confusion in Rosenberg’s great book.”¹¹

Of course, this manner of describing the antinomies bears a close methodological relation to the sectarian alternative of “Fascism or Bolshevism”, to the supposition that, after the demise of the bourgeois world, the Fascistized consciousness of the bourgeoisie will disappear once and for all, bursting like a balloon. As a matter of course, a critical

analysis of this process of disintegration does not concentrate on the substances that emerge in bourgeois thinking, but on its *attributes*. This is how Lukács develops a typology of post-1848 German philosophy (modern Irrationalism, indirect apology, religious Atheism, neo-Romanticism, myth-making, etc.), which, despite the methodological shortcomings arising from *anti-Fascist sectarianism*, lifts his work, far above the average literature of the age.

Marx is a secondary figure in his book on Fascism, in part because he refuses to adjust to the centre of orientation of the idealized "true" consciousness of the proletariat. But can he avoid the *false* consciousness of the proletariat? Not at all. He devotes a separate chapter to the role of Social Democracy (Social Fascism) in the emergence of Fascist philosophy. Is this criticism again a new beginning? Does it have relevant precedents?

History and Class Consciousness sharply sets the true consciousness of the proletariat over against vulgar Marxism on the basis of the opposing standpoints of the unified whole (totality) and isolated part. When the vulgar Marxists get bogged down in *Realpolitik* and disrupt the unity of theory and practice, they sink back to the level of the consciousness of the *bourgeoisie*. The false consciousness of the proletariat is more disastrous than that of the bourgeoisie because the latter is "at least in harmony with its class position". "But in the case of the proletariat, such a consciousness not only has to overcome these internal (bourgeois) contradictions but also conflicts with the course of action to which the economic situation necessarily commits the proletariat (regardless of its own thoughts on the subject). The proletariat must act in a proletarian manner but its own vulgar Marxist theory blocks its vision of the correct course that it must adopt."¹² Because of its political organization, Social Democracy raised the spectre of the proletariat being arrested in its existence at the same level as the bourgeoisie. The separation of the social spheres of existence, economic fatalism, subjection to the natural laws of Capitalist production, and the ethical utopianism expressed in the emphasis on the "human" functions of the state, all these entail the consequence that the proletariat yields to bourgeois views and loses its only advantage and decisive practical weapon against the bourgeoisie — namely, its ability to conceive of society as a concrete historical totality. "With the ideology of Social Democracy, the proletariat falls victim to all the antinomies of reification that we have hitherto analysed in such detail."¹³

In Lukács's book on Fascism, there are only incidental critical comments on the classics of German Social Democracy (Mehring, Lassalle) or the falsifications of Marx. It does not simply demonstrate that the theorists of the counter-revolutionary Social Democratic Party have adopted a controversial philosophical position on all aspects of Dialectical Materialism (Marx). In fact, Lukács's criticism is the *continuation* of the pre-revolutionary sectarianism in *History and Class Consciousness*. But it is now located in a new position of *defeat*, in the form of anti-Fascist sectarianism, and so, it is a *politically readjusted* sectarianism. On the one hand, Social Democracy that has transformed itself into a liberal party (to become not the left wing of the bourgeois democratic opposition but part of the Imperialist system, paving the way for Hitler) moves from Revisionism to the support of Fascism (disguised as opposition)¹⁴ in the course of its political evolution. In *parallel* fashion, it proceeds from the Subjective Idealistic interpretation of Hegel through Neo-Kantianism to *Lebensphilosophie* and other pre-Fascist bourgeois irrational trends. On the other hand, with the accession of Hitler, the conception of Fascism as specified in the "Blum Theses" collapses, but its sectarianism can be continued in the new situation, as well. Lukács's sectarianism applies Stalin's strategy of the Comintern to the genesis and "antinomies" of Social Fascist philosophy in a specific way. In this continuation, the elimination of the aspect of totality appears "as the transformation of Marxism into a 'science' that corresponds to a bourgeois liberal type of science in the Imperialist era. This means, on the one hand, that the requirement of the knowable nature of objective reality is eliminated from epistemology, and on the other, that the Marxist method of the only unified science (*The German Ideology*) is also omitted in an equally radical fashion, and Marxism is dissected into compartmentalized disciplines: economics, 'sociology', etc."¹⁵

Classical German philosophy was unable to break out of the limits of formal-rational thinking and had of necessity to correlate the antinomies of Rationalism and Irrationalism. In the continuation, Lukács demonstrates that this very duality is the alpha and omega of the Social Democratic ideology. For Social Fascists, the real content of the category of *reason* is smoothly functioning and developing *Capitalism*, free from contradictions. They contrast this reason with the irrational, rebellious instincts of the masses (revolutionary action of the proletariat) as well as

with mad excesses of the Fascists. In this way, they identify Fascism with Bolshevism in their apologetic demagoguery.

Reason, science, and Rationalism are, however, only seemingly paramount in this philosophy. "For everything is shallow here, a 'rationality' perceiving only appearances, whose sole ambition is to banish from reality and superficially 'rationalize' all that is contradictory; it is forced to conceptualize anything that it has failed to grasp with its philosophical idiom as the rigid counterpole of 'reason', as irrationality."¹⁶

But it is not only in this rather general regard that Social Fascist "reason" correlates with Irrationalism. The correlation is also functional: "reason" is the twin brother of Fascist Irrationalism. Teaching the masses to be "reasonable" is just as much a means of forestalling a possible attack against Capitalism (though with different means) as is Fascism's attempt to divert the anti-Capitalist drives of the masses into another direction with rationally tinted demagoguery. In ten years' time, the baleful danger once only implicitly suggested by false consciousness assumed an explicit form as a true obstacle blocking the vision of the correct course. "Social Fascism failed to win over the masses to the rational form that it had devised to save Capitalism. But for the time being, it managed to obscure the correct course that would have suited their interests. For the time being, it managed to keep them from fighting against Fascism."¹⁷

Consequently, Social Fascism is an accomplice in the creation of the philosophy of Fascism.

With the ideology of Social Democracy, Lukács said, the proletariat fell victim to the antinomies. The proletariat cannot eliminate the antinomy of Rationalism and Irrationalism, Lukács says now, unless it adopts the course of the Bolshevik Revolution, which abolishes the Social Fascists' "reason" and the Fascists' irrationality at the same time. The Lukácsian critique again closes logically with the assertion that *this* abolition "will not be ambiguous as it was in Hegel: It will directly and simply mean supersession".¹⁸

In the first half of the thirties, Lukács's analysis was itself burdened by negative ideological elements, not simply because its starting point was the false dilemma of "Fascism or Bolshevism"; but also because it lacked the philosophy-of-history approach to the examination of *German history* and in general, of the age of Imperialism. Besides, until 1935, the philosophy of history played little role in Lukács's writings, e.g., his

emphasis on the notion of uneven development. At that time, Lukács stressed the political aspects of the history of Fascism and ignored the *economic-philosophical* analysis of the economic basis of German society (namely, an analysis of economic processes after the First World War and in the crisis of 1929–1933). At the same time, Lukács's analysis, which emphasized the role of class in the understanding of ideological processes, itself lacked an in-depth evaluation of the class consciousness of the proletariat. On the one hand, he described the proletariat as the victim of Social Democratic propaganda, of the quasi-oppositionist left-wing ideology of the intellectuals, and of Irrationalist bourgeois philosophy (a fate that it shared with broad sections of the petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia). On the other hand, he also described it as a class free of any false myth and endowed with a mature consciousness, a class that based its revolutionary praxis on goals, on an adequate Materialist and dialectical knowledge of the motive forces of reality, that is, the economic processes. The philosophical foundations of Lukács's vision of a world-wide anti-Fascist proletarian revolution in this sense lacked a discussion of *history* and *the consciousness of the proletariat*.

Lukács's "one-sided" denunciation of the destruction of reason, his failure to differentiate between the subtle and barbarous rejection of reason, his allegation that Irrationalist philosophy was the forerunner of Fascism, and his argument that he who embraces the Irrationalism of "good intentions" should not be surprised to find himself lost in the deadly grip of the devil, are usually challenged with two "dialectical" arguments: man is not only a social but also a biological being, who possesses not only consciousness but also instincts, and whose consciousness has not only well-lit rooms, but also dark corners. Furthermore, in the history of social reality, there exist both a rational and a non-rational sphere. The *existence* of the two aspects *must be acknowledged* — even if there might be disagreement over their structure, proportions, and role — just as prominent thinkers such as Schopenhauer or Nietzsche indeed always acknowledged.

Although these arguments seem to be logical, they are extremely shallow and they demonstrate a total misunderstanding of the problem. (Admittedly such arguments can lay claim to a certain theoretical and ideological background, and rest on ossified traditions.) The scope of this study does not allow us go into a detailed discussion of the relationship between the rational and the irrational, yet we must point out that

the problem of *autonomous ratio*, the relationship of reason and the non-rational, cannot be resolved by a "dialectical amalgamation" of the two rigidified opposites, unless the *mediating function* of man's social-historical *praxis* is also taken into consideration. The rational sense of the facts, processes, and laws of the objective world can be described only as a possibility of the conscious practice of the subject: it is social man who, in the course of his material and intellectual life, is able to transform this possibility into reality, that is, "objectify" it from nature and society. If the mediating role of human praxis is ignored, the consequence will be an *identification* and apologia of reason (ideals abstracted from reality and history) and the world as it is. In point of fact, the practical and intellectual reproduction of reality takes place under contradictory circumstances and class conditions, and with the mediation of movements that are waging a dramatic struggle with one another. In bourgeois societies, it assumes a tragic and extremely alienated form. It is the contradictory historical practice of mankind that renders the possibility of a rational sense of the world unreasonable. Thus the ideals are put into practice in a far from ideal way, and the drama of human history sometimes assumes false appearances. It was in this sense that Marx said, "Reason has always existed, but not always in a rational form".

The identification of reason that exists in non-rational form with reality, the acceptance of reality *turned* deliberately Irrationalistic as the eternal form of destiny and misfortune (even with some reservations), and the elimination of praxis as mediator all result in the affirmation of the *status quo* even if the intent is the opposite), just like the tenet that the world appears in a reasonable form to the analyst who *views* it in a reasonably way.

We return to the discussion of this issue in order to point out that Lukács's evaluation, its errors and false ideological limitations notwithstanding, includes an entirely valid and justified tendency. At the same time, in that era Lukács's criticism did not (and could not) succeed in shedding light on those factors — in German history, the Imperialist economy, and the Communist movement — that *mediated* the materialization of reason in an unreasonable form in Germany, factors that caused Germany under Hitler to become a bleak illustration of all those philosophies that claimed that either reality or history was utterly lacking in reason. No, Lukács cannot be blamed for overemphasizing reason or violating the rules of epistemology since — as we have seen — he was

fully aware that reason can be identified both with a peacefully and smoothly developing Capitalism and with a proletariat that acts under the iron laws of necessity. What was missing from Lukács concept was not the *movement* that assured a *genuine* perspective for the elimination of the unreasonable form. Although the sectarian perspective promised a redeeming vista, the doctrine of Social Fascism and of the intensification of class struggle, and a concentrated attack on the left wing of the movement and those compromising with the left wing — this meat-grinder of self-destruction — thinned those forces within the movement that could have been expected to rescue Germany. For that reason, Lukács regarded the post-1848 development of the German bourgeoisie merely as the prehistory of the bourgeois class consciousness of the age of Imperialism, and of Fascism, and not as the prehistory of *anti-Fascism*, whose intellectual heritage could be used for reconstruction.

When Lukács returned to Moscow, in 1933, he was aware of these circumstances. He had recognized the changes in the world-historical situation and was familiar with conditions in the Soviet Union. On 24 June 1934, he delivered a paper at a scholarly meeting of the Philosophical Institute of the Communist Academy. Although the paper was entitled, “The Significance of *Materialism and Empiriocriticism* in the Bolshevization of the Communist Parties”, its real message was an auto-critique, a disavowal of *History and Class Consciousness*. It would be an oversimplification to describe this major public recantation as just another partisan move of Lukács’s, without first examining some of its special features. At first sight, the paper is a repetition of the foreword to his 1933 work on Fascism, where, as we saw above, he criticized his own development against the background of what he described as the direct and inevitable transformation of the bourgeois intelligentsia into Fascists and their philosophy into Fascism; acting as a critic of German ideology he rejected his earlier work. His self-criticism was negative ideological. In the first part of his address, he applied the approach of his book on Fascism and summed up all its key elements (critique of life-philosophy, Subjective Idealism, myth-making, Irrationalism, Kantian and Hegelian trends, Social Fascism, etc.). In addition he said that his book on Lenin anticipated the critique of the entire bourgeois philosophy of the Imperialist period, its transition to the ideological preparation of Fascism. Later on, however, the ideological and theoretical foundation of Lukács’s self-criticism and elements of the struggle *against*

the ascent of Fascism were augmented by motifs — again of a negative ideological character — of the ideological struggle for *Bolshevization*. This “synthesis” is a *peculiar* response to the debate of 1930–1931, but its essence is not to be found principally in the fact that Lukács rejected the stance of *History and Class Consciousness* on the image-theory by employing Lenin’s theory of knowledge, or that, after criticizing the Second International, he condemned the ultra-left-wing, Syndicalist trends of the Third International. (He condemned not only the Syndicalism of Korsch and others, but also his own.) The more profound basis of his synthesis was the connexion that he established between the dilemma of “Bolshevism or Fascism” and that of “*Russian Bolshevism or Western Communism*”.

Occasionally man can disguise himself. Independent of the fact that this is an “entirely partial phenomenon” and that the external cannot for long be separated from the internal, it is worth examining whether, intentionally or not, man assumes a disguise that *corresponds to the requirements of his age*. When Lukács recanted the ideas of *History and Class Consciousness* from the standpoint of a critical attitude toward German ideology — objectively speaking — no disguise was involved; when the recantation took place from the standpoint of “Russian” Bolshevism — subjectively speaking — he probably did employ a disguise. However, the disguise itself was not a reference to Stalin, Lenin’s “true” heir, it was a mask that, when he donned it, immediately displayed a tragicomic grimace, true to the spirit of the age.

The model for Lukács’s self-criticism was Lenin’s remark on Bogdanov: a Historical Materialist “above” and an Idealist “beneath”. Once again we must quote extensively from his self-criticism, which employed the genetic method: “I began my career as a student of Simmel and Max Weber (I was influenced by tendencies of the *Geisteswissenschaft*), and I developed toward Idealism from Kant toward Hegel. Furthermore, the philosophy of Syndicalism (Sorel) exerted an important influence on me, for it consolidated my romantic anti-Capitalist tendencies. The World War and the Russian Revolution of 1917 brought about a crisis in my whole world view, and my Syndicalist tendencies intensified under the personal influence of Ervin Szabó, who was the most important representative of Syndicalism in Hungary. Thus, when I joined the Communist Party of Hungary in 1918, my views were Syndicalistic and Idealistic. Notwithstanding my experiences of the revolution in Hun-

gary, I let myself be led by an ultra left-wing opposition to Comintern line (1920–1921). Although, after the Third World Congress, I realized my concrete errors of the time (Parlamentarism, March action), my *History and Class Consciousness* of 1922 (which I had written between 1919 and 1922) was a philosophical synthesis of these tendencies. For that reason, what Lenin had described an ‘Idealism beneath’ applied exactly to the most important mistakes of my work, even though I had never come into contact with Machism. The struggle that I had waged against the theory of reflection and the Marxist–Engelsian interpretation of the dialectics of nature was a typical form of ‘Idealism beneath’. It is therefore self-evident that ‘Materialism above’ could not be but ‘Materialism’ distorted and abstracted in an Idealistic way. This could be demonstrated in detail concerning every concrete issue discussed in my work, ranging from problems of philosophy to the definition of class consciousness and a theory of crisis. In the course of my party work, and after I gradually became familiar with works by Lenin and Stalin, these ideological foundations of my views were weakening. Although I did not approve a new addition of my work (which had in the meantime been sold out), it was only during my stay in the Soviet Union between 1930 and 1931, and especially as a result of the philosophical debate of the time, that I came to see the problems of philosophy in their proper light.”¹⁹

When Lukács applied this critical remark of Lenin’s to the Lukács of the twenties, he did not mean that he had become the same type of *theoretician* as Bogdanov. He was certainly not aware that, with this type of self-criticism, he had retrospectively justified what Deborin had disapprovingly said of him (namely, that he had espoused *Historical Materialism*, yet rejected philosophical *Materialism*.) Neither did he know that his self-criticism, adjusted to an age that had *accepted the Plekhanovite orthodoxy*, and this “Russian” Bolshevism, apart from its declared platform, had just as little in common with Leninism as did Lenin’s criticism of Bogdanov with Deborin’s criticism of Lukács.

This is how Lukács returned to the land of Soviet Socialism when Fascism had come to power. He was pressed, both inwardly and outwardly, to disown *History and Class Consciousness*. This opened up the possibility for a philosophical analysis of the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie.

As we have seen, Lukács contended that the steady linear motion, the continuity, was necessarily present in twentieth-century German ideol-

ogy: the decline of bourgeois philosophy ran parallel to the bourgeoisie's road to Fascism. Epistemologically, Lukács asserted, this progression of *non-classical* German philosophy was controversial, since both reality and the actual class relations appeared in bourgeois consciousness in a false and distorted manner. However numerous its critical reservations and however cuttingly witty its castigation of the existing conditions, this philosophy not only reinforced the *status quo* but also supported Fascistization by proclaiming the slogan of "revolution from the right" in order to combat decadence.

In our view, Lukács's hypothesis that the world view of the German bourgeoisie developed in a straight line into Fascism did not express the vulgar sociological postulation of the parallel between the movement of the classes and ideological development in terms of methodology. Rather, it reflected the fact that he approached the *sources* (the philosophical development of the Imperialist period) from the assumption that *Fascism represented the terminus ad quem* of the developmental process.

Analysing the writings of the ideologists of Fascism, Lukács demonstrated in detail *what* they had taken over from other philosophical theories. He showed, for example, what Rosenberg borrowed from the views of Houston Stewart Chamberlain and Spengler, Riegl and Worringer.²⁰ He devoted just as much attention to the Fascist metamorphosis of non-classical German philosophy, to the political mechanism that were involved in the reformulation of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Dilthey, Simmel, Max Weber, and Spengler. His main aim in doing so was to uncover *how* Hitler, Rosenberg, Goebbels, Bäumler and their confederates drew on the sources, how they selected and falsified the concepts that they adopted, how they simplified and commercialized them for the petty bourgeoisie, how they pieced together an eclectic, "demagogic world view" devoid of original ideas: an encyclopaedic summation of all the reactionary theories of the age.

Can the sources, the predecessors, the inherited philosophical ideas be evaluated from the viewpoint of their "improved" form? Can the Irrationalism of *Lebensphilosophie*, for example, be judged on the basis of the recognition that Irrationalism assumed its most radical form in Rosenberg's myth theory; or can the charisma of the leader as envisaged by Max Weber or Stefan George be interpreted as the early version of the Fascistic *Führer* ideology?

The approach to sources and genesis that combines the viewpoints of "from where to where" and "to where from where" was most succinctly defined by Lukács when writing about Nietzsche: "... Nietzsche opened the gate for a development of bourgeois ideology that ended in the Fascist theory of post-war Imperialism. There is not a single motif in Fascist philosophy or aesthetics whose germs cannot be detected in Nietzsche".²¹

Obviously, this does not mean that he condemns the sources themselves as Fascistic.

In 1934 and 1943, i.e., around the time of the victory of German Fascism as well as the beginning of its fall, Lukács devoted several articles and essays to the "prophetic" philosophy and aesthetics of Nietzsche.²² What makes his criticism relevant to us at this point is not so much the application or validity of the genetic method, not so much the well-known conclusion that Nietzsche was the rightly respected, "most distinguished ancestor" of Fascism, sometimes falsified and sometimes condemned by the Nazis. Lukács's aim is, rather, the *critique* of (rightist, indirectly apologetic) *Capitalist ideology* (defending the "evil side") as a basis for the trends in liberal cultural criticism. Nietzsche's anti-Capitalism draws as much on the past as on the future. He condemns Capitalist development and culture both from the perspective of its early, past phase and from the utopian viewpoint of the Imperialist era. Lukács is clearly aware that Nietzsche's philosophy is a perceptive reflection on the degradation and deprivation of man caused by reification. The "subtle vision" of man's deformation and reduction to crippled misery makes Nietzsche's struggle against decadence significant. "However mistaken his starting point, his conclusions and intentions, etc. may be", Lukács writes, "Nietzsche's perceptive observation of the symptoms reveals the outward shapes, a whole series of manifestations of the ideology of Capitalist decline. The *correctness* of these polemical observations is of course closely connected with the absolute *reactionary* nature of his philosophical position."²³

The recognition that a reactionary position may often lead to the correct, *realistic-critical* observation of reality, of the ideological forms of philosophy, is of great relevance to the later interpretation of the "inevitability" of false consciousness. This idea was to unfold in full detail in the Lukácsian aesthetics of the thirties, in his fight against the vulgar sociological and dogmatic theories of art, in the analysis of the

lasting values of classical Realist traditions ("the triumph of Realism"). For Lukács — for the critic of German ideology — this did not, however, become the philosophical-ideological basis for a possible alliance with left-wing bourgeois anti-Capitalism (especially before the Popular-Front policy and again in the late thirties and early forties, when the possibility of a Popular-Front temporarily declined). The discovery of the dialectical relations between the criticism of a reactionary world view and of the *status quo* was not yet sufficient to shatter the sectarian antinomy of "Fascism or Bolshevism". Consequently, the reasons why Schopenhauer or Nietzsche exerted an influence on the *left* remain unexplained. Of course, Lukács is perfectly familiar with both the fact and the cause of this influence (critique of Capitalist culture), but in his opinion, a reactionary, Irrationalistic philosophy developed only in a *rightward direction* leading from honest rebellion to the fraudulent gesture of sham revolutionary action. "Nietzsche's influence shortened the period during which the bourgeois intelligentsia sympathized with Socialism; he ushered the talented young generation of intellectuals into the camp of Imperialist reaction and decadence precisely because the construction of the Nietzschean philosophy made it possible that the reactionary *volte-face* should be connected with the illusion of a radical intensification of social revolt criticized in cultural terms."²⁴

What we said above might lead one to the premature conclusion that, given the methodologically defective, or at least contradictory foundations of Lukács's criticism of twentieth-century German bourgeois philosophy in the thirties, his judgements as such are also questionable. The situation is however, far more complex. First, theoretical and methodological mistakes should not be viewed ahistorically (which, of course, does not mean that the given historical situation might be an extenuating circumstance). Second, the errors of outstanding thinkers are never primitive, and cannot be treated simply as signs of personal limitations. Third, however much it may appear to be a *contradictio in adiecto*, especially in the eye of strict Lukács-critics, there is a dialectical relation between the errors and virtues, as the history of his whole life-work reveals.

It must be noted that Lukács's works stand unmatched in the contemporary Marxist literature, among the critical analyses of both twentieth-century bourgeois thinking and Fascist ideology; there is no other Marxist work whose outlook is so fully imbued with the intention of

actual political *agitation*. Anyone who requires proof of the sophistication of Lukács's reasoning should compare any of his books and essays with the average literature of the age on similar topics, e.g., Lukács's critique of Social Democratic ideology with that of Rudas, which dates from around the same time.²⁵

When Lukács approaches the German ideology from its terminal point — from Fascism — he certainly does not confine his scrutiny to the exploration of analogous motives, kinship, and common origin, but strives to describe the *whole* of the tendency in question to characterize the relevant thinker's entire system of thought as such with particular emphasis on its inherent contradictions. The genetic approach functions *within* this general description (often latently) as a centre of gravity: this is the philosophical material from which the *ideology of barbarism could evolve*, irrespective of the original subjective intentions. But it is precisely the "one-sidedness", the rigid unequivocalness of this magnifying linearity of the Lukácsian method that allows the student to explore and criticize the reactionary elements and tendencies that were objectively inherent in the philosophical currents from the beginning. It is precisely this direct, genetic relationship, established with "fertile one-sidedness" between the ideas of the forerunners and their Fascistically distorted extreme variants that enabled Lukács to present what is still a basically valid analysis of Irrationalism and the destruction of reason and to provide a *lasting and permanently topical* description of such components of twentieth-century bourgeois philosophy as myth-making, religious Atheism, the transition from Agnosticism to mysticism, and indirect apology. These are Lukács main intellectual achievements of the early thirties, which are preserved and extended in his anti-Fascist writings of the early forties.

THE TRIUMPH OF REALISM

having a professor's chair in the West; no destination other than the Soviet Union seriously occurred to him. Lukács's arrival in Moscow was a return to scholarship; the party ideologist would not tolerate a more honorificary. First, he joined the staff of the Literary Institute of the Communist Academy; and later, that of the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences, where he worked until the end of 1945. He was also a member of the Union of Soviet Writers since its founding in 1934. Between 1935 and 1942, he earned a living by writing free-lance articles and then, from 1942 until August, 1945, he returned to the Institute of Philosophy.

Lukács gives an objective account of the events of the second half of his Moscow exile in a curriculum vitae dated 23rd January 1945. Let us now quote the relevant passages of this important document in full: "In 1930, as a free-lance writer and member of the Writers' Union, I wrote articles for various Soviet journals in Russian, German and Hungarian. I was a member of the German Communist Party, of the German Committee of the Writers' Union, and I also worked as the foreign editor of the journal *Internationale Literatur* (German-Globe World). Here, in May 1941, I registered with the Russian German Committee Party. Then, on 22 June, 1941, I was arrested by the NKVD. I was released and released on 22 August. Since the day of my discharge I have been working on war propaganda, my primary concern being the ideological fight against Fascism. In October 1941, I was examined together with the other writers here in Kazan and later in Tashkent, when I returned to Moscow in July 1942. There I wrote in 1942-1943 for the Uzbek publishing house *Orbiyotlan* an anti-Fascist brochure for the Institute of Philosophy of the Academic Academy, and various articles for English and American papers sent abroad by the NKVD and

MOSCOW (LITERATURNY KRITIK)

Lukács's exile in exile was, in fact, a return. At the age of nearly fifty, having finally found himself, he had no intention whatsoever of accepting a professor's chair in the West¹: no destination other than the Soviet Union, seriously occurred to him. Lukács's arrival in Moscow was a return to scholarship; the party ideologist would not remain a mere functionary. First, he joined the staff of the Literary Institute of the Communist Academy, and later, that of the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences, where he worked until the end of 1938. He was also a member of the Union of Soviet Writers since its founding in 1934. Between 1939 and 1942, he earned a living by writing free-lance articles and then, from 1942 until August, 1945, he returned to the Institute of Philosophy.

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the SOVINFORMBURO. In 1942, I got a post on the staff of the Institute of Philosophy of the Scientific Academy, where in December 1942, I successfully defended my Ph.D. thesis entitled *The Young Hegel and the Problems of Capitalist Society*. In my first years at the Institute of Philosophy, I worked on the history of philosophy. I wrote various articles on Marx and Engels and also for [some] as yet unpublished volumes on recent philosophy. I also used this opportunity to expose the ideological roots of Fascism. My brochure, *Racism is the Enemy of Mankind*, is being prepared for publication by the Institute of Philosophy. At present, I am working on a major book dealing with the history of the emergence of reactionary ideology in Germany; this also serves the purpose of exposing Fascism. At the same time, I continued my activities as a journalist in order to unmask the ideology of Fascism and promote Russian culture. I wrote a number of articles for *Internationale Literatur* (Deutsche Blätter) (against the Prussian mentality, on the Maidanek camp, etc.), others for the SOVINFORMBURO, for American journals through the VOKS (on Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Gorky, etc.), for the paper of the Hungarian P.O.W.s (Igaz Szó), for the Hungarian language radio broadcasts, etc. In 1944, a book of mine, *Az írástudók felelőssége* (The Responsibility of Intellectuals), written in Hungarian, was published, in which I analysed the intellectual development of the Hungarian intelligentsia in the past few years. Since then, the book appeared in Hungary as well. Recently I have been engaged in conducting verbal propaganda among German P.O.W.s, with the permission of the Hungarian Communist Party.”³

Although not written for that purpose, Lukács's curriculum vitae also reveals that the consciously undertaken duality of roles between the scholar and the publicist, the philosopher and the propagandist, the aesthete and the staff-member of editorial boards — now in a unity even stronger than before — was also maintained at this stage of Lukács's career. And a new feature: in the period between 1933 and 1945, the Russian and the German “lines” ran together and were moreover joined by the Hungarian, in Lukács's work and thinking.

Nevertheless, the passage quoted above also contains a few omissions. For instance, Lukács did not mention that, in the course of these twelve years, he was unable fully to master the Russian language; he could read only works of scholarship. Yet he found friends, who called Georg Osipovich that is, Lukács by the nickname Yuri. (He signed some

of his articles as Osipov, but this time it was only an *author's* pseudonym.) He was not a lone wolf, who shared his ideas only with Mikhail Lifshits, if anyone⁴: "I have never said that I was on my own in the thirties. Quite to the contrary, this was the first period in my life when, for me, work and struggle became possible within a community."⁵

Lukács also failed to mention the most important phase of his work in Moscow, that linked to *Literaturny Kritik*⁶, which was closed down at the end of 1940. He omitted it from his curriculum vitae because *by then* it could no longer be included. All of Lukács's studies on Realism (in addition to many other articles) appeared first in *Literaturny Kritik*. Politically, the journal was by no means an opposition paper (even though certain comments made by Lukács might have given this false impression), but its position in literary theory and criticism could truly be regarded as exceptional in so far as it was not under the supervision of the Union of Soviet Writers.⁷ The critics of the time considered Lifshits to be the leading theoretician of the journal, and Lukács its foremost literary historian; the "intellectual core" of the journal also included the critics, Usiyevich, Sats, and Aleksandrov, as well as the writer Platonov⁸. During its short life, *Literaturny Kritik* did an exceptional job of acquainting its readers with classical German aesthetics, with the most valuable ideas of the Marxist theoreticians (Mehring, Lafargue, Plekhanov, Lunacharsky), with the views of the Revolutionary Democrats, and with the intellectual world of the bourgeois Enlightenment. In addition, it provided Marxist analyses of these earlier currents of thought. The journal in fact became in Lenin's words, "the society of the Marxist friends of Hegelian dialectic", publishing Hegel's *Aesthetics* in a new translation. It also published excerpts from classic works of aesthetics (Lessing, Diderot, Goethe), as well as from the writings of Realist authors (Balzac, Stendhal) on art theory. For instance, the correspondence between Balzac and Stendhal appeared here for the first time, together with a foreword by Lukács; Grib compiled a massive volume from Balzac's criticism and theoretical works, for which Lifshits wrote an introduction. This was the work that laid the indispensable foundations for Soviet aesthetic-historical research and source publication.

Was there some kind of *aesthetic* change in Lukács's *Weltanschauung* upon his return to Moscow? Was there a turn after 1933? In so far as such a turn can be postulated, it certainly did not take the form of a

change in discipline. It was not a matter of turning away from philosophy to aesthetics.

The year 1933 drastically and finally refuted the basic tenet that the proletariat, as a class for itself, is the identical subject-object of history. The possibility of proletarian revolution within the foreseeable future came to an end. By this time, Lukács even if he had wanted to, could not build a philosophy of history on the class consciousness that eliminates reification. The proletariat that was simultaneously the subject and the object of its own cognition, the class that achieved proper self-assertion, again suffered a practical defeat, the second since 1919. What came to the forefront and became decisive in Lukács's thinking at this time was the *post-revolutionary* society of the victorious proletariat, the prospect of Socialism. At the same time, Lukács gradually became aware of the fact that, in the country of the only victorious revolution and of solitary Socialism, the issues to be handled are not only those that the author of *History and Class Consciousness* supposed. He realized, namely, that seizing power and even organizing the Socialist economy are merely stages in, but not the final points of, overcoming reification. By the same token, he came to appreciate the serious internal contradictions entailed in the process of restructuring following a (non-classical) revolution, the towering political obstacles that limit both the perception of social totality and the practical application of theory freely forming reality.

The identity of subject and object is therefore, of necessity, to be replaced by a different structure, one not based on history and class consciousness. From this time on, subject and object, the subjective and the objective worlds, are dialectically linked by mankind's forms of activity and reflection, which are universal and at the same time distinct. They remain ontologically related to one and the same reality: productive labour (the metabolism between man and nature), science (theoretical cognition), and art (aesthetic behaviour, reflection). If there really was a turn in Lukács's aesthetics in the thirties (naturally not perceived in such a form), then its essence was, to put it roughly, that the work of art (Realist art) in effect replaced the class consciousness of the proletariat and became the identical subject-object of the cognition and historic self-awareness of mankind. Lukács regarded it as the maintainer of identity, as the pledge of the dialectical conquest of totality, as the organon for penetrating the barrier of alienation, as a means of evoking

the demonstration of contradictions, for both the criticism and the transformation of existence.

The scope of the present work does not permit a detailed analysis of the decisive ideological, theoretical, and structural consequences of this change. It is, however, certain that the change is enormous, providing the first opportunity in the history of Marxism-Leninism to construct a uniform aesthetic theory.

The movement is the cradle of the theoretical forms of Communist consciousness, and the driving force of the revolution is also that of "the history of philosophy and of other theories". As the preceding comments were intended to show, if Lukács, as the theoretician of *Literaturny Kritik*, expressed the established — contradictory — Socialist relations in the form of aesthetic categories, too, it was not by accident, not simply owing to the particularities of his intellectual biography. His aesthetics were post-revolutionary. For this reason, the change meant a great deal more than the fact that, whereas in the twenties he had rejected the idea of "depiction", his aesthetic thinking now took a new epistemological turn mediated by Lenin's reflection theory.

Lukács expounded the concrete meaning of the aesthetic concepts that he otherwise used mainly as general philosophical categories in his critique of Soviet and German proletarian art between 1930 and 1933, in a range of studies. Three pieces stand out among them. "Art and Objective Reality" (1934), "The Intellectual Physiognomy in Characterization" (1935), and "Narrate or Describe" (1936)⁹ marked a genuine turning point in the history of Marxist aesthetic thinking and continued to be of decisive importance in Lukács's own work up through the "Specific Nature of the Aesthetic".

Although in a belated, misunderstood, and uneven way, the main ideas of these studies have been internalized by the aesthetic consciousness of our age to such an extent that they are now employed not only by Lukács's disciples and critics but also by those who, at most, have only an inkling of their origins. There is no need to dwell on Lukács's concrete statements on extensive and intensive totality, artistic concreteness, the closedness of the work of art or its direct evidence, teleological structure, the intellectual physiognomy of literary figures, the dialectical objectivity of the form, distinguishing between the typical and the average, the poetic transcendence of everyday reality, etc.

Nevertheless, there are several reasons for a re-reading of these studies. It would reveal, for instance, that contrary to the legends, the literary theoretician of *Literaturny Kritik* did in fact analyse the internal world, the structure of works of art, with an outstanding critical acumen. It would also reveal that Lukács's aesthetic discourses were also critiques, reviews, in which he, so to speak, continued his Moscow reviews on different foundations. Contrary to all later accusations, Lukács studied Soviet *belles lettres* in depth, the works of Gorky and Sholokhov being authoritative points of departure. He knew and reviewed the newest contemporary literature, the works of Fadeyev, Pagodin, Panfiorov, Olesha, Gladkov and Ehrenburg.¹⁰ In the second half of the thirties, the theoretician and the journalist Lukács are frequently revealed in one and the same text. In these reviews, Lukács treated the Soviet novels *as his own*, yet criticised their schematism with bitter, cutting irony. ("Most of our novels are inhabited by the shadows of lifeless schemata instead of people".)

He condemned the unimaginative, topical works, in which the characters and descriptions were mere props or illustrations for the demonstration of some kind of material or spiritual connexion: "This is what the tediousness of the composition of our novels is related to. For most of them, it holds true that we hardly begin reading, and already we know the entire plot: there are saboteurs in action at the factory, an unholy confusion results, finally the party cell or the GPU unmasks the mischief-makers, and production is blooming again. Or: the kolhoz does not function due to the sabotage of the kulaks, but the foreman or the authorities are able to break down the sabotage and we shall witness the flourishing of the kolhoz, etc."¹¹

At the *tactical* level, especially before 1936, Lukács continued to use ideological elements that contradicted his own theory, such as the ill-conceived notions of the (bourgeois) "survivals" and "backlag", in his argumentation: "What are the obstacles to representing the new man in our literature? Obviously, first and foremost the survival of bourgeois consciousness... Our literature, even in the most significant works produced so far, remains far *below* our reality. Our reality is more heroic, more intellectual, more aware, more differentiated, more rich, more humane, and more personal than even the best of our literature."¹²

Of course, this does not reduce by one iota the importance of criticising schematism.

Lukács's theoretical articles were also contributions to the contemporary literary debates in the Soviet Union.¹³ "Narrate or Describe", for instance, related to the discussion on Naturalism and Formalism organized at the Union of Soviet Writers. Moreover, in two significant literary battles in the second half on the thirties, Lukács was not merely a contributor but the main actor. Both the discussions on the novel and on Realism were inseparable from the conflicts of the post-revolutionary society engaged in building Socialism, from the task of promoting awareness of the historical-philosophical and aesthetic implications of these conflicts, and from the means by which those conflicts were to be conducted.

The milestones of this era took the form of heated debates. The fact that Lukács's new concept of the novel and the debate concerning it developed after he had written *The Theory of the Novel* but before he wrote *The Historical Novel* lends them particular importance. The author of *The Theory of the Novel*, at the time of the Great War, studied the historically based dialectics of literary forms, the possibilities of a more intimate "linkage" between aesthetic categories and history, and, following Hegel, tried to solve the mystery of permanence within change. "But his method remains extremely abstract in many respects, including certain matters of great importance; it is cut off from concrete socio-historical realities. . . . It was not until a decade and a half later (by that time, of course, on Marxist ground) that I succeeded in finding a way towards a solution. When M. A. Lifshitz and I, in opposition to the vulgar sociology of a variety of schools during the Stalin period, were trying to uncover Marx's real aesthetic and to develop it further, we arrived at a genuine *historico-systematic method*."¹⁴

Lukács's concept of the novel and of Realism is a counter-theory. In the course of elaborating it, Lukács had to fight not only his own, internal battles, but also public ones. Under what circumstances did his theory evolve?

The direct occasion for writing "The Novel as Bourgeois Epic" was provided by a request from the *Literaturnaya Entsiklopedia*. The article did appear under the entry "Novel"¹⁵, although with a postscript-like supplement written by somebody else. Lukács summarized the basic tenets of his article in a lecture, which was discussed by the literary section of the Institute of Philosophy of the Communist Academy. He delivered the lecture on 20 December 1934. The discussion began the

same day; it was continued on 28 December and ended on 3 January 1935.¹⁶

The occasion for expounding a concept reveals nothing of the essence of that concept and precious little of the intentions of the author. In any case, at this time Lukács was not the only one concerned with the problems of the novel in the Soviet Union: the topic was "in the air". The discussion organized at the editorial offices of the periodical *Okt-yabr* on "Socialist Realism and the Historical Novel" could be regarded as symptomatic of the times. The lecture introducing the discussion was given not by a literary historian but by a *historian*, I. Fridland, who advanced the view that the essence of the historical novel was the comprehensive, "epochal" representation of an age based on the data of the activities of historical personality, and that, as a work of art, it in a sense bore the marks of a strictly scientific structure.¹⁷

The problems of the novel appeared in a radically different context at another discussion, the subject of which was a three-volume work by F. Schiller on the history of Western literature, intended as a textbook.¹⁸ The participants clashed over the issue of whether the criterion for the literary historian's assessment of a book was to be its Realist representation or the revolutionary spirit and democratism of its author.

The facts and events testifying to the topicality of the issue of the novel, by themselves, revealed only the ripples on the surface of the ocean of intellectual life. The deeper currents were alluded to by the report in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* on the polemics occasioned by Lukács's lecture (which, incidentally, mentioned the "heavy-going, abstract form of the presentation" as its only fault). The report emphasized that "the discussion became particularly heated because it went beyond the scope of the question posed as the concrete issue and it turned into a discussion on the interpretation of the genres and even, in a yet wider sense, on the method of literary history".¹⁹

The contributions immediately reveal the manifestations of this metamorphosis, but only to a lesser extent its social-aesthetic causes and its historical-philosophical essence. Yet these were the factors that finally determined Lukács's concept, and they lurked behind both its merits and its weaknesses.

In the various stages of his work, Lukács interpreted *method* differently, but never regarded it as a secondary, technical issue. In this case, however, it was not the application of the Dialectical Materialist

method in general that was at issue, as had been the case in the debates with Bredel and Ottwalt, but, much more concretely, the method of periodization. Lukács advanced his own historico-systematic method against the vulgar-historical and empirical approach, which proceeded from the development of classes and class struggles and from the law of unequal development. In a broader context, Lukács employed the historical method in the analysis of the novel when examining the relationship between epic forms and socio-economic formations. Typical forms are born of social types and, as such, cannot be separated from their concrete historical content. The form is always the form of socio-historical content and not the totality of concrete artistic procedures, techniques, and elements of style. Historical changes in the form should not be deduced from the class position of the individual artist. This historical method is the precise opposite of the vulgar sociological approach to art and literature, as the latter necessarily posits the *external* relationship of content and form. Lukács's undying achievements lay in: (1) employing the Marxist-Leninist category of socio-economic formations in the theory of genres; (2) linking the existence and the history of artistic forms (without vulgarization) to the junction points of the totality of historical development; and (3) demonstrating how the essence of social phenomena has gradually crystallized into literary form and how one can understand the lower, less advanced grades by means of this unalterable form.

Still, if this had been all that Lukács had to say, it would not have amounted to much. But he wanted more. He wanted a truly "epochal" answer to the question of the change of genres. He stated that the novel was the most typical literary genre of bourgeois society: "its typical characteristics are revealed only when it becomes the form of expression of bourgeois society. On the other hand, it is precisely in the novel that the specific contradictions of Capitalist society are most adequately and most typically represented".²⁰

The characteristics of the novel can best be understood by comparison with the Classical epic. If the characteristics of the Greek and bourgeois epics stem from the age of the "heroes" and from the contradictions of the Capitalist formation, respectively, then the problem of the adequate epic form of Socialist society can and should be solved through the analysis of the contradictions prevailing under Socialist social conditions.

The dilemma that Lukács wrestled with was how epic was possible in the age of Socialism.

In tackling the vital question of the epic, Lukács proceeded from a sharp contraposition of the antique and bourgeois epics and, following Hegel and Marx, stated that Socialism, as a new type of communal society, provided an opportunity for the Realist novel to approach the classical epic. The rate at which the novel would be enriched with epic elements would be directly proportional to the rate at which Capitalism would be eliminated and the classless society established, that is to say, this process would be historical tendency. The idea of the renewal of the epic elements was also linked to an emphasis on the fact that despite the tendency of the Socialist novel to approach the epic, it would retain and critically appropriate the traditions of the great bourgeois Realist novel. It would be superficial to conclude that Lukács misunderstood Marx or that he was perhaps too much captivated by the beauty of the dialectical triad of the negation of negation (epic-novel-epic). It would be just as superficial to note only that his theory of genres — at the dawn of the anti-Fascist Popular-Front policy — created an *aesthetic continuity* between the bourgeois and Socialist levels of development. We can form an authentic picture of the ideological background of Lukács's notion concerning the evolution of the new, epic elements of the Socialist novel if we clearly perceive that, by this time, he regarded the Soviet Socialism as the phase of the positive resolution of alienation that would eliminate the objective causes of man's degradation. Hence, the Socialist novel was for him the "transitional" epic form of a transitional society. On the one hand, it was linked to the great tendencies of the classical Realist novel, and, at the same time, it transcended the latter by eliminating its limitations. On the other hand, it was characterized by the renewal of the epic elements, but this renewal "it not the artistic renewal of the elements of the form or content of the old epic (or possibly mythology, etc.) but grows, by necessity, out of the evolution of social being, of the establishment of classless society".²¹

That, in the person of Gorky, the Socialist Realist novel had found a "living, mediating link" between the great Realist traditions and Socialist Realism was in Lukács's opinion, the "historic good fortune" of the latter.

The historical-philosophical basis of the approach to the epic is the organic unity between individual and community as it evolves in Social-

ist society. In Lukács's view, the elimination of the contradiction between social development and the free unfolding of human abilities, the release of the energies of millions of people render possible the realization of the "universal-social" within the activities of literary characters, the turning of individual into epic, that is, into positive heroes.

The resolution of the contradiction between social development and the alienation of man, the anticipation of a classless society, the unity of individual and community renewed retained at a higher level the free, positive individual given to action as the attainer of the universal-social — these are the main historical-philosophical moments of Lukács's definition of the Socialist form of existence. In addition, they serve as the ideological bases for the heroic illusion of the renaissance of epic elements. Naturally, Lukács did not regard the Socialist formation as already accomplished; throughout his work he retained the actual priority of the novel form against the epic tendency. He never gave up the decisive criterion of Realism, namely, the authentic and true reflection of the contradiction of reality.

In the bourgeois novel, wrote Lukács, objective social movements could be represented only through turning the conflict between individuals into a plot. In contrast, "in the organization of the proletariat into a class, in the battle of class against class, in the collective heroism of the workers, a new element of style appears, which, in this context again evokes the essence of the ancient epos: the struggle of one social formation against another".²²

Lifshits voiced the same conviction in his contribution: "The epic will proceed from an aspect of reality different from the point of departure of the novel: It begins not with the story of the concrete man outlined against a background of great historical events, but directly with the representation of these events; the deeds of the heroes of the Civil War and the building of Socialism will then be inserted among them."²³

The idea of the renewal of the epic was an optimistic illusion, although by no means unique one. It was not borne out by the subsequent development of literature. Lukács's and Lifshits's hypothesis — at least in the short run — proved to be an erroneous one, merely wishful thinking. Yet the discussion of the novel unequivocally revealed that this error did not by any means arise out of a romantic anti-Capitalism nostalgically *reflecting* on the organic wholeness of antiquity. Lukács was

perfectly aware of the fact that Marx had characterized the heroic age of civilization as the irretrievable historical childhood of mankind, the art of which was inseparably linked to the "underdeveloped social level from which it stemmed", to the immature social conditions under which it was born. In agreement with this, Lukács stated that the heroic nature of this age was not understood by Hegel as simple heroism but as a *primitive* unity of society, the relative lack of contradictions between individuum and polis. The unmediated unity of particular and universal, of subject and substance, of individuum and genus is world-historically unrecoverable. The heroic state of the world thus could not be recaptured.

After all, Lukács was perfectly correct in his conclusion that the key to the appropriate epic form of Socialism lay in the contradictions of Socialist society, in the evolving relationship between individual and community. Naturally, everything depends on how concretely and deeply, at what level of perfection these contradictions are grasped. In this respect, Lukács was faced with certain historical obstacles at the turn of 1934-1935. The assessment of the possibilities of representing the positive hero showed how deeply the socio-historical causes affected his concept. In his lecture Lukács also dwelt on the fact that, under Socialist conditions, "the elements to be criticized (in the positive hero) are not contradictions entailed in the existence of the proletariat itself" and "not even the most cutting self-criticism can eliminate the positive qualities of the hero".

The positive characters, such as the leader of the revolutionary masses, clearly and decisively embody social rather than individual forces.²⁴

When, at the end of the thirties, Lukács reconsidered the problem of the historical perspective of the epic and the novel, he did so not only with a sharper focus. *The Historical Novel* first appeared in the *Literaturny Kritik* in 1937-1939. This is what Lukács wrote in the last lines of his book: "The historical novel of our age has first and foremost to negate its immediate predecessor in a radical and clear-cut manner, resolutely to eliminate its traditions from the new works. *The necessary approach to the classical type of literary novel* ... will certainly not be a simple re-birth of this form, but, if I may use a term borrowed from the dialectics of Hegel and Marx, a renewal equivalent to the negation of negation."²⁵

In *The Historical Novel*, the idea of the revolutionary democracy of populism and of the Popular-Front extending beyond the anti-Fascist struggle was also built into the theoretical basis of the hypothesis that the "new heroic age" would approach the epic. Nevertheless, Lukács also stated in no ambiguous terms that "We are still very far off, even in present-day Socialism, from being able to regard Capitalist prosaism as a past, truly superseded stage of mankind's progress".

And when in 1948, history proved that the hopes that he had pinned on the Popular-Front were at least in part illusory, Lukács was not ashamed to admit: "my political perspective at the time was shown to be too optimistic".²⁶

Like most of his works of the thirties, the articles that Lukács produced in the course of the Realism debate of 1939-1940 — despite all appearance to the contrary — again did not simply deal with "great" Realism in and of itself, but ultimately with the question of what alternatives would be open to art and literature in the era of Socialism victorious in one country and Fascism in power. It would hardly have been possible even to pose this essential question without an awareness of the problems of social progress and reaction, of historical alternatives and false consciousness, of ideological development and decline, in the absence of an analysis based on the classics of Marxism. Yet the only opportunity open to Lukács in public was to discuss these ideological problems in the guise of problems of philosophy and of aesthetics.

Already in 1936-1937, during the fight against vulgar sociology the discussion was centred round these issues. In the eyes of Lukács, Lifshits, and the theoreticians of *Literaturny Kritik* the dangers of the vulgar sociological schemata lay not so much in the fact that Balzac landed in a box allocated to the ideologues of "industrial capital", Anatole France in the one for "middle-bourgeoisie" and Romain Rolland in the one labelled "petit-bourgeois humanism" but in the fact that this theory would uproot art from the soil of reality and make it stem from class consciousness taken in a vulgar sense. The first proposition of the vulgar sociological theory held that "All an artist does is to arrange the ancient psychological experiences forced upon him by his own environment, upbringing, or the interests of his own social groups. . . . All an artist does is to collect the mental states of his class into some kind of peculiar vessels called works of art."²⁷

One of the many highly significant aspects of the critique of vulgar sociology involved the manner in which Lukács contrasted Lenin's reflection theory, and the principle of the populism of art, with the mechanistic, fatalistic concept of class, pointing out that the levelling relativism was in fact nothing else than the "apologia of apologetics".²⁸

There is another, no less significant political aspect to the Lukács-Lifshits critique of vulgar sociology: the unmasking of sectarianism. For the sociology of the arts advocated the principle of "uniform" development, the parallel development of society and of the arts, conceived of within the schemata of "rising class = progressive ideology = valuable art" "declining class = reactionary ideology = worthless art". In addition, it dramatically applied the critical doctrine according to which "every artist is born from the tree of his class, and such is his fruit". When Lukács and Lifshits underlined the sectarian nature of theory, they in fact followed the spirit of the Popular-Front policy formulated at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. They also built on an important statement by Dimitrov, who declared that "we, Communists, do not conduct a small-minded policy limited to the guild-like interests of the workers", and that "in the present situation, sectarianism — or *self-satisfied* sectarianism, as we qualify it in our draft resolution — is the greatest obstacle in our fight for the establishment of a united front".²⁹

Lukács linked the Popular-Front to the populism of literature and to Realism, also indicating the multiple mediations of this link, and at the same time emphasizing that the vulgar identification of political views with artistic value prevented the development of precisely the radical democratic and revolutionary proletarian literature that it purported to encourage. Here we cannot undertake a detailed analysis of the manifold and not in the least literal relationship between the anti-Fascist Popular-Front policy and Lukács's theory of Realism. Yet it should be noted that the question of the relationship of the movement to the progressive cultural heritage of the past closely linked Lukács's aesthetic aspirations to the tasks of the ideological struggle announced at the Seventh Congress.³⁰

The condemnation of sectarianism and the praise of nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature could not, in Lukács's case, be rendered independent of the battle waged for the success of the Popular-Front policy. Here, however, equal emphasis should be laid on the indirect nature of the unity between literary theory and the Popular-Front and

on the fact that Lukács regarded the anti-Capitalist ideological content formulated in the *works* of anti-Fascist writers representing bourgeois democracy (such as Thomas Mann, Romain Rolland, Heinrich Mann, or Arnold Zweig) as the main *political* support of the Popular-Front. By this time, Lukács very much reckoned with and highly appreciated the role played by adherents of bourgeois democracy among the forces entering the anti-Fascist alliance, but he did not deduce the aesthetic significance of their *art* from their bourgeois democratic *Weltanschauung* with the help of some sort of sociological "schema". To the contrary, he saw the ideological bases of their Realism precisely in the rejection of bourgeois Liberalism, in the humanist critique of the limitations of bourgeois Democratism, of the inhumanity of Capitalist culture and the "spiritual animal kingdom", and in the not always conscious revolt against the irrationality of the bourgeois order. "The writer who represents real men and women need not be fully aware (in fact, he need not at all be aware) of the fact that the representation of real men and women embedded in real social conflicts is already equivalent to the beginnings of the revolt against the ruling system. . . . If we follow the development of such significant Realists as Anatole France or Thomas Mann we can observe. . . . the unequal and contradictory process of becoming aware of the spontaneous revolt against Capitalism within the limits determined by the necessities of literary representation."³¹

Is was this type of non-Socialist revolt proceeding from democracy towards Socialism that, in Lukács's opinion, might become a strategic reserve of the proletarian revolution.

In 1935, the Communist International took proper and unambiguous stand concerning the issue of its "relationship to bourgeois democracy". This statement was indispensable also because some Communist parties refrained from complying with democratic demands. They did not recognize the interrelations between the fight for democratic rights and for workers' power, for Socialism; they "handled" the issue of bourgeois democracy in a "schematic manner"; and they did not take into consideration the historical changes that had taken place, for instance in Germany since the Weimar Republic. These were the tendencies that Dimitrov attacked, pointing out that "today, the *concrete* choice of the working masses in several Capitalist countries lies not between the dictatorship of the proletariat and bourgeois democracy, but between bourgeois democracy and Fascism".³²

From 1939 on, far-reaching changes took place in the Comintern's evaluation of its relationship to bourgeois democracy. To understand this change, it is sufficient to refer to some well-known events concerning the gains made by Fascist Germany, to the policy of appeasement practised by the bourgeois-democratic states, or to the Soviet-German non-aggression treaty.

Influenced by the events preceding the outbreak of the war, the Comintern reassessed its relationship to bourgeois democracy. It declared a *general* war on the Imperialist bourgeoisie, on the War for whose outbreak the Comintern held *all* Capitalist governments (the bourgeoisie of both the warring and the neutral countries, which also "warms its hands at the fire of war" and "cynically casts its 'democratic' mask aside"³³) responsible.

According to the November 1939 appeal of the Executive Committee, the working class no longer had a choice between Fascism and bourgeois democracy, as the latter was fighting "not for saving democracy from Fascism, but for the victory of reaction".³⁴

In retrospect, it was an error to place English lords, "glorious" French democrats, and the banking system of London and Paris on an equal footing with the bloody reign of the Fascist dictators, industrial magnates, and Berlin's black-shirted pogrom-leaders. In December 1939, Lukács, too indisputably erred in putting *equal* emphasis on fighting both Fascist reaction and the Capitalist system, on the necessity for the merciless criticism of bourgeois democracy, as the *concrete choice* between the two continued to remain on the agenda. His error cannot, however, be understood if we leave the afore-mentioned historical and political interrelations out of consideration, or if we forget that it was Lukács's unexcelled merit to have demonstrated in detail that the bourgeoisie can never represent social progress *without contradiction*, and also that the great Realist achievements of twentieth-century bourgeois literature were possible only in so far as the writers sensitive to the contradictions of Capitalism transcended the horizon of their democratic *Weltanschauung* in the direction not of Liberalism, but of Socialism.

In 1939, Lukács's book entitled, *A Contribution to the History of Realism*, occasioned a new and impassioned debate.³⁵ The theoreticians and critics of *Literaturny Kritik* (Lukács, I. Sats, Y. Usiyevitsch, V. Grib, P. Yugin, M. Rozental, G. Fridlender), by asserting the mimetic essence of art, rejected the notion that the great Realist writers represent

the world as seen by their own (progressive) class. Over and against this, they rightly referred to the methodologically enduring statement by Engels concerning Balzac's example: [The] "Realism I allude to, may crop out even in spite of the author's opinions. . . . That Balzac. . . was compelled to go against his own class sympathies and political prejudices, that he *saw* the necessity of the downfall of his favourite nobles, and described them as people deserving no better fate; and that he saw the real men of the future where, for the time being, they alone were to be found — that I consider one of the greatest triumphs of Realism, and one of the grandest features in the old Balzac."³⁶

V. Yermilov, Y. Knipovich, and others believed that Lukács's concept of the triumph of Realism was in fact a praise of the reactionary *Weltanschauung* and that it even endangered the idea of Socialist Realism. For if it is always reality that wins, then the Socialist artist or writer has no need of a Marxist *Weltanschauung*. Hence, in their view, Realist representation was created always *as a result of* (*blagodarya*) and not *despite* (*vopreki*) the author's *Weltanschauung*. Thus, in Balzac's case, too, what we have is not a contradiction between conservative *Weltanschauung* and literary method, but the contradictory nature of both. The "blagodarists" came to the conclusion that what is finally asserted within a work of art is only the *progressive* (in Balzac's case, the bourgeois) aspect of the author's *Weltanschauung*. And so the problem is neatly solved within the intimate framework of a single class ideology.

Naturally, if such sociological schemata are applied to works of art and literature, one can speak about the aesthetic value of literary works expressing out-of-date ideas and explain their endurance only if one refers to concepts such as "being artistic", "formal perfection", "richness of expressing emotions", etc. But what is the origin of these values? That remains a mystery. In this way, vulgar sociology that mechanically binds *Weltanschauung* and method of representation, turns into its own opposite under the force of dialectics: It is led to the separation of the form and content of the idea, thus opening the door to "immanent", Subjectivistic theories. It is quite impossible to evoke here, in all its ideological-historical fullness, the 'chaos' that arose at the turn of the thirties and forties, when Lukács's book appeared and occasioned the disputes over his "hostile views", over his conception of the interrelations between the work of art, reality and representation, over his interpretations of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. The dispute presents a nearly

complete picture of the aesthetic mentality and fallacious notions of the age. Yet it was not its aesthetic aspects, not even when viewed from the perspective of art theory, that constituted the most illuminating elements of the debate. Naturally, the fact that Lukács fought vigorously and on many fronts against such *slogans* of his opponents is important from the standpoint of ideological criticism. As he put it, "on the one hand, there are the progressive ideologies, which can *only* help the writer, and, on the other hand, there are the reactionary ones, which can *only* hinder him".³⁷

Nevertheless, the key point of the polemics was the interpretation of the social function and historical role of false consciousness, the relationship between human existence and false consciousness.

"The triumph of Realism", wrote Lukács "means the victory of the stirring and contradictory unity of objective reality even over the political, social, ideological, etc. prejudices of the artist, that is, the victory of the objectively correct tendencies that reflect the dialectics of reality in an appropriate manner in the work of art over the directly abstract, schematic, etc. behaviour of the artist."³⁸

Yet, this also implies something else in addition to the victorious force of reality. It means that no artist can do violence to objective reality and go unpunished: subjective bias, false consciousness cannot be forced upon the world without leading to catastrophic failure. It would be wrong to assume that Lukács referred only to the force of reality spontaneously-unconsciously asserted in classical Realist art and literature. The fact that he raised the entire problem to a historical-philosophical plane is not open to doubt.

It might be thought that Lukács restricted the concept of the triumph of Realism to bourgeois consciousness, to pre-Marxist philosophy, to Capitalist society. His publications, however, reveal that, in his view, the contradictory nature of social progress will not be eliminated in Socialism, either and will rather be modified. In fact, the existence of contradictions is far more pervasive than any given form of society. "We have not yet carried out sufficiently deep philosophical or literary research into the new nature of Socialist existence and we have not yet sufficiently recognized the concrete force of the modifications from the perspective of thought and of art. This, however, we do know: the contradictory nature of life, which had existed before and had also been more influential than social conditions, cannot be eliminated through

any kind of transformation of society. Socialist existence is thus also subject to the rule of the dialectics of phenomenon and substance. . . . even under the conditions of Socialism, every single artist will have to strive both within himself, and in forming himself, for the triumph of Realism, for the intellectual and artistic appropriation of reality.”³⁹

In the course of the debate, Lukács and Lifshits stressed not only the fallacious character of the thesis that “every idea is progressive in its own time”, since the moments of progress and of reaction are inseparable and relative owing to the historical limitations of the classes, but also that “Marxist analysis has, at all times, to point out where the maximum of progressive social thought, in which the life conditions of the oppressed classes are reflected, appears”.⁴⁰

Lukács explored an important interrelation when he wrote: “even if the interaction between the incidentally fallacious *Weltanschauung* and the Realist work of art is ever so complicated, yet, *just any* kind of fallacious *Weltanschauung* is not suitable for being the basis of Realism. The illusions and errors of the great Realist writers become artistically fertile only if these are historically necessary errors and illusions linked to major social, popular movements”.⁴¹

Only when the writer is able to see reality with the eyes of the oppressed masses, with the eyes of the people, is he able to transcend the limitations of his *Weltanschauung*, does reality become triumphant. Far from discarding the class point of view, this approach, rather, stresses its importance in the spirit of the oppressed classes, of the maximum of progressive social thought. Populism does not mean some kind of unbiassed vision of reality, but a certain partisanship which alone enables the artist in pre-Socialist societies to reflect reality in an authentic way. The *conscious* identification of the writer with the cause of the working class, the links between Communist partisanship and the Socialist Realist creative method represent a qualitatively new stage based on the former.

The emphasis on the role of populism in Realist art (recalling revolutionary democratic aesthetics, the heritage of Belinsky and Dobrolyubov) was a positive achievement of the Soviet aesthetics of the thirties. It was not the fault of the theoreticians of *Literaturny Kritik* that the concept of populism, too, later fell victim to vulgarization, and that, especially in Zhdanov's understanding, it deteriorated to the point of which it meant the requirement of representing Russian national fea-

tures (of following the peredvizhniki in art, an Glinka in music), of expressing the "spirit and the character of the people".

In this way, the principle of reflecting *reality* is a protest against the literature that embellishes, whitewashes Socialist society. It demands artistic *truth* from literature and castigates artists for twisting or suppressing the truth, for eliminating the representation of real contradictions. The "vopreki" also call attention to the fact that a progressive *Weltanschauung*, by itself, does not lead to outstanding artistic achievements, not even if proficiency in artistic techniques is "added". "... the blind identification of the authors' political opinions with their literary significance", wrote Lukács, "badly impeded the artistic development precisely of radical democratic and revolutionary proletarian literature during the Imperialist era, diverted it from a thorough and deep artistic and ideological study, instilled a sectarian complacency in it at the existing aesthetic and intellectual level, which was frequently somewhat low".⁴²

On the one hand, works of art cannot be regarded as political declarations made in an artistic form (and as such they cannot be condemned or approved), while on the other hand, literature, by virtue of its aesthetic essence, resists being turned into mere illustrations of even the correct (or presumably correct) political ideas, slogans, and resolutions. The critique of the vulgar "class-centred" sociology also considered the grave danger posed by the affixing of class labels (or rather, by its new version of "anti-Soviet" denunciation), by the "passion for unmasking", by the identification of the words of the hero of the novel or play with the political sentiments and affiliation of the author (meaning whether he belonged to the party or to some "anti-party" group) at the time of the "increasingly embittered class struggle". The opposition between the "class-genetical" analysis and the principle of totality also implies the opposition between sectarianism and the Popular-Front policy. It was not by accident that Lukács stressed an immanent, manifold, and multifariously mediated interrelation between "*the Popular-Front, the populism of literature and true Realism*".⁴³

Concerning the above, two questions could arise in the reader's mind. The first question is as follows: is it not merely as a result of the experiences of the past fifty years that we now perceive such conscious social criticism, although often put in the ambiguous language of Dodona, in these writings? It is quite obvious, however, that Lukács's and Lifshits' opponents *there and then* perfectly understood this language. At

the height of the attacks against *Literaturny Kritik*, in 1940, *Krasnaya Nov* published a great "exposé", which said, in conjunction with the Realism debate, that the voprekists "tried to present the issue as if they were dealing with abstract matters of no topical significance and as if the theoretical statements of *Literaturny Kritik* applied only to the history of the distant past... It was very much in the interests of Lukács, Lifshits, and their fellows to suggest that the debate was innocent and abstract and free of sharp political edges".⁴⁴

The other question might be: If the fight against vulgar sociology was a political fight, which, even though it suffered a temporary set-back (*Literaturny Kritik* was closed down in 1940), nonetheless pursued the correct aim, did the arguments cited in support of the triumph of Realism hold true? Were they justified in referring to the classics of Marxism, in "overgeneralizing" their "passing" remarks? To this day we can encounter the literary-historical argument that Marx and Engels did not have a sufficiently thorough knowledge of the art of Balzac. Was Engels' conclusion on "one of the grandest features in the old Balzac" really based on superficial information or, as has also been claimed, on the identification of political views and *Weltanschauung*? The classic thinkers, however, not only read but studied in depth all the works of the "diviner of the surplus value theory", and learned more from him than from "all the professional historians, economists and statisticians [of the age] taken together". Marx wanted to write a critical study the *Comédie humaine*. But that is beside the point. What is more important is that the adherents of views such as the one cited above question the methodological significance of Marx's and Engels's statements on aesthetics and art theory. In point of fact, of course, it is well known that they did not analyse the works of any artist in separate writings devoted to that purpose alone. If this criterion were accepted, their remarks could be put down as subjective, particular judgements of taste. With a pertinacious effort, the theoreticians of *Literaturny Kritik* succeeded in refuting this view in the thirties.

It has been said that Lukács drew far too sweeping conclusions from Engels's comments on Balzac and from Lenin's Tolstoy, and that he applied them inflexibly to the history of literature. Yet, Lukács's articles and Lifshits's collected writings published in 1938 reveal not only that there are not just one or two relevant thoughts, and instead a number of interrelated ideas concerning the issue at hand, but also that their actual

role and concrete place can be determined only if they are not separated from the critique of tendency-literature, liberal ideology, and Capitalist culture, etc.

At this time, however, we wish to discuss neither the theoretical significance of these concrete interrelations, on which Lukács's polemical writings throw some light, nor the manner in which the "triumph of Realism" fits into the unified whole of the Marxist-Engelsian aesthetics reconstructed for the first time in the thirties. Rather, our concern is with another ideological aspect of this "literary" debate, which points far beyond Marx's, Engels's, and Lenin's aesthetic writings, to the *totality of their philosophy*.

It was at this time that Lukács called attention to the fact that Engels's and Lenin's well-known comments on the outstanding Realist writers of the nineteenth century "are excellent, historically concrete applications of the *general* teaching of *Marxism-Leninism* to the specific field of literature and, at the same time, constitute an integral part of their conception of the *general* contradictions of ideological development".⁴⁵ Following Engels, Lukács also added that the ideological "battles and advances . . . are always made with 'false consciousness' in class societies and in pre-Marxist thinking".⁴⁶

With this, Lukács designated a more concrete place for the problem of Realism within the general frame of Marxist philosophy. The relations between work of art and *Weltanschauung* belong to the domain not only of aesthetics and not primarily of literary theory (or history), but are integral and natural parts of the wider realm of the philosophy of history. One of the fundamental laws of this realm expressed many a time by the classic thinkers is that, in class societies, people carry out and struggle through their own history with a false consciousness, which does not mean that, under certain specific conditions, the aims of "limited content" — to use Marx's words — established on subjectively false consciousness and realized with "heroic illusion" could not lead to the objectively correct result. The Marxist principle of unequal development holds fully in this area: the contradictions and conflicts evolving in socio-historical reality must be distinguished from the ideological forms in which people experience, become aware of, and struggle through these conflicts.

Lukács sought for an answer to the question of how reality breaks through false consciousness and prevails in the work created, in the

realized result. He asked how, despite the utopias, illusions, ideological limitations, and errors, the road that may be full of detours and delays, and is anything that straight, nevertheless leads to objective historical truth, to Realism. It is hardly necessary to call attention to the *strategic* importance of this approach at the time of the anti-Fascist joining of forces.

Not only literature, but pre-Marxist philosophy, political economy, and utopian Socialism, as well provide characteristic examples of the triumph of Realism. In one of the chapters of *The Young Hegel* ("The Tragedy in the sphere of Morality"), Lukács examined Hegel's, Ricardo's and Fourier's Realism in detail, and compared them to Balzac's Realism: "Ricardo and Balzac were no Socialists, indeed they were declared opponents of Socialism. But both Ricardo's objective economic analysis and Balzac's literary mimesis of the world of Capitalism point to the necessity for a new world no less vividly than Fourier's satirical criticism of Capitalism."⁴⁷

The conservative writer, the utopian Socialist, the economist opposed to Socialism, and the Idealist thinker are very different from one another, and correct perceptions and fallacies are mingled in different ways in their views, yet they all found themselves face to face with the contradictions of the new social order that was more progressive than the one preceeding it. Their greatness lay precisely in the fact that they did not deny these contradictions, but instead achieved a critical, Realist representation of the prosaic world of Capitalism. In the case of the young Hegel, for instance, this Realist criticism consists of his illusions concerning Napoleon and of "a realistic observation of the German conditions".

Lukács outlines Hegel's and Ricardo's, Balzac's and Fourier's Realism, the alternatives of bourgeois ideology in the following way: "... For the real, dialectical analysis of human progress and its contradictions can only be undertaken from a point of view dominated by a belief in the ultimate victory of progress, despite all the contradictions. Only the perspective of a classless society can provide a view of the tragedies to be encountered *en route*... If this perspective is not available to a thinker... then there are only two possibilities open to anyone who has a clear view of the contradictions. Either he will hold fast to the contradictions, in which case he will end up as a romantic pessimist. Or he will keep his faith, despite everything, that progress is inevitable, however many tragedies lie along the road. In that case his faith must be embodied in one or other of the mystifications of false consciousness..."⁴⁸

In 1938, almost simultaneously with his polemical writings, Lukács wrote a study entitled "Marx and the Problem of Ideological Deterioration", in which he analysed the philosophical interrelations of the triumph of Realism in detail. His point of departure was again the principle that "the contradictory nature of progress is a general problem of the development of class society".⁴⁹ He examined with particular thoroughness the 'complicated, unequal, non-fatalistic' relationship of the individual (thinker, artist) living under the ideological conditions of bourgeois society to his own class. According to vulgar sociology, the individual is locked in the stocks of his class existence and class consciousness, with no saviour in sight. In contrast to this distorted view, Marxism, although not denying that the existence of the individual is determined by his class, points to a more subtle relationship: "it is impossible for individuals belonging to any class to overcome the limitations of their class existence '*en masse*' without also eliminating them. The individual person may, incidentally, master these limitations'. The term incidental is to be understood in the sense of the objective dialectics of accident and necessity".⁵⁰

Whether a given ideologue, scientist, or artist representing the bourgeoisie, will break with his class or, to the contrary, capitulate; whether his break will be followed by a return or desertion; or whether he will be able to recognise and represent the decisive contradictions of the age without openly and deliberately siding with the proletariat — these are matters of intellectual and moral strength. (Lukács here overcame the sectarian antinomy of "Fascism or Bolshevism".) How the above possibilities can be translated into practice, however, also depends on whether the individual carries out his activities in the area of the social sciences, which are in the "most disadvantageous" position from the point of view of the triumph of Realism, or in arts, which occupy a "somewhat preferential" place. For in the former case, the practically unavoidable break with the bourgeoisie is a precondition of Realism, while in the latter case a "larger field" is open to sincere cooperation.

Examining the epic of bourgeois society, Lukács emphatically underscored the fact that the theoreticians as well as the writers living in a society disadvantageous for the arts, were confronted with the prosaic life of Capitalism, with its degrading conditions, and at the same time with its progressive character. They could resolve this contradiction ideologically in several ways, through the creation of the myth of pro-

gress just as well as through lamentations over the fate of mankind. The outstanding writers did away with this contradiction at least in their *works* if not in their *Weltanschauung*, unmasking and mercilessly criticizing the world of the bourgeois era. Lukács did not demand that writers take the proper, Marxist, "scientific stand". Let us consider, for example, his characterization of Thomas Mann: "*true Realist . . . knows exactly who Christian Buddenbrook is, who Tonio Kröger is, who Castorp Hans, Settembrini, or Naphta is. He need not know from the results of abstract social scientific analysis: here he may err just as Balzac, Dickens or L. Tolstoy erred before him — but he knows in the Realist sense of the creator, he knows how thinking and emotion grow out of social being, how experiences and emotions are parts of the entire complexity of reality*".⁵¹ So it is not scientific merits that Lukács discovers in the works of the great Realist writers; rather, he emphasizes the principle that, in bourgeois society, the authentic reflection of the intensive totality of reality is carried out despite their false consciousness, prejudices, or even "heroic illusions".

Lukács's understanding of the triumph of Realism is not fatalistic. In order to be able to turn to reality with "trust prompted from within", an artist or writer has to carry out an extremely complicated "work", first and foremost on himself. He has to fight a "twofold" battle with the prejudices of ideology and *Weltanschauung* both handed down to him and yet related to reality, and with the emotional, moral, and intellectual prejudices of his own inner world of experience. This ideological work assumes knowledge of the self and knowledge of the world, examination of the self and examination of society all at the same time, but most of the time it is not accompanied by the deliberate review of the false picture of the world at the intellectual-philosophical level, and herein lies its contradiction. Consequently, Lukács does not deny — in fact, he underlines — the fact that the work of artistic creation is also ideological work. It demands both intellectual strength and moral courage and its success can be measured only by the work of art itself and not by the statements of the writer. As against "dead objectivity" (and hollow, "false subjectivity"), he stresses that artistic appropriation is not the passive acceptance of the existing, of the appearances on the surface of some supposedly ultimate reality, but the elimination of these appearances: true Realism means breaking with fetishism and mystification.

After this lengthy exposition, the way in which Lenin's idea of reflection was integrated into Lukács's concept may perhaps be easier to understand. Despite the obvious assumption, this was not accomplished by means of some shallow insight of the philosophy of cognition. The true reflection of objective reality means primarily that it is Realist art that can represent the contradictions of "cunning" reality that are present in the life of man in the form of often falsely understood delicate movements and its *world-historically true* tendencies.

Looking back on his activities in Moscow, at the time of polemics, to the widening of conflicts, Lukács speaks quite unambiguously about the political and theoretical content of his battles of 1939 to 1940 in his draft curriculum vitae: "... increasingly pronounced emphasis on Engels' *triumph of Realism*, as opposed to ideological regulation from 'above'. The fact is that in art, for art, there can be no such absolute directedness. What is decisive is not the writer's design or intention (which can be disciplined), but his shaping of his material, which remains subject to the laws of governing the *triumph of Realism*. Therefore, ideology can influence attitudes—mainly indirectly. This is the reason why it is essential to probe the question of genesis, mimesis in terms of: What? How? By providing an account of the genesis of mimesis, the 'triumph' of Realism is freed of every trace of Irrationalism: in it the truth of history breaks through".⁵²

When *Literaturny Kritik* and *Internationale Literatur* were functioning, the Realist, anti-Fascist literature capable of finding a resounding echo in the people was Lukács's ideal: its topical cultural, and political value was provided by its inexhaustible diversity, as against "one-track" avantgardism.

Both the party-oriented and universal characteristics of Lukács's journalistic and theoretical writings can equally be found in the following lines: "The richness of representation, the deep and meet perception of the lasting and typical modes of appearance of human life brings about the great progressive effect of these masterpieces: their readers, as they internalize them, clarify their own experiences and widen their human and social horizons, and the living humanism prepares them to accept the political slogans of the Popular-Front and to perceive its political humanism; the understanding of the great progressive and democratic periods of mankind's development, mediated by the works of Realist art, creates the fertile soil in the souls of the masses for the new type of revolutionary democracy represented by the Popular-Front."⁵³

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE: THE REAL GERMANY

In 1935, with the declaration of the Popular-Front policy, the Communist movement came to a turning-point. Between 1936 and 1938, with the unlawful trials, the political history of the Soviet Union came to a turning-point. In 1939 and in 1941, with the outbreak of World War II and with the attack on the Soviet Union, world history came to a turning-point. Lukács was working in the epoch of the Popular-Front, of Soviet Socialism, of German conquests, and of the Soviet Great Patriotic War.

Yet, did Lukács's *philosophical* train of thought alter its course at all in response to the meanders of history? It is possible that he merely made use of the "usual" tactical trick when he quickly shed the terminological ballast of the theory of Social Fascism? For continuity seems to prevail without a break, as for instance in the condemnation of avangarde art (Expressionism). It would seem that there is no significant difference between his critical writings of 1933 and 1938: both link the "grandeur and decline" of Expressionism to the ideology of the German Independent Social-Democratic Party (Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei — USDP). Moreover, Lukács himself confirmed the appearance of unbroken continuity, when he used his own example to illustrate the truth of the old saying: Even the road to hell is paved with—revolutionary—good intentions. "Still I can hear the bullets of the red war fought against Imperialists whistle round my ears, still the excitement of the Hungarian illegal movement trembles within me, no part of me wants to allow that the first great revolutionary wave is gone, that the resolute revolutionary will of the Communist vanguard was incapable of overthrowing Capitalism. Thus we have the subjective basis: revolutionary impatience. The objective product: 'History and Class Consciousness', a work that is reactionary because of its Idealism, because of the insufficient comprehension of the theory of reflection, because of the rejection of the dialectics of nature, etc. Of course, I am not the only one

in this day, to whom such a thing has happened. Quite to the contrary, this is a mass phenomenon. And the attitude of my old study on Expressionism that turned so many of the participants toward the opposition, the close linking of Expressionism to the ideology of the independent Socialist Party (USDP) is also essentially based on the aforementioned old truth."¹

The impression of continuity is further confirmed by Lukács's reference to the fact that in his old study he had made a sharp distinction between the consciously counter-revolutionary leaders of the USDP and its immaturely revolutionary rank-and-file with respect to the responsibility for Noske's victory. Similarly, it is undeniable that, on both occasions, he treated *Realism* as the only representative of progress (as opposed to the trend Naturalism-Impressionism-Expressionism-*Neue Sachlichkeit*-Surrealism) and saw an impediment to revolutionary purification just as much in the ideological influence of the anti-Realist tendencies as in Social-Democratic ideology.

Despite the subjective and objective, presumed and actual elements of continuity, Lukács's writings born in the midst of the Expressionism Debate show a decisive change of attitude. In 1933, in a manner already quite familiar to readers of his book on Fascism (*Fascism or Bolshevism*), he relentlessly criticized the pseudo-revolutionary rebellion of the entire German Expressionist intelligentsia, charging that it led directly to Rosenberg and Goebbels. In 1938, the debate was carried on *within* the anti-Fascist camp. This, too, was ruthless. Lukács called it "ruthless in a comradely fashion". And truly, only comrades within a movement can be quite as ruthless to one another as Lukács was to Brecht and Eisler or Brecht and Eisler were to Lukács.² Their confrontation turned on the artistic alternatives of the anti-Fascist struggle in the age of the Popular-Front, on the questions of how to widen the front and who could be potential allies. By this time, Lukács would not exclude anti-Fascist writers of bourgeois or democratic *Weltanschauung* from among the potential allies. He would not oust Thomas Mann, the author of *Der Zauberberg* and of *Mario und der Zauberer*, who liked Nietzsche.

The two protagonists of this political as well as literary debate were Lukács and Bloch. It was not simply a confrontation between the representative of "eclectic academism" and the Lover of Art. Lukács reminded his old friend with justification that "in the course of the last few years, we had several heated and highly fertile debates, the basis of which

was that we agreed on the aims in general, but our opinions diverged in principle with respect to the concretization of these aims".³

The real, philosophical issue at stake in their polemics was the interpretation of *contemporary Capitalism*. This was the crucial point in the debate between the theoretician of Expressionism and that of Realism.

Bloch questioned Lukács's concept of totality which was "retained" from the system of classical Idealism, and posited a closed and comprehensive reality. "...Bloch questions this 'totality' in relation to precisely the Capitalism of our age. Thus the contradiction between our viewpoints does not, directly and formally, seem to be philosophical in nature, and rather, it looks like a discrepancy in the socio-economic perception of Capitalism; as philosophy, however, is the intellectual reflection of reality, it follows that such discrepancies also lead to important philosophical differences."⁴

How did Lukács approach these contradictions? He contrasted Marx's and Lenin's concept of totality with the experience of disruption of Capitalist reality, with consciousness fastening on immediacy and treated as a fetish, with its artistic practice (Expressionism, Surrealism) and its theory (Bloch). Although the entire world economy constitutes an integral whole, the individual components within the economic system of Capitalism truly become independent from historical and objective point of view, which is why, on the surface, the life of the society necessarily seems to be "disrupted". The parts, however, are dialectical, moments of the totality of social interrelations. To prove this point, Lukács turned to Marx's analysis of the Capitalist crisis. According to Marx' findings, this dialectic is such that "the unity, totality, and objective interrelations of all part are manifested precisely in the crisis, in spite of the objectively existing and necessary independence".⁵

Thus, their philosophical differences condensed around categories such as part and totality, appearance and essence, immediacy and mediatedness. Disregarding now the other details of the Expressionism Debate, it can hardly be doubted that Lukács has a new *aesthetic* address, for the dialectical categories of reality (already well known from *History and Class Consciousness*) as well as for their fetishized and correct consciousness. The elimination of both of the earlier forms of sectarianism (the messianic and the one based on the concept of Social Fascism) significantly contributes to the fact that, by now, *Realist art* carries the

dialectical consciousness of totality. That is how Gorky and Thomas Mann enter into democratic Fascist alliance for Lukács, who creates a non-tactical and in addition philosophically grounded anti-sectarian interrelationship between the Popular-Front and Realism — against the fellow Popular-Frontist Bloch, in their “comradely” ruthless dispute.

Within the anti-Fascist camp, opinions differed as to the evaluation of Nietzsche, as well. Just as on so many previous occasions, here again, Lukács’s only truly worthy opponent was Ernst Bloch. In his article “The Nazi Stewing in His Own Juice” (1942), Bloch called the search for the antecedents of Nazism in the work of thinkers such as Wagner or Nietzsche a deleterious fashion. “Nietzsche and Wagner are thereby indeed devalued, but Nazism becomes embellished, serious, and worthy of further consideration . . . The ultimate effect of this search for ancestors is that it serves the Nazis’ new propaganda . . .”⁶

When Bloch added that Nietzsche was Bismarck’s opponent, when he emphasized that Fascism, which “turns the millions of vague Capitalists into the bloodhounds of capital”, was original in fabricating lies but stole its raw material from any and every possible source, when he claimed that research into the intellectual genealogy of German Fascism should be curbed because Fascism was international in nature, he also was worried about the German Future. Although his vision of the future was not built on a renewal of old ideals, his concern was the same as Lukács’s: What future awaits the German cultural heritage after the downfall of Hitler? “The anti-Fascists, who hound up a part of the German culture for Hitler, not only embellish Nazism. Unwittingly and unconsciously, they provide the means for the reaction, whereby even the future that could still emerge from Germany after Hitler’s defeat, could be rendered worthless.”⁷

Lukács’s answer became known only recently. This answer, written in the form of a friendly letter, again evokes the spirit of their earlier dialogues: agreement in the ultimate purpose, sharp differences in the methods of achieving it. Bloch, although he correctly wanted to unmask the historical scoundrel, isolated Hitler from historical development. If the Nazi was only stewing in his own juice, and if the coming to power of Fascism was truly independent of the preceding political and ideological demoralization of Germany, then Hitler was really what he always claimed to be: a unique genius. “It is precisely the isolation of Hitler from the previous course of political and ideological development of the

German reaction that promotes rather than hinders the reorganization of reactionary forces inside and outside Germany.”⁸

Lukács agreed with Bloch in so far as the Nazis claimed the most varied ideas as their own, but he added that party-inspired and concrete criticism cannot stop at the recognition of this eclecticism. Rather, it must clarify reality in accordance with historic truth: Where did the Nazis take over and extrapolate from views that were intrinsically reactionary, and where did they desecrate and distort progressive ideas?

As Lukács reminded Bloch in his letter: “The late Leo Popper, a friend from my youth, used to say: ‘It is a hopeless attempt to turn grammatical mistakes into characteristics of style by way of stubborn repetition’. This also applies to the Nietzsche–Bismarck question. Viewed in the abstract, it is true that Nietzsche ceaselessly criticized Bismarck. Yet the question should be asked: *Why* did he criticize him, *where* does his criticism stem from and *where* does it lead? . . . Nietzsche’s critique of Bismarck is the purest type of right-wing criticism.”⁹

Finally, Fascism is not only German. Any theoretician can affirm, with a clean conscience, that it is an international phenomenon: “this, however, does not exempt the *German* anti-Fascists from the obligation of destroying the ideology of *German* Fascism with *German* weapons”.¹⁰

How and why, at the turn of the forties, did the principle of the universal contradictoriness of reality, of social being, become so topical? *All* the turns of historical destiny after 1935 gave rise to a radical change of perspective in Lukács’s philosophy. His vision of the *post*-Fascist development of Germany changed: Proletarian revolution gave way to revolutionary democratic renewal.¹¹ His overtly optimistic picture of Socialism after the October Revolution also changed (instead of the unfolding of Socialist Democracy: trials). In the first place, the change, as it were, prompted Lukács to delineate the place of a new philosophical investigation in the context of anti-Fascism. And then, at the turn of 1941–1942, Lukács wrote his second book on Fascism: *Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?* (How Did Germany Become the Centre of Reactionary Ideology?) Lukács here “returned” to classical German philosophy, to the genesis of democratic thought, to those thinkers that had served as sources for Marx—that is, non-classical German philosophy, the direct antecedents of fascistization—as to a heritage to be mastered dialectically. In this way, the age of Hegel and Goethe became, in Lukács’s thinking, the humanist coun-

terpoint to the theory and practice of barbarism, the hopeful token of the German future. Lukács's series of Goethe studies (1940) is a monument of democratic and humanist traditions.

In this new perspective, however, socio-historical movement, the contradictions of progress necessarily gained substantial significance. From a methodological point of view, they applied equally to bourgeois and Socialist development, to the totality of the movement of world history. The change in effect delineated the place of a new position, of a new, major study on Marx. Yet this place remained empty. The contradictions of Socialist progress were deepening in the country that was the only hope of a final victory over Fascism.

Given that (as noted above) the question of historical necessity was one of the most important philosophical as well as political points of crystallization in the age of Fascism, it was by no means incidental that the interpretation of the historical role of reason continued to remain on Lukács's agenda. Was what was taking place in Germany really necessary? Could reason be discerned in it? Already in the Expressionism Debate of 1938, Lukács had opposed the view that whatever comes into being is by necessity also rational: "The appreciation of historical necessity in Marxism is as little the justification of the existing (even at the time of its existence) as it is the expression of a fatalistic historical necessity . . . There is no doubt that the original accumulation of capital, the separation of the small-scale producer from his means of production, the coming into being of the proletariat, etc. were all, together with all their inhuman horrors, historically necessary. Yet not Marxist would think of praising the English bourgeoisie of that age as the bearer of Hegelian Reason. And still less would he think of this as the fatalistic necessity of development beyond Capitalism to Socialism . . ."¹²

Naturally, Lukács continued to hold that Irrationalism was the expression of the decline of Capitalism. Here, however, he placed the emphasis mainly on the *social function* of irrationality, on the practical role that Fascist brutality played in awakening the most evil human urges, the bestial emotions, through the mediation of the National Socialist movement.

The outbreak of the World War and the attack on the Soviet Union were the most important historical events that fundamentally determined the approach of Lukács's second book on Fascism. At the beginning of the thirties, as we have already seen, he focussed his attention

mainly on the critique of Nazi ideology. Although, in his criticism, he devoted important sections to the National Socialist system, he accorded only secondary importance to the *theoretical* analysis of the practice of Fascism. The World War that expanded into a war of extermination against all progressive men and women, against entire peoples and against culture itself transformed Lukács's thinking in several regards.

First, the question of how and why Fascist theory developed into practice was accorded *equal importance* in both the philosophical and ideological-historical analysis of the origins of the movement. In the works written at this time, Lukács criticized Fascism as the *theoretical and practical* system of barbarism. In his analyses of German ideology in the thirties, Racism naturally played its part, but primarily from the standpoint of, for instance, the ways in which Goebbels and Rosenberg appropriated certain elements from the views of Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain. Now the emphasis was shifted to the fact that Racism, as the quintessence of the National Socialist *Weltanschauung*, was the ideological basis of all the infamy committed by the fascists in and outside Germany, in war and in peace.¹³ That was how Nietzsche and the Gestapo came so close to one another in Lukács's thinking.

Second, Fascism, as the highly topical aspect of the practical system of barbarism, necessarily brought an extremely serious dilemma into the foreground, namely, the relationship between Fascism and the German people. At the time Hitler's assumption of power, Lukács's question was: Why do millions of people in Germany believe in the ridiculously muddled Fascist ideology? At the time, Lukács attributed the hypnotic effect to mysticism and to demagoguery, that is, he proceeded from the nature of the ideology itself. By the beginning of forties, he posed the question in a different way: "how was it possible that the German people, which had once stood at the forefront of European humanism, sank so low? Was this still the same people? Or was this people made barbarous to the core by the poison of the Fascist system, of Fascist ideology?"¹⁴

How did Lukács resolve the dilemma of the guilt or innocence of the German people? First and foremost, with Marx's well-known saying: A woman and a nation are never forgiven the hour when the first vagrant adventurer is allowed to rape them. It was necessary to explain how the moral and intellectual *fall* of the German nation could have taken place. In order to accomplish this, however, Lukács also had to demonstrate

her former *greatness*. Thus, the answer brought the interrelations of *history*, and not only those of the history of ideology, to the fore.

Although Lukács did not analyse the sectarian faults of the German Communist movement (of which Dimitrov spoke at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern) in this, his second book on Fascism, either, he did make a comprehensive attempt at providing a more differentiated explanation embracing historical, economic, and political reasons for the effectiveness of Fascist ideology and propaganda.

There was a strong anti-Capitalist feeling among the masses, who were used to obeying the centralized will of the bureaucratic state and military apparatus and were disappointed with bourgeois democracy. They failed to develop a loyalty to the democratic system during the Weimar-period. National Socialist demagogy, for its part, foisted the responsibility for both the poverty and the payment of war reparations onto the democratic regime. It linked the humiliating Versailles Treaty to democracy and whipped up patriotic resentment. It made the people believe that democracy was forced upon the German nation by the victors and that democracy was alien to Germany's true national and historical traditions, that it only served the realization of the anti-German plans of Western Imperialism. "The ideologues of democracy were unable to cope with this propaganda. This was in part because . . . they were not familiar with the history of German democratic endeavours, and so, were unable to produce a historically correct representation of the problems of the so-called days of glory (for instance, the Prussians' defeat by Napoleon at the battle of Jena as the historically necessary consequence of the system of Frederick the Great, etc.), nor were they able to present their own democratic traditions (the Peasants' War, the true ideology of classical humanism, truly democratic tendencies in '48 and before, etc.) in an attractive light to the German people and thereby make them popular. And partly because they were frequently insensitive to authentic patriotic feelings while rightly and often aptly unmasking the reactionary war propaganda and the reactionary nature of the first Imperialist war, which put an even greater distance between them and the masses indignant with patriotic fervour."¹⁵

The economic crisis generated strong anti-Capitalist feelings, coupled with revolutionary impatience, in broad sectors of the working class. At the same time, prompted by everyday experience, the workers did not believe in the inherent and necessary *interconnection of reason*

(which they interpreted as reforms) and *revolution*. They were disappointed in the perspective of a rational, "democratic" development (which they regarded as identical with the Weimar Republic). They, obviously, had never heard of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, or Spengler. The propaganda of Hitlerite Germany was "ingenious" in that it disguised modern reactionary ideas as revolutionary ones, took them from philosophical text-books and university lecture halls out into the streets, and translated them into the language of popular needs. "Hitler was 'ingenious' merely in that he, with the deftness of a dyed-in-the-wool demagogue, rejected in those ideologies everything that was only the whims of the ideologues of decadence... he realized spontaneously to what extent those ideas expressed the aspirations of the broad masses."¹⁶

National Socialism, however, was not content with propagating a profoundly politicized and highly persuasive "modern", "scientific", and "Socialist" world outlook, for it also promised to transform that view into a practical reality by means of a firm political and organizational form, a *movement*.

Lukács's manner of shedding light on the ideological *mediating* mechanisms called into being by Nazism in order to bridge the gap between German reality and German philosophy was unique and of lasting value in the Marxist anti-Fascist literature of the era.

The most important change in emphasis was that, instead of examining how Social Democratic rationality was transformed into neo-Kantianism and, under the influence of life-philosophy, into Irrationalism, Lukács offered a historical analysis of the changes that occurred in the consciousness of the working class during the Weimar Republic. He was convinced that, for the masses, the dilemma of reason or irrationality could not be a theoretical problem, "for them it was a question of *life and death*".¹⁷ In his description of the feelings of the peasant and petit-bourgeois masses who had been disappointed in the "rationality of *Realpolitik*", Lukács vividly defined the process in which rationality, the watershed of decisions concerning German national existence, assumed in the minds of the people a form that was not reasonable but highly practical. As he put it, "... the masses were faced with the following dilemma, one that was theoretically mistaken yet distilled from life, political practice: either to make the 'rational' choice of submitting to national humiliation, or to challenge it with irrational heroism and expect a miracle".¹⁸

At this point, Lukács missed the opportunity to surpass Bloch in describing the dilemma that, for some of the German (and not only the German) left-wing bourgeois intellectuals, arose as a *practical* alternative: either to submit to the "rationality" of Fascist rule and consider it as "real", together with all its inhuman horrors, or, by opting for a "dangerous life", to challenge it with irrational heroism.

In the second half of the thirties, Lukács's analysis of the world-historical situation was characterized by a gradual change in method: Instead of approaching the problem from the standpoint of the history of philosophy (i.e., of ideology), he came to approach it from the standpoint of the *philosophy of history*; the primary emphasis shifted to the analysis of the lessons of German history. This tendency first appeared during the debate on the novel in 1935, was formulated in more concrete terms in *The Historical Novel*, and was continued without interruption in the works on the young Hegel and on Goethe. *How Germany Became the Centre of Reactionary Ideology* also testifies to the fact that the change in Lukács's thinking simultaneously entailed rejection and preservation. By describing the "grandeur and decline" of German classical humanism, Lukács outlined the tragic fate of the German people, the belatedness of its bourgeois development, and the weakness of its democratic traditions, and thereby, arrived at a critique of the theoretical and practical system of Fascist barbarism.¹⁹

A single example, Lukács's critique of Prussianism, can show both how his earlier ideas were enriched with new content (as, for instance, his notion of continuity based on the genetic method) and how, for him, each historical-philosophical problem served as an opportunity to discuss contemporary issues. Assuming that the essence of Prussianism is the unconditional subordination of the interests of every citizen to military-expansionist interests, Lukács writes, then Fascist Germany is a full-fledged rebirth of the old Prussia at the most modern technological level.²⁰ From the examination of the "continuity" of Prussianism and from a comparison of the structural features of autocratic power and parliamentary democracy, Lukács drew conclusions that were meant to explain both Hitler's initial success in the war and the historical necessity of the victory of democracy. The autocratic state can, even in peacetime, force the masses of its citizens to make extraordinary sacrifices, is thus able to prepare for war, which is impossible for a democratic state — precisely because of its democratic institutions — until immediate

danger is at hand. The strength of bourgeois democracy and, in Lukács's opinion, of Soviet democracy in particular, is manifested in the fact that, at a time of concrete danger, when the very existence of the nation is threatened, it is able to mobilize the broadest masses of its population — who are willing to make any sacrifice in order to defend their freedom. Thus the social and moral superiority of democracy (a factor that is constant rather than temporary) is bound, albeit slowly, to turn into a decisive *strategic superiority* in the course of the war.²¹ It should not be forgotten that, back in 1933, Lukács still saw only a formal difference between Anglo-American and German Imperialism. By 1942, however, he emphasized the positive possibilities of British and American democracy in the mobilization of freedom-loving peoples.²²

Once the Popular-Front policy had become the official line, the false dilemma of "Fascism or Bolshevism" disappeared from Lukács's critique of the German ideology, yet the critical spirit itself persisted: Even though left unspoken, this critique was necessarily also a *self-criticism* in certain regards, an attempt at eliminating earlier ideological moments. One such point was the interpretation of the class-determined nature of ideological phenomena. Here we are referring not only to the changed, constitutive role of the concept of the masses, but primarily to the fact that Lukács (again, not without antecedents) rejected the "superficial and narrow-minded solution" that was bent on reducing the "camps of revolutionary progress and barbaric reaction simply and mechanically to a rigid antithesis between proletariat and bourgeoisie".²³

He refuted the widespread notion that the revolutionary-democratic representation of the interests of the people was not possible without joining the revolutionary workers' movement or demanding the overthrow of Capitalism. The tacit withdrawal of the requirement for a *salto vitale* implied the recognition of the positive role of the democratic (citoyen) bourgeois opposition in the struggle against the anti-democratic tendencies of Imperialism, its acquittal on the charge of belonging to the pseudo-opposition. Lukács now directed his critique against the weakness, inconsistency, and reactionary ideas (especially Liberalism) of the democratic opposition without, however, attempting to expel it from the anti-Fascist camp.

And what about the German left-wing intelligentsia? Lukács was of the view that the Realist works of the *émigré* writers, the historical novels of the German anti-Fascists heralded their radical ideological turnabout

and that their democratic humanism was the pledge of the purification of dishonoured Germany. His critical passion did not fade away, but its tone changed: "Naturally, there has never been an age when all intellectuals would have capitulated to the reactionary ideological tendencies without resistance. In Western Europe, however, the social situation of the past seventy-five years was such that not even the most sincere and most devoted sectors of the intellectual opposition were able to establish close contacts with the people; they were unable to work out clear-cut, democratic principles either at the political or at the cultural level."²⁴

By this time, the critique of the German ideology was determined in Lukács's view by the aftermath of Fascism. The idea that the only way to save Germany was through revolutionary democracy became a realistic basic tenet.

Several factors contributed to the fact that, at the beginning of the forties, Lukács changed his approach to German ideology: In his discussion of German *history*, he retained the genetic method only in conjunction with the twentieth-century philosophical antecedents of Fascism, while elsewhere eliminating it. Earlier, as well, he had employed historical points of departure, but then they had been present mainly in the form of political history; now, however, the analysis of reactionary ideology was embedded in history *per se*.

The main reason for the emergence of the historical approach was that, as the defeat of Fascism drew near, it was necessary to consider the future of Germany, of the German people, to take stock of the forces that were going to take up the fight with the remnants of Fascism in the course of the social, intellectual, and cultural renewal. At this time, Lukács approached the history of German ideology from a different angle. In 1933, he had examined the history of twentieth-century bourgeois philosophy from the perspective of the final Fascist catastrophe, but did not mention the historical counterpole to reactionary development. This past was missing because at that time the future was also missing. In 1941-1942, by contrast, he attributed extraordinary significance to the greatness of the German people and to the *humanism of the German classics*. Consequently, by this time, he characterized reactionary ideology as the death of this humanism in non-classical German philosophy. (Incidentally, this also explains the structure of the Tashkent manuscript.) The task, the hope, and even the *renaissance* of humanism all stemmed from this. It was also at this time that he put the

final touches on the formulation of his well-known conception of the development of post-1848 philosophy, namely, the parting of the ways, in which the line followed by the late Schelling, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche stood in strong contrast to that of Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Goethe. (This also reveals that it was not due merely to his Classicist inclination that he began to work on the "Studies on Faust" just in 1940: There was a very profound connection between Lukács's anti-Fascism and his research into classical German philosophy, letters, and arts.)

The future of true Germany lies with democracy. It seems that Lukács's article on Gottfried Keller would be the most suitable illustration of his ideal of democracy; indeed, *it has been said* that this article brings most of his thought on the subject to light.²⁵ This appearance is confirmed by the fact that Lukács considered the study of Keller, a classic of democracy, "highly timely in these days". In particular, he believed that Keller's representation of man (which was permeated by a deep longing for a harmonious personality) was very topical "for the age of unfolding Socialism".²⁶

What were the essential attributes of Keller's "exemplary" democracy, as emphasized by Lukács? First and foremost, this was a social order to which the opposition between institutions and citizens was alien, one in which there was a unity between public and private life, in which man's education to social-political activity could bear fruit. "Keller, the adherent of pure democracy, is of the view that the individual perfection of the personality must, in the end, be in harmony with fruitful social activity."²⁷

In democracy, this harmony must be asserted in all fields of life, in the social and political as well as in the moral field: all areas of private life (family, love, marriage) are bases for public action. Democracy is the organon for the full unfolding of the human personality.

A decisive feature in Keller's humanist approach is his *populism*, the deep conviction that every major achievement in the development of mankind stems from the life of the people and should be led back to the people. That is why he links the highest art and culture to the life of the people, that is why he does not distinguish the literature of the "erudite" from that of the people, of the masses. "Keller's populism is the continuation of the traditions of the classical German humanism: In it, the living and invigorating power of culture, the formative power of erudition is manifested."²⁸

The *direct* assertion of democracy does not mean the abolition of public affairs, of civil institutions, or of the state, but the elimination of their alienated-objectified forms, a creative, initiating-transforming, free relationship to the institutions.

Lukács's belief that Keller's Switzerland could become the example of "true" democracy because it was not yet fully permeated by Capitalism, because it historically preceded Capitalist society, whose democracy is merely "formal" and that, in this way, it could be hypothesized, projected "into the free future"²⁹, is false for several reasons.

First, it is false because Lukács stressed throughout his own study that Keller cherished *illusions* — albeit artistically fertile ones — concerning Swiss democracy. He hoped and trusted that the ancient democracy would only be *enriched* by Capitalism and would be able, without collapsing "to integrate (process) organically all the progressive economic and cultural moments of Capitalist development".³⁰

Second, the legend concerning the precapitalist example of "true" democracy is also false. As has been seen, Lukács certainly held Keller's ideas on democracy to be timely, but, in the era of the Popular-Front, in the fight against Fascism, he considered *all* the stages and forms of democracy attained in world history, the defence of *all* the phases of its evolution (whether obsolete, superseded, or premature) to be *particularly timely*. "However relentlessly we criticize the limitations and contradictions of bourgeois democracy, however bitterly we observe together with Anatole France and others, the purely formal equality before the law, if the representatives of Liberalism and democracy truly fight against Hitler, then they are true representatives of civilization and culture against barbarism."³¹

If, at this time, Lukács regarded anything as politically exemplary from the point of view of the democracy and transition to Socialism that would follow the defeat of Fascism, it was by no means ancient Switzerland, but revolutionary democracy, the example of revolutionary Spain. "Humanity has always tried to find a way out of deep crises in the most various manners. The perspective of the way out, however, may point forward just as well as backward . . . in our view, the road forward need not always and not exclusively be the road leading to Socialism. Attempts such as the ones elaborating the ideas of the democracy of the great French Revolution, trying to perfect them and raise them to a higher level, may also be roads leading forward. This can be seen most

clearly in that 'strange kind of democracy' that the left-wing of the anti-Franco Spanish republican army is trying to realize."³²

Third, the legend of the obsolete "ethical democracy" is also false because, as we have seen, Lukács, as a Communist anti-Fascist at one and the same time rejects and protects "formal" bourgeois democracy, the achievements of the French Revolution, such as civil liberties and equality. However contradictory, limited, and problematic these concepts may be in a socio-historical sense, to whatever extent they may have been superseded by Marxism on the theoretical level and by Socialism in practice, these ideals are both ideologically and politically "extremely topical" if for no other reason than because they represent the most sophisticated formulations of the doctrine of equality prior to Socialism. "We have known for a long time that liberty and equality are problematic concepts of a certain historical stage of human development".

Even if these ideals "... are not quite as final or everlasting as their proclaimers imagined ... they still signify something immortal in the process of human civilization".³³

It would be a serious error to claim that, at the beginning of the forties, Lukács's philosophy was free of all contradictions, or that he gauged the chances of revolutionary-democratic development after the World War or the particularities and future of the "new type" of Soviet democracy with unerring clarity. Contradictions, especially in the case of significant thinkers, tend to seep into the books from reality itself; they are the products of more than mere subjective limitations. With shocking clarity, Lukács formulated his view that the resolution of the contradictions of life, the more harmonious development of the totality of mankind, is only a promise of the distant future. Yet he believed that the Socialist democracy already established in the Soviet Union was *politically* the beginning of the *positive* resolution of the contradiction between social progress and alienation, the beginning of the elimination of the division of labour, and that it was based on the multi-faceted development of the personality.³⁴

Lukács saw the glimmer of the dawn of the "new" democracy there where the light of the day was still defeated by darkness. He cherished illusions concerning the present, but mainly, the future of the Popular-Front. He hoped that revolutionary democracy and the Spanish example would yield a more democratic and more socially concerned formation,

one that would go beyond the anti-Fascist defence of existing democratic achievements. He expected the fight of the Popular-Front to result in the establishment of the material and cultural conditions capable of ensuring the fullest possible opportunities of development for all humanity. With pathos he proclaimed: "We are facing a new, heroic age."³⁵

Such optimistic illusions are highly edifying. They are not chimeras, not ordinary errors of judgement, and they may even be proven true by world history. The Marxist Lukács, as the philosopher of the era after the proletarian revolution, is most often compared to Hegel, who resigned himself to the fact that "the revolutionary age of bourgeois development has ended, and so builds his philosophy upon the recognition of this new turn of world history".³⁶ Yet, despite his strict realism, Lukács's attitudes remind one not only of Hegel but also of the very different Hölderlin, who would not yield to the post-Thermidorean world and instead remained loyal to the old revolutionary ideal of Classical Greek democracy. Lukács preserved the ideals of the true Germany at a time when Germany had not yet found herself.

YES AND NO

After 1935, the conditions enabling Lukács to become aware of the reality of Soviet Socialism and to analyse its contradictions — and with them, also those of the age of Imperialism — from a historical-philosophical point of view, and to work out an ideology actively uniting identification and critique, gradually evolved. The result of this internal struggle was the most profound — and what is most unfortunate — virtually unparalleled work of the era: *The Young Hegel*.

The exceptional greatness of this work is, however, far from obvious. The reasons for this are manifold; among them, the belatedness not only of its appearance but also of its proper reception is only of secondary importance.

Throughout his life, Georg Lukács was preparing to write the *magnum opus*. Ever since the “dream of youth” of Heidelberg, through *Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen* and up to *The Ontology*, he cherished the hope of creating a great system of aesthetics and philosophy. (This is just one of the reasons why he thought that he had begun his “genuine life work” only at the age of seventy.) His ultimate aim was to write an *independent and systematic* Marxist-Leninist aesthetics; his ideal was the *philosophical universality* of Hegel’s conception and the *historical-systematic mode* of his *synthesis*, which “will be an example to be followed by all aesthetics for a long time to come”.¹ Lukács’s attempt at reconstructing Marx’s ontology was also aimed at universality and historical synthesis. For very profound reasons, however, these great works remained *in torso*.

The Young Hegel is a great work and it is complete. Is this due to its well-balanced and ostensibly conventional “academic” form? To the fact that it is not one of the many variants left unfinished and that Lukács never had to continue or augment it? Only a more detailed analysis could provide satisfactory answers to these questions. Nevertheless, it might be useful to consider at least briefly some of the circumstances surrounding the birth of this work.

At the beginning, the writing and the publication of the monograph appeared to be a smooth affair. In 1938, Lukács even informed the public of his work: "At present, I am working on a major monograph commissioned by the Moscow Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences: *The Young Hegel and the Problems of Capitalist Society*".² Although the work was barred from publication (according to Lukács, it was completed in autumn 1937), there was nothing to prevent him from defending it as his doctoral dissertation (under the same title) four years later, on 29 December 1942. So, on 28 August 1943, the title Doctor Philosophiae was officially conferred upon him.³ The fate of the book was apparently not affected by Lukács's arrest: In 1942, as indicated in a letter by Igor Sats, there was still the hope that it might be published in Russian.⁴

In fact, hopes for its publication diminished only when Hegel was denounced as the ideologue of the feudal reaction.

Discussing the events in this order permits us to acquire a better understanding of one of Lukács's later remarks (dated 1957): "... during the war a resolution was adopted, branding Hegel as an ideologue of the feudal reaction and an opponent of the French Revolution. As a result, I could not publish my book on the young Hegel. I thought that the war could surely be won without all this unscientific nonsense. But if those responsible for the anti-Hitler propaganda hold this Hegel affair to be so important, then, of course, winning the war is doubtless more important for the time being than fighting over the true role and correct interpretation of Hegel".⁵ Why was the book not published before the war or between 1941 and 1944? Was the book's spirit manifested only in the open criticism of Zhdanov's nonsensical characterization of Hegel as a representative of reactionary political forces opposed to the French Revolution? And finally, did its only merit consist in correcting certain statements in *History and Class Consciousness* and in shedding light on the interrelation between the French Revolution and Capitalist economics on the one hand, and Hegel's dialectics, on the other?⁶ Again, these questions require a more detailed analysis.

We need to make another short digression. This, however, will guide us toward the inner world and the hidden meanings of the work. We have already mentioned the intellectual influences that compelled Lukács to revise *History and Class Consciousness* and to expound his new philosophical stance. Disregarding for the time being the book's Bol-

shevik reception and the polemics of 1930–1931, one of the most decisive of these influences (even if its effect was not immediate or exclusive) was the conception of Marx's 1844 manuscript concerning alienation, Hegel's *Phenomenology*, the possibility of a critical philosophy aimed at the "critique of political economy". Another intellectual influence dating back to the years that Lukács spent in Berlin was the legitimization of the "classical" Irrationalist life-philosophical interpretation (Dilthey) of the young Hegel, which was in part attributable to the contemporaneous publication of numerous previously unknown documents on Hegel's early activities. These influences moved Lukács to elaborate a plan aimed at transcending the mistaken conception of *History and Class Consciousness*. "This search became a plan to investigate the philosophical connections between economics and dialectics. My first attempt to put this plan into practice came early in the thirties, in Moscow and in Berlin, with the first draft of my book on the young Hegel..."⁷

There was yet another powerful intellectual influence that affected Lukács in Moscow in the early thirties, one that he never mentioned in connection with the *genesis of his work*: the influence of Mikhail Lifshits, this time as philosopher rather than aesthetician. This explains, first, why Lukács dedicated *The Young Hegel* to Mikhail Alexandrovich Lifshits "with respect and friendship"; second, why the monograph discusses *only and especially the young Hegel* (these two questions are inseparable); and finally, the way in which the post-revolutionary period is represented in the book.

That dedication was not merely a formal expression of courtesy. It was a gesture meant for the personal friend and admired thinker. It was meant for the thinker who formulated the topical meaning of Hegel's philosophy in the age of *Socialism* with enlightening clarity. Already in 1931 Lifshits recognized the topical essence of Hegel's ideas: "... the Revolution is over. The Old Regime has been destroyed and a new order and new logic have to be formulated in its stead. The categories of logic are forms in which the glowing lava of revolutionary events take final shape. Hegel's philosophy is an abstract representation of the fact that struggle is replaced by order, the destructive stage of bourgeois revolution by its creative stage".⁸ Hegel is fully aware of the sense of his activity: in theory as well as in practice, the Ancien Regime is necessarily replaced by a "new principle", and he sees clearly that he is the philosopher of the "organic" age after the revolution. At the same time,

he contrasts revolution, by itself a "fury of death", with the positive system that resolves the contradictions of the revolution... "this contrasting of the revolutionary-critical element with the 'positive' and the subordination of the former to the latter forms the basis of Hegel's philosophy of identity".⁹

Lifshits thus stated that the relevance of Hegel's philosophy lay in the fact that, as the German theory of the French Revolution was also the theory of the post-revolutionary era, so the task of the Marxist thinker of the present was none other than serving as the philosopher of the aftermath of the completed revolution. "We, too, have the task of developing a 'new principle' both in practical life and in methodology. The proletarian revolution, however, does not accept any contradiction between its critical and creative stages...; it does not proclaim the slogan of 'reconciliation', and instead, it continues the critical-revolutionary destruction, which is inseparable from its 'positive and creative work'."¹⁰

In the early thirties, Lifshits thought that, throughout the course of building Socialism, the "critical" and "positive" elements would remain in harmony and could not come into contradiction with one another. He believed that, with the continuation of the "destructive" function of the revolution, and with the strengthening of its "creative" functions, the slogan of "reconciliation" would, in historical terms, be discarded once and for all. At the time, this view was obviously shared by Lukács, too. Nevertheless, the fact that the two men had no pure philosophical considerations in mind when they turned to Hegel was of greater importance. As Lifshits later explained, "in the early thirties my relationship to Hegel was not some kind of narrowly professional philosophical interest in the brilliant German philosopher and, of course, it also did not arise from a search for some artificial and false historical analogy. The most important reason that Lukács and I studied Hegel at that time was our endeavour to fulfil the rigorous requirement of analysing the socialist revolution in a manner true to the Leninist tradition".¹¹

Hegel's philosophy undoubtedly played an important role in Lenin's analyses of world-historical events, as well. (Suffice it to mention that Lenin intensively studied Hegel's works during the war.) The French Revolution also played its part in the assessment of the options and parties of the Russian Revolution. (Let us recall that Lenin's question of 1905: "Will our revolution be of the 1787 or of the 1848 type?"; or his

description of the Bolshevik Jacobins, etc.) Lukács, however, wanted to carry on the Leninist legacy not only in this direct sense, but also in a broader philosophical and critical spirit. He is unlikely to have arrived at this conclusion before 1936. (For this reason, the first draft of the work on Hegel written in 1930–1933, of which we know very little, is believed to be rather different from the final text.) This is how Lifshits recalls Lukács's endeavour: "In his work, Lukács reestablished a close connection between Hegel and the revolutionary tradition. The break that took place in the old Hegel . . . was not a conversion to reaction, but a tragic necessity. To a certain degree, we could understand this and *perhaps only we could understand this because we faced a similar situation*. At the same time, it is justified to say that our interpretation of Hegel (the way we explained his contradictions and approach to history) was diametrically opposed to that interpretation of his philosophy that considered him a deliberately reactionary chronicler of universal history, which had cruelly sacrificed the lives of thousands of people. . . . In contrast to that historical process and to Hegel, we stood for the democratic path of the movement of history, which is also accompanied by the sacrifice of people, as nothing happens without contradictions in world history, but, in the Leninist spirit, we conceived this way to be more democratic, freer, and more concrete. To use philosophical terms: the Hegelian abstract concreteness is nothing else than the realism of history in the spirit of Capitalism. Our concrete concreteness on the other hand was the real Socialist society interpreted in terms of the Leninist October tradition — minus the dark forces that had sprung up in the thirties".¹²

The encounter with tragic necessity and with the dark forces, and the disruption of the positive-creative period by conflicts signalled new world-historical phenomena whose truth could and had to be defined by resorting to active silence. We believe that what Lukács said of the meaning of the Hegelian Absolute Spirit is also true of Lukács's young Hegel: "from this standpoint 'absolute spirit' encompasses Hegel's efforts to organize the conquest of reality by mankind into a large, complex and uneven process in which philosophy has to set aside all preconceptions and devote itself to defining and evaluating the particular stages in accordance with their material, historical and dialectical significance".¹³

Henceforward we shall consider the most important moments of the inner intellectual world of *The Young Hegel* from the — authentic — Lifshitsian point of view (even if that might involve a measure of one-

sidedness) and treat it as a great, independent, historical, and systematic attempt at examining the contradictions of the post-revolutionary period, as an attempt at Historical Realism in the spirit of Socialism.

In Lukács's work, Historical Realism shed a new light on a long-accepted Leninist concept. There is no demarcation line between the bourgeois-democratic and proletarian revolutions. It was not only the anti-Fascist Popular-Front policy that lent a new topicality to this doctrine, but also Lukács's belief in a historical and methodological continuity between Hegel and Marx, primarily by stating that proletarian humanism integrated all the intellectual assets of mankind that reflected all the real contradictions of objective reality. Hegel stood at the apex of the last great period of bourgeois philosophy (1789-1848), Lukács wrote, because, in addition to summing up the intellectual achievements of the long history of mankind, his philosophy "comprehends the contradictory movement of that development, with all its unsolved and insoluble contradictions. . . . Hegel's unique position in this period rests on the fact that for the first time in human history the *contradictory nature of existence itself* was consciously made the central preoccupation of philosophy".¹⁴

Classical German philosophy and literature as well as classical English economics proceeded from the contradictions of reality at that time. In their thought and art, Hegel and Goethe gave expression to the contradiction between humanistic ideals and a miserable, prosaic reality. Everything that was new and significant in their works developed "amid the manure of contradictions", to use Marx's words.

The recognition of the contradictory nature of existence in Hegel's philosophy and Goethe's literature (with the mediation of English economics) was rendered possible by overcoming the heroic *illusions* of the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary periods: progress has its price, and the unprecedented development of the means of production of Capitalism, liberty and enlightenment are inseparable from the inhuman and diabolical power of bourgeois society. In his "Studies on Faust", Lukács wrote: "His poetic *Phenomenology of the Spirit* ends with the real development of the productive forces, as the power which leads from the phantasmagoric existence of Feudalism to the world of the real development of human capabilities, to the real world of human activity . . . Goethe does nothing to mitigate the diabolical character of the Capitalist

form of this progress; but, at the same time, he shows that here the true field of human activity presents itself for the first time."¹⁵

The essence of Hegel's and Goethe's realism was that they faced up to the conflict between Capitalist progress and humanism. They strove to maintain humanism without illusions, which resulted in a peculiar duality. Owing to the post-revolutionary nature of their humanism, they thought that the contradictions could be resolved *within* the existing bourgeois society. A different stand was taken by Fichte, who advocated a utopian subjectivism, intent on the radical introduction of revolutionary democratism in a country with no experience of revolutionary movements. Paradoxically, Hegel's superiority is manifested in that less democratic view, namely, in the fact that he accepted the society that evolved out of the French Revolution as *reality* and tried to understand it in its true form. This, however, was by no means a mere apologia, glossing over or suppressing contradictions. "On the contrary: Hegel's thought leads him to emphasize the contradictions, to make them as explicit as possible, even to the point of apparent insolubility."¹⁶

We have hereby outlined the first set of general thoughts concerning the problems of Capitalist society, as set forth in *The Young Hegel*. Lukács made no secret of the fact that he discussed the problems of progress from the standpoint of *Socialism* without creating vulgar analogies. It is evident that he spoke of the prehistory of Socialism itself, in a twofold sense: first, in the sense of the world-historical continuity of the contradictions of existence; and second, in the sense that, under Socialism, the elimination of contradictions within the existing takes the form of philosophical, ideological, and also practical problems, which one can overcome only by establishing a realistic "elaboration" of the contradictions themselves as a point of orientation.

Speaking of dramatic collisions, Lukács wrote elsewhere: "The contradictoriness of social development, the intensification of these contradictions to the point of tragic collisions is a *general* fact of life. Nor does this contradictoriness of life come to an end with the social resolution of class antagonism through the victorious Socialist revolution. It would be a thoroughly shallow and undialectical conception of life to believe that with Socialism there is only the monotonous serenity of self-satisfaction without problems, struggle or conflict."¹⁷

We have already quoted Lukács's statement that "the contradictory character of progress is a general problem of the development of class

society. That he meant this to apply not only to Capitalism is revealed by his criticism of bureaucratic "optimism" (bureaucracy "does away with the process together with its contradictions and difficulties"), which he contrasted with the optimism of the tribunes of the Socialist revolution.¹⁸

Lukács was fighting a vulgarly optimistic, undialectical, self-satisfied, and conflict-free picture of Socialism. In the political-philosophical thinking of the age, this picture was formed by the principle of the "compulsory harmony". In September, 1938, this doctrine was reaffirmed in the following tenet: "the relations of production cannot for long lag behind the growth of the forces of production, they cannot contradict one another for long. Therefore, however backward the relations of production may be in comparison to the development of the forces of production, sooner or later they must — and indeed they do — come into accord with the standard of the forces of production".¹⁹

Stalin's schematic sketch of the development of the forces of production "from the earliest times to our days", describing the five fundamental types of society in world history based on the movement of two sorts ("thesis", "antithesis") of contradictions, reached the pinnacle of historical development with the irreconcilable antagonisms of Capitalism. In Socialism, on the other hand, the harmony is indissoluble, the "synthesis" has set in, history comes to an end. There are no conflicts, no collisions. The tragically contradictory nature of progress has come to an end. "Here, the relations between people within the process of production can be characterised as the relation of comradely cooperation and mutual Socialist aid of workers freed from exploitation. Here, the relations of production *are in full harmony* with the state of the forces of production, because the social character of the productive process is supported by the public ownership of the means of production."²⁰ The place of the burst Capitalist form has been filled, the "real emptiness" remaining in Hegel's *Phenomenology* has been filled, the "externalization" has been eliminated. Although Stalin's schema appears to contain a ghastly semblance of Hegel (and linguistically, of Marx), the difference could hardly be greater.

Naturally, Stalin never conceived *politically* of the *practice* of building Socialism, the realization of Socialism in the Soviet Union as a process characterized by the "dull merriness" of apathy. In his well-known article, Lukács contrasted the optimism of the bureaucrat with

that of the tribune (yet again linking the problem with the contradictions of Socialism). It may seem that it is the optimism of the tribune of the Socialist revolution that fits Stalin, who, in Lukács's words, recognizes the inevitability of serious conflict, of the "undaunted recognition of external and internal danger, the full cognizance of the dialectical contradictions, which, on uneven paths, will lead to the final liberation of mankind".²¹

Was Lukács justified in referring to Stalin when he criticized the bureaucratic phenomena of Soviet life? Technically, yes. The reference justifiably recalls Stalin's and Kaganovich's statements, in which they condemned bureaucracy at the Seventeenth Party Congress in 1934. There, Stalin spoke of the "regular and ruthless" fight against obstacles of the fact that victory does not just come by itself, that "normally, it has to be dragged". And, as the resolution, general guidelines, and statements of the party are unconditionally valid, the difficulties of organizational work "nest" within the leading functionaries themselves. Three types are responsible for the failures and shortcomings. The first such type is the *incorrigible bureaucrat and office-worm*. "The bureaucrats and office-worms had long ago learned how to show loyalty to the resolutions of the Party and of the Government in words and to file and forget them in their desk-drawers indeed."²²

The second type of functionary is that of the "pretentious potentates" with their past merits, who believe that the law applies not to them but to the fools, and who, in their conceit, do not carry out the resolutions. Finally, there are the "honest babblers" unable to manage or to organize, who would drown every cause in a flood of endless speeches. The bureaucrats, the potentates, and the babblers should be removed from their posts, and, in general, the elimination of the obstacles requires the removal of the unreliable, fickle, "retrograde" elements.

In Stalin's view, the contradictions lie in the retrograde *subject*. The contradiction between good directives and bad realization can be resolved by *administrative regulations*. "Bureaucratism exists also in our Socialist society",²³ wrote Lukács, who followed Lenin's approach in his criticism and regarded Lenin's question as one of immediate relevance. He considered bureaucratism an alien body, a remnant of Capitalism, and saw in it the victory of spontaneity and directness over deliberation and the consideration of the totality of the contradictions. The true bureaucrat does not file and forget folders, for, to the contrary, he deals

with everything smoothly and without friction on the basis of precedents and regulations. In execution, *man* is of secondary importance, and the interrelation of the resolutions with the fullness of real life is of no interest. "The list of contents of the problems of life emerges also in the bureaucratic files, in certain cases in their entire fullness. . . . Nevertheless, this is only a list of contents, not the living, moving, contradictory fullness, totality and unity of real contents."²⁴

Let us now return to the ideas of *The Young Hegel*. Lukács acted as an ideologue of Soviet Socialism when he analysed the dilemma with which the German humanists as well as Hegel, especially in his Frankfurt period, grappled. The essence of this dilemma was that they simultaneously had to say *yes and no* to the world that had emerged in the wake of the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution in England. Undoubtedly, Lukács considered the unity of opposition and affirmation to be the only acceptable conduct. It became clear that the relationship between *criticism* and *affirmation* was historical and concrete, and could not be treated as a rigid dichotomy. The ascendant bourgeois society displayed numerous phenomena and lifestyles, several institutions that, as dead objectivity, hindered the individual's progress and hampered the unfolding of his or her personality. Capitalism "had begun to reveal its horrifying, anticultural and prosaic aspects with a clarity different from the period of heroic illusions before and during the French Revolution. The major bourgeois humanists in Germany now found themselves confronted by the the complex and contradictory necessity of having both to recognize this bourgeois society, of accepting it as the only possible necessary and progressive reality, and at the same time to expose and denounce its contradictions critically and freely, rather than to capitulate and apologize for the inhumanity they entailed". Hegel's "aim is thoroughly to understand and to function within the civil society of his day; on the other hand he recoils from its inhuman, lifeless and life-denying aspects, refusing to see them as vital and life-giving".²⁵

We have now arrived at the gravest problem for Lukács and his age, for Soviet Socialism, namely the "tragedy in the realm of the ethical". The question now to be considered is not just whether Lukács accepted that tragedy and if so, why, but also *how*, motivated by a desire to understand the existence and operation of his society, he rejected everything in it that was life-denying.

Lukács proceeded from the Hegelian Marxist notion that there is an antagonism between the development of the human species and that of the individual: the price of the unfolding of the personality, of the full richness of human nature, is a historical process in which individuals are sacrificed. The tragedy that is the consequence of the contradictory path of human progress in the history of class societies, is a *great and real* tragedy, for each of the conflicting moments is *justified* and *unjustified* at one and the same time.²⁶ "... for Goethe and Hegel both, the unceasing progress of the human species results from a chain of individual tragedies. The tragedies occurring in the microcosm of the individual are the disclosure of the ceaseless progress of the macrocosm of the species: this is the philosophical factor common to both *Faust* and the *Phenomenology of Mind*".²⁷

Lukács's approach to the great and real tragedy of the fact that "individuals are sacrificed and exposed" was fundamentally different from that of German critical theory. He stressed the importance of *historical concreteness*. "Only the exact function in the given concrete stage of development determines whether a feeling, a thought or an action is human or diabolical. Sometimes it is not even possible to come to a decision about this on the basis of the isolated moment, but only on the basis of the direction of the process it reveals and which will become visible only later. This dialectics is the foundation of Goethe's unshakeable faith in the future of mankind. The struggle between good and evil engenders the forward direction of evolution; even evil can be a vehicle of objective progress... Of course, this is by no means an original invention of Goethe... But only in *Faust* and in the philosophy of Hegel as the 'ruse of reason' did this view become the foundation of the new faith in dialectical progress which followed the French Revolution."²⁸

In the mid-thirties, Lukács offered the following assessment of negativity in Hegel's dialectical logic (which reflected Hegel's relation to Capitalist development): "It is to the credit of Hegel that he pointed out the progressive role of the negative principle ('the evil aspect'). Hegel was in a position to take that standpoint as he — like the contemporary economist, Ricardo — could accept Capitalist development with all its horrifying consequences without becoming an apologist like the others who followed him."²⁹

The recognition of the necessity of sacrifice and tragedy as the positive foundation of a post-revolutionary belief in dialectical progress

could not in itself show the way to a criticism of the "dark forces" in a positive-creative period. It is at this point in his analysis that Lukács places particular emphasis on Hegel's attitude toward tyranny, terror, and the Jacobin dictatorship. In the following, we hope to clarify why Lukács chose to discuss the issue of *Thermidor* in the early thirties and why he attached greater importance to the interpretation of the *Jacobin dictatorship* in 1936-1937.

Hegel recognized the justness of the violent destruction of the old feudal institutions as well as the fact that tyranny was an inevitable concomitant of putting down the attempts at restoration. Lukács pointed out that this correct Hegelian perception should be supplemented with the realization that tyranny is necessary only in a *transitional period* between two social systems. He placed special emphasis on Hegel's characterization of the tyrant, who, if he were wise, would voluntarily relinquish his tyrannical power as soon as it became superfluous. As however, his divine being is only the divinity of the beast, blind necessity, he does not do this. That was also Robespierre's fate: His strength left him because *necessity abandoned him*. (We believe that these ideas on the fall of tyranny are closely related to the complexity of the human fate stressed in *The Historical Novel*: People and parties are "handed the bill" for their former deeds.)

In assessing Lukács's ideological identification with the aforementioned Hegelian idea, we must bear in mind that he drew parallels between two trials, those of Robespierre and Danton, on the one hand, and of Stalin and Bukharin, on the other. Over and above this ideological parallel, Lukács also agreed with Hegel in rejecting "absolute freedom", in rejecting Jacobin terror, while (and this is where the most topical philosophical content of the problem lies) he placed equal emphasis on the fact that Hegel's "great understanding of history enabled him to see that this dictatorship, which he abhorred so profoundly, was a necessary and inevitable turning-point in world history: the establishment of the modern state".³⁰

The issue in this historico-philosophical dilemma is not so much that the same world-historical necessity generates tyranny and its fall, that our recognition of the inevitability of terror does not exclude our criticizing or abhorring it, but that the tyranny of terror in the *Phenomenology* is the *absolute peak* of "externalization" in other words,

that it is the point of transition at which the elimination of "externalization" by the subject has to take place.³¹

Lukács distinguished three degrees, three layers of meaning in Hegel's concept of "externalization". The first expresses the subject-object relation, and it applies to work and to all the economic and social activities of man. The essence of this *universal* meaning is that people create their own history. "History, then, is regarded [by Hegel] as a complex dialectical evolution of the human race, a process rich in contradictions and interactions, propelled by the praxis of socialized individuals."³²

In addition to this meaning of socialized work, of history-creating human praxis, there is also the peculiar meaning of "externalization", the specifically Capitalist form, the fetishized form of social objectivity. Thirdly, there is a broad philosophical extension of the concept "externalization" which then comes to be synonymous with "thinghood" or objectivity. This is the form in which the history of objectivity is portrayed: objectivity as a dialectical moment in the journey of the identical subject-object on its way back to itself via "externalization".³³

Lukács also referred to Marx's (and Feuerbach's) criticism of Hegel, laying the emphasis mainly on the examination of the third meaning of "externalization". Thus, everything written in the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts* concerning the *Phenomenology of Mind* concerning the problems of reintegration was placed in the foreground. At this point, Lukács had a perfect opportunity to demonstrate and interpret Marx's views on the *perspectives of the positive elimination of alienation* in Communism, yet he did not avail himself of that opportunity. Following in Marx's footsteps, having reviewed the negative aspects of Hegel's Idealist, mystifying approach, having pointed out that the horizon of Socialist society was closed to Hegel, he summarized the significance of the fact that, although "hidden" — to use (Marx's) words — was already present in the *Phenomenology* the critique of alienation: "Marx refers to a number of passages where Hegel correctly understood certain specific features of the 'pre-history' of mankind. And he shows, further, that although the concepts of alienation and supersession are distorted by Idealism and given a reactionary colouring in Hegel, they are not utterly false, as Feuerbach believed, but are a one-sided reflection of reality, deformed and inhibited by the capitalist perspective, whose correct intuitions, however, were worthy of preservation."³⁴ This is precisely

the point at which, in order to continue, Lukács ought to have outlined the Marxist resolution of reintegration, the critical transcendence of Idealist dialectics. Yet Lukács stopped here. He fell silent. A more detailed discussion of Marx's critique is outside the scope of our task, he wrote.

His silence, as in so many other cases, is eloquent. Throughout the book, Lukács discussed the praxis and socio-economic activity of the socialized individual (the first degree of the concept of "externalization") in detail and stressed its hidden essence with particular topicality: the Odyssey of mankind, *historical progress, is tragically contradictory*. Goethe and Hegel "could see the insoluble contradictions of bourgeois society opening up on the horizon, both could see how history was creating an abyss between the individual and the species. Their greatness lay . . . in their fearless confrontation of these contradictions and in their efforts to express them at the highest level of philosophy or poetry".³⁵ They say yes and no to the existing, all at once: yes to bourgeois society and no to all that is inhuman in it.

The idea of the tragic hidden in the universal contradictoriness of human progress was by no means a merely abstract historico-philosophical principle indispensable for the exploration of the classical age of Hegel and Goethe, for the study of *Faust*, or for an understanding of the aesthetic and generic specificities of the drama. It was also a specific attempt at providing an answer to the fundamental philosophical-ethical dilemma of the age, free of moralizing.

How did Lukács respond *post festum*, in 1957, to the moral dilemma: *In whose interest and for what purpose* had the immense sacrifices been made? In what way did Lukács experience and evaluate the great purge trials, which "necessity" had abandoned? "From the beginning, I was sceptical about their justness in a manner similar to the way in which I evaluated the trials of the Girondists, Dantonists, etc. during the Great French Revolution. I acknowledged their historical necessity and did not lay special stress on whether they were lawful . . . A fundamental change in my opinion came about only with the promulgation of the slogan that Trotskyism, etc. had to be uprooted. I saw from the outset that nothing could come of this but the prosecution of large numbers of mostly innocent people. Were I asked why at that time I did not openly take a stand in that spirit, I would not stress the physical impossibility of such an action — I lived in the Soviet Union as a political *émigré* —, but its

moral impossibility: The Soviet Union was on the threshold of a life-or-death struggle with Fascism. Therefore, a committed Communist had no alternative to saying: 'My party, right or wrong'.³⁶ This confession reveals only one aspect of Lukács's silence albeit a fundamental one. For, while the political consciousness of the moral decision is one thing, the choice of active philosophy, the utterance of the unsaid, the formulation of the ineffable, is another. This choice was: *reconciliation*. A reconciliation that sought to reintegrate and give a rational form to the externalized unity of subject and object, of individual and species abandoned by necessity and thereby also by rationality — hence a unity of contradictions — by maintaining the critical spirit.

It may seem that only the radically non-conciliatory philosophy can be progressive. Lukács believed that, in the case of Hegel (and Goethe), the reverse applied. Hegel's reconciliation with reality was not a reactionary compromise with the conditions of the time in Germany. Hegel's and Goethe's reconciliation, free of lies and apologia, were aimed exactly at the thorough examination of the dialectical contradictions of bourgeois society. Lukács stressed this point not only in his book on Hegel but also in virtually all of his writings produced between 1937 and 1945: "Goethe's *Faust* and Hegel's *Phenomenology* express, partly in differing and partly in identical ways, a new, tragic, and contradictory relation between the individual and the fate of the human species. Where is 'reconciliation' to be found here? In the profound conviction that the unity, motive force, and 'rationality' of the progress of mankind lie in reality itself. . . , and that the greatness of a thinker or poet is to be seen not in the fact that he reads his subjective enthusiasm into reality, but on the contrary, in the fact that he discovers, considers, and gives shape to the rationality inherent in reality."³⁷

When Lukács linked reconciliation with a dialectical belief in progress, with the "classical" conviction that, despite all its tragic contradictions, human progress is unstoppable and would triumph in the end, the question arose: would this view be able to avoid the traps of the mystifications of false consciousness, was it not an instance of escapism to a heroic utopia,³⁸ would it not postpone everything to the future? Lukács was undoubtedly touched by the spirit of utopia when he posited the resurrection of the epic on the basis of the organic unity of individual and community to be restored under Socialism.

The answer — the triumph of Lukács's Realism — touches upon both the final and most topical message of *The Young Hegel* and the ultimate supersession of *History and Class Consciousness*, the problem of the reintegration of the dead and empty forms of alienation. Lukács's summation of the young Hegel's philosophy is, at the same time, the creed of the ideologue of Socialist society: "The description of the actual historical process . . . led only as far as the completion of the process of 'externalization'. We have seen that the Enlightenment, Capitalism and the French Revolution formed the climax of the journey towards the abolition of every sort of natural immediacy and the realization of 'externalization'.

But we saw too that Hegel's attempt to anchor that retrospective process in social reality right from the start was defeated by his own integrity. In the Hegelian scheme the 'moral life of the spirit' should be the point at which movement enters into actual social life. The scheme remained skeletal, i.e., Hegel points to the place where 'externalized' reality was to have been reintegrated in the subject, but the place remains vacant in his account."³⁹

In the age of Fascism and of Soviet Socialism the Hegel issue was also a "Marx issue". Lukács was thinking in terms of epochs, in a tragic age, yet not pessimistically. His optimism, which was not free of illusions even at the time of the Popular-Front, was by no means a kind of *apologetic reconciliation*. It was an *inner* affirmation of Socialism as well as the rejection of its alienated phenomena. Lukács was quite explicit in stating that the "reconciliation" of the young Hegel was not a reactionary affirmation: "On the one hand it presents an idealistic mystification of irreconcilable contradictions. On the other hand, this very fact points to Hegel's underlying realism, his commitment to the concrete social realities of his age, his profound understanding of the actual life of man in society, his aspiration to see the contradictions in human progress where they are actually fought out in the arena of economic life."⁴⁰

The protagonist of *The Young Hegel* thus does not introduce reconciliation in a positive social form: in fact, the place of the reintegration of externalization is left vacant in the stage of the "moral spirit". In the *Phenomenology*, reintegration should start at the absolute climax of externalization, after the *tyranny of terror*.

It is at this point that Lukács fully realized the shocking effect of the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts*: methodologically, he affirmed

Marx's criticism, which focussed on the *Phenomenology of Mind* "and within this, on Hegel's conception of 'externalization' and its supersession".⁴¹

This time, he did not disown *History and Class Consciousness*, but transcended it, drawing the conclusions that follow from Marx's critique of Hegel at the important points, for instance, in this way: "In his discussion of economics Marx, drawing on his knowledge of the empirical evidence, distinguishes sharply between objectification in work in general and the alienation of subject and object in the *capitalist form* of work. Armed with this distinction he can expose Hegel's erroneous equation."⁴²

Lukács also drew the conclusion that the Hegelian idea of the supersession of alienation despite all its Idealist distortions, was not false and should therefore be preserved for the intellectual development of the future. But, at this point, Lukács stopped. Here and now, he *avoided* interpreting Marx's views on the chances of the positive supersession of alienation in either early or advanced Communism.

The aftermath of the proletarian revolution, the Socialist society, is the form in which the democratic movement of social life, the reintegration of externalization, should commence. Yet, this place has been left vacant in the philosophical exposition. Lukács fell silent, thereby expressing the truth of his world and of his age.

Silence, too, is action.

NOTES

GEORG LUKÁCS AND HIS DETRACTORS

- (1) Theodor W. Adorno, "'Erpreßte Versöhnung — Zu Georg Lukács' 'Wider den mißverstandenen Realismus'", in: *Lehrstück Lukács*, ed. J. Matzner (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974), p. 178.
- (2) Georg Lukács, *Record of a Life* (London: Verso, 1983), pp. 164–166.
- (3) The five Lukács volumes: *Literaturnye teorii XIX veka i marksizm* (Literary Theories of the 19th Century and Marxism) (Moscow: Goslitizdat, 1937), p. 284; *K istorii realizma* (Contributions to the History of Realism) (Moscow: Goslitizdat, 1939), p. 370; *Gottfried Keller* (Kiev: Staatsverlag der nationalen Minderheiten der UdSSR, 1940), p. 111; *Borba gumanizma i varovatstva* (The Struggle Between Humanism and Barbarism) (Tashkent: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatelstvo UzSSR, 1943), p. 68; *Írástudók felelőssége* (The Responsibility of Intellectuals) (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1944), p. 94.
- (4) See *Record of a Life*, pp. 105–106; G. Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, Foreword (Moscow, September 1937), (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 13–14.
- (5) G. Lukács, Hungarian Foreword to *A realizmus problémái* (Problems of Realism) (Budapest: Hungária, 1948), p. 5.
- (6) See G. Lukács, "Arisztokratikus és demokratikus világnézet" (Aristocratic and Democratic World-Views), in his *Utam Marxhoz—Válogatott filozófiai tanulmányok* (My Way to Marx. Selected Studies in Philosophy), ed. György Márkus (Budapest: Magvető, 1971), II: 96–97.
- (7) *Georg Lukács zum 70. Geburtstag* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1955).
- (8) See *Irodalom és demokrácia — Az irodalmi (Lukács-) vita dokumentumai* (1949–1951). (Literature and Democracy — Documents of the Lukács-Debate), ed. János Ambrus (Budapest: Kossuth, 1983), I: 243–260. See also Dénes Zoltai, *Egy írástudó visszatér* (An Intellectual Returns) (Budapest: Kossuth, 1985), p. 52.
- (9) See *Record of a Life*, p. 167.
- (10) Quoted by Frank Benseler, "Ein Lokalpatriot der Kultur", in: *Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Georg Lukács*, ed. F. Benseler (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1965), p. 22.
- (11) See *Record of a Life*, p. 168.
- (12) *Georg Lukács und der Revisionismus* (Eine Sammlung von Aufsätzen). (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1960). See also *Zur ideologisch-theoretischen Konzeption von Georg Lukács*, in: *Weimarer Beiträge*, 1958, Sonderheft.
- (13) See, for instance, "Lukács' revisionistischer Kampf gegen die sozialistische Literatur" (1958), in: A. Abusch, *Humanismus und Realismus in der Literatur* (Leipzig: 1973), p. 167.

- (14) A. Abusch, W. Bredel, and O. Gotsche were addressing to the conference of the German Writers' Association on theory (6–8 June 1958). See "Zum Werden unserer sozialistischen Nationalliteratur", *Neue Deutsche Literatur* 8/1958, pp. 68–83.
- (15) G. Lukács, "Ekonomicheskoye vzgladi Gegela v yensky period" (The Economic Views of Hegel in his Jena Period), *Voprosi Filosofii* (Questions of Philosophy) 5/1956, pp. 151–152. Also: G. Zeidel, E. V. Ilienkov, L. J. Naumenko, "Molodoy Gegel" (The Young Hegel), *ibid.*, pp. 181–184.
- (16) "Protiv filosofskovo revizionizma" (Against Philosophical Revisionism), *Voprosi Filosofii* 10/1958, pp. 3–18. See also: A. G. Yegorov, "Protiv revizionizma v estetike" (Against Revisionism in Aesthetics), *ibid.*, 9/1958; E. K. Sokolov, "Kritika revizionistskoy konceptsii irrationalizma na stranitsah *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*" (Critique of the Revisionist Conception of Irrationalism in the Pages of *DZfPh*), *ibid.*, 12/1958.
- (17) A part of *The Young Hegel*, "A szellem fenomenológiája felépítésének vázlata" (A Synoptic View of the Structure of The Phenomenology of Mind), appeared in the *Hegel-émlékkönyv* (Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Hegel), ed. József Szigeti (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1957), pp. 35–118. The volume commemorated the 125th anniversary of Hegel's death. "The Hungarian Marxist thinkers wish to contribute these essays" to the celebration, the editor wrote in the Preface. "The printing of the volume was delayed by the well-known counter-revolutionary events starting on 23 October 1956. As, however, the papers written or selected for this particular occasion tackle problems of general significance, the Hungarian reader will find them an illuminating reading even if the occasion itself has passed." See also the following papers by József Szigeti: "Még egyszer a Lukács-kérdésről" (The Lukács-Question Revisited), *Társadalmi Szemle* 7–8/1957; "Lukács György filozófiai és politikai nézeteinek összefüggése" (The Interrelation of Lukács's Philosophical and Political Views), *ibid.*, 2/1958. Further contributions to the "Lukács-Question": "Lukács György filozófiai munkásságának bírálatához" (Contribution to the Critique of Lukács's Philosophical Work), *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* (Hungarian Philosophical Review), 3–4/1958; "A kommunista filozófusaktíva vitájáról" (On the Debate of the Communist Philosophers' Team), *ibid.*, 3/1960. On contemporaneous criticism in Hungary see: M. A. Hevesi, "K kritike vozzreny G. Lukácsa (Po stranitsam vengerskoy pechati)" (On the Criticism of Lukács's Views in the Hungarian Press), *Voprosi Filosofii* 6/1958.
- (18) G. Lukács, "Das ästhetische Problem des Besonderen in der Aufklärung und bei Goethe", in: *Ernst Bloch zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. R. O. Gropp (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1955).
- (19) G. Lukács, "Kunst und objektive Wahrheit", *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 2/1954. First published in *Literaturny Kritik* (Literary Criticism) 9/1935.
- (20) G. Lukács, *Wider den mißverstandenen Realismus* (Hamburg: Claasen, 1958). This volume itself is transitional in nature: the first two pieces ("Die weltanschaulichen Grundlagen des Avantgardismus" and "Franz Kafka oder Thomas Mann?") were written before the Twentieth Congress, while the closing paper ("Der kritische Realismus in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft") was written after it. See G. Lukács, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism* (London: Merlin Press, 1962).

- (21) Ibid., p. 10.
- (22) Ibid., p. 6-7.
- (23) Ibid., p. 11.
- (24) G. Lukács, "Die Gegenwartsbedeutung des kritischen Realismus", in his *Essays über den Realismus* (Neuwied and Berlin: Luchterhand, 1971), pp. 457-603.
- (25) See for instance D. Glowka, *Georg Lukács im Spiegel der Kritik — Die Interpretationen des Lukács'schen Denkens in Deutschland 1945-1965*, Inaugural-Dissertation (Berlin, 1968); *Positionen—Beiträge zur marxistischen Literaturtheorie*, ed. W. Mittenzwei (Leipzig, 1969).
- (26) New editions of Lukács's works written in the period under consideration: *Écrits de Moscou*, trans. and introd. C. Prévost (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1974); *Moskauer Schriften — Zur Literaturtheorie und Literaturpolitik 1934-1940*, ed. F. Benseler (Frankfurt am Main: Sandler, 1981); *Eszttétikai írások 1930-1945*, ed. L. Sziklai (Budapest: Kossuth, 1982); *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?* ed. L. Sziklai (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982); *Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?*, ed. L. Sziklai (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982).
- (27) *Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Georg Lukács. Georg Lukács zum 13. April 1970. (Goethepreis '70) "Ad lectores 10"* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1970).
- (28) *Dialog und Kontroverse mit Georg Lukács. — Der Methodenstreit deutscher sozialistischer Schriftsteller*, ed. W. Mittenzwei (Leipzig: Reclam, 1975). This volume of essays, its editor later wrote, "tried to historicize Lukács's works and their impact, and to analyze his progress and the limitations in his contribution to Marxist aesthetics. Lukács exerted an influence on the Marxist literary scholarship of the GDR. The reception of his works changed from uncritical praise to radical rejection, and therefore, for the time being, there is no clear-cut new attitude to his oeuvre. However, Lukács's works may become catalytic again for our tasks if we interpret them critically and with an alternative approach in the context of the development of Socialist literature." See W. Mittenzwei, "Lukács' Ästhetik der revolutionären Demokratie", in: G. Lukács, *Kunst und objektive Wahrheit*, ed. W. Mittenzwei (Leipzig: Reclam, 1977), p. 17.

THE IDEOLOGIST

- (1) "Tibor Garai in Conversation with Georg Lukács" (2 January 1976), in: *A század nagy tanúi* (Great Witnesses of the Century) (Budapest: RTV Minerva, 1978), p. 211.
- (2) *Record of a Life*, pp. 110-111.
- (3) G. Lukács's letter to A. Lesznai, Budapest, 25 December 1945. Lukács Archives and Library (Henceforward: LAL).
- (4) *Record of a Life*, p. 167.
- (5) G. Lukács, *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, Vol. 2 (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1986), p. 398.
- (6) Ibid., p. 401.

- (7) Ibid., p. 421.
- (8) Marx-Engels, *The German Ideology* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976), p. 496. (Last emphasis added.)
- (9) *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, pp. 398-399.
- (10) Ibid., pp. 468-469.
- (11) Ibid., p. 469.
- (12) *The German Ideology*, pp. 60-61.
- (13) Ibid., p. 68.
- (14) Ibid., p. 495.
- (15) *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, pp. 398-399.
- (16) Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), p. 90.
- (17) *The German Ideology*, p. 57.
- (18) G. Lukács, "Mein Weg zu Marx", in his *Schriften zur Ideologie und Politik* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1967), p. 647.
- (19) Ibid.
- (20) Ibid. (Emphasis added.)
- (21) G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte — Die Vernunft in der Geschichte* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1970), p. 66.
- (22) G. Lukács, "Nachwort" to his *Essays über Realismus* (Neuwied und Berlin: Luchterhand, 1971), p. 677. (Emphasis added.)
- (23) G. Lukács, "Pártköltészet" (Party-Poetry), in his *Magyar irodalom — magyar kultúra* (Hungarian Literature — Hungarian Culture), ed. F. Fehér and Z. Kenyeres (Budapest: Gondolat, 1970), p. 303.
- (24) Ibid., p. 305.
- (25) *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, pp. 498-499.
- (26) Foreword to the Hungarian edition of Lukács' *Studies on Lenin*, ed. M. Vajda (Budapest: Magvető, 1970), p. 6.

THE "RISE AND FALL" OF THE "BLUM THESES"

- (1) G. Lukács, *Record of a Life*, p. 81.
- (2) G. Lukács, *Preface to History and Class Consciousness* (London: Merlin Press, 1971), p. xxx.
- (3) See G. Lukács, *Curriculum vitae* (A Hungarian collection of his autobiographies and documents concerning his life), ed. J. Ambrus (Budapest: Magvető, 1982), pp. 456-466.
- (4) J. Révai, "Megjegyzések irodalmunk néhány kérdéséhez" (Comments on Some Questions of our Literature). *Szabad Nép* (Free People), 18 March 1950. See *A Lukács-vita*, p. 175.
- (5) *Curriculum vitae*, pp. 465-466.

- (6) See "A Kommunista Internacionálé VI. kongresszusa" (The 6th Congress of Communist International, 17 July—1 September 1928), in: *A Kommunista Internacionálé válogatott dokumentumai* (Selected Documents of the Communist International) (Budapest: Kossuth, 1975), pp. 315–316.
- (7) When, for a short time, it seemed that his expulsion was inevitable, Lukács even agreed to the removal of a harmless lipoma (which he had had for a long time), just to play for time in this way, too. See Communication by Ferenc Jánossy, *Medvetánc* 4/1986, 1/1987.
- (8) *Record of a Life*, p. 88.
- (9) M. Lifshits, interview with L. Sziklai, LAL.
- (10) G. Lukács, Foreword to *Magyar irodalom — magyar kultúra*, p. 18.
- (11) See *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xxix.
- (12) *Curriculum vitae*, p. 159.
- (13) P. Ludz, "Der Begriff der demokratischen Diktatur in der politischen Philosophie von Georg Lukács", in: G. Lukács, *Schriften zur Ideologie und Politik*, p. 51. "Already before the 'Blum Theses', the concrete fight for democratic liberties had been curbed by the slogan 'class-against-class' issued at the plenary session in July 1928." ("Tudományos ülésszak a KMP megalakulásának 50. évfordulója alkalmából") (Scientific Session on the 50th Anniversary of the Hungarian Communist Party), cited in a paper by Ágnes Szabó, *Párttörténeti Közlemények* (Journal of Party History) 1/1969, p. 193.
- (14) J. Kammler, *Politische Theorie von Georg Lukács. — Struktur und historischer Praxisbezug bis 1929* (Darmstadt und Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1974), p. 331.
- (15) *Curriculum vitae*, p. 219.
- (16) G. Lukács, "Téziservezet a magyar politikai és gazdasági helyzetről és a KMP feladatairól" (Theses Concerning the Political and Economic Situation in Hungary and the Tasks of the Hungarian Communist Party), *Párttörténeti Közlemények* 4/1975, p. 187.
- (17) *Ibid.*, p. 198.
- (18) *Ibid.*, p. 198.
- (19) "A Kommunista Internacionálé Programja" (Programme of the Communist International), in: *A Kommunista Internacionálé válogatott dokumentumai* (Selected Documents of the Comintern), pp. 295–296.
- (20) G. Lukács, "Téziservezet a magyar politikai és gazdasági helyzetről", p. 189.
- (21) *Ibid.*, p. 188.
- (22) *Ibid.*, p. 189.
- (23) *Ibid.*, p. 190.
- (24) The author's position is somewhat different from that of Miklós Lackó's pioneering study. See M. Lackó, *Válságok — választások* (Crises — Choices) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1975), pp. 185–186.
- (25) See O. Betlen, "A KMP II. kongresszusa politikájának nemzetközi vonatkozásairól és a párt stratégiájáról" (On the International Implications of the Policy of the HCP's 2nd Congress and the Strategy of the Party), *Párttörténeti Közlemények* 3/1963, p. 124.
- (26) B. Szabó, *Népi demokrácia és forradalomelmélet* (People's Democracy and the Theory of Revolution) (Budapest: Kossuth, 1974), pp. 41, 42–43.

- (27) G. Lukács, Foreword to *Magyar irodalom — magyar kultúra*, p. 18.
 (28) "Téziservezet a magyar politikai és gazdasági helyzetéről és a KMP feladatairól", pp. 185–186.

A NEW START

- (1) Erich Kästner, "Auf einen Sprung nach Rußland", *Das Neue Rußland* 5–6/1930; F. C. Wiekopf, *Zukunft im Rohbau — 18 000 Kilometer durch die Sowjetunion* (Berlin: Malik Verlag), 1932, p. 20.
 (2) M. Bulgakov, *The Master and Margarita* (Collins Harvill Press, 1972), pp. 21, 133.
 (3) M. Lifshits, interview with L. Sziklai, LAL.
 (4) I. A. Sats, Lunacharsky's literary secretary and Lukács's friend, provides some intriguing information on the relationship between the two commissars. "A. V. Lunacharsky, whose opinion was the measure (though not the absolute measure) of everything for me, sympathized politically with Lukács — separating him from Béla Kun both during and after the Hungarian Soviet Republic. But however much Lunacharsky respected [Lukács's] literary and philosophical work, he had no liking for it. He said Lukács was ponderous and dogmatic. I think this was largely attributable to their meetings and controversies in Berlin in the late twenties, when Georg Osipovich, who flatly refused any compromise in theoretical debates, sharply criticized certain of Lunacharsky's ideas and affinities. Lunacharsky never made explicit mention of these events, but his passing remarks made one feel that he was not deeply interested in Lukács, even though he did not cease to acknowledge his greatness." See I. A. Sats, "Znakomstvo v Moskve s G. Lukácsem" (Acquaintance with Lukács in Moscow), LAL.
 (5) G. Lukács, "Dr Maks Adler, 'Ucheniye marksizma o gosudarstve'", *Vestnik Sotsialisticheskoy Akademii* 3/1923, p. 410. (Review of Max Adler's book "The Doctrine of Marxism Concerning the State"), in the Bulletin of the Socialist Academy. Other reviews in the same journal: "Fritz Mautner, 'Der Atheismus und seine Geschichte im Abendlande'", 5/1923; "Hermann Schmalenbach, 'Leibniz'", *ibid.*; "Friedrich Kuntze, 'Die Philosophie Salomon Maimons'", *ibid.*; "Literaturnoye naslediyе Lassalya" (Lassalle's Newly Published Literary Legacy), *Nachlaß* 7/1924.
 (6) G. Lukács, "Friedrich Kuntze, 'Die Philosophie Salomon Maimons'", *Vestnik sotsialisticheskoy Akademii* 5/1923, p. 241.
 (7) *Vestnik sotsialisticheskoy Akademii* 4/1923, pp. 186–222; 5/1923, pp. 74–120; 6/1923, pp. 116–185.
 (8) K. Korsch, "Suschnost marksizma" (The Essence of Marxism) *Krasnoy Nov* (Moscow: Poliizdatoll, 1923); *Idem*, "Marksizm i filozofiya" (Marxism and Philosophy) *Oktyabr Mysli* (Moscow, 1924).
 (9) László Rudas, "Orthodoxer Marxismus?" *Arbeiter Literatur* (Vienna) 4/1924 (In Russian: *Vestnik Kommunisticheskoy Akademii* 8/1924); "Die Klassenbewußtseinstheorie von Lukács", parts 1 and 2, *ibid.*, 10/1924 and 12/1924, respectively; (In Russian: *Vestnik Kommunisticheskoy Akademii* 9/1924): "preodoleniye kapitalisticheskovo oveshchestvleniya ili dialekticheskay dialektika tov. Lukácsa" (The Trans-

- cendence of Capitalistic Reification or the Dialectical Dialectics of Comr[ade] Lukács), *Vestnik Kommunisticheskoy Akademii* 10/1925.
- (10) A. Deborin, "G. Lukács i yevo kritika marksizma". *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* 6-7/1924. In book form: Moscow, 1924. (G. Lukács and his Critique of Marxism); in German: *Arbeiter Literatur* 9/1924.
 - (11) A. Deborin, "G. Lukács i yevo kritika Marksizma", p. 50.
 - (12) *Ibid.*, p. 65.
 - (13) G. Lukács, Preface to *Utam Marxhoz*, p. 22.
 - (14) I. Luppel, "Deborin: G. Lukács i yevo kritika marksizma" (Deborin: G. Lukács and his Criticism of Marxism), *Pravda* July 25th, 1924.
 - (15) See M. Hevesi, "Baloldaliság" a filozófiában — Az 1920-as évek filozófiai vitáinak történetéből ("Leftism" in Philosophy — From the History of the Philosophical Debates of the 1920s.) (Budapest: Kossuth, 1979), pp. 213-220. "Although the term 'Leninism' was accepted, there were some people who claimed that there could be no Leninism as it would mean the revision of Marxism... Several articles emphasized Lenin's orthodoxy, that Lenin did not revise Marx but directly continued his teaching. The formulation of some other authors'... views could be interpreted in such a way as to mean that Lenin was opposed to Marx." (p. 217).
 - (16) See "Tézisek a Kommunista Internacionálé pártjainak bolsevizálásáról" (Theses on the Bolshevization of the Parties of the Communist International), in: *A Kommunista Internacionálé válogatott dokumentumai*, pp. 204, 205, 209.
 - (17) "Foundations of Leninism", in: *Problems of Leninism* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1947), p. 27.
 - (18) G. Lukács, "Novaya biografiya M. Gessa" (A New Biography of M. Hess), *Arkhiv K. Marksa i F. Engelsa* Offprint No. 3 (Moscow-Leningrad, 1927), pp. 440-459. Idem: "Ernst Simon, Ranke und Hegel", *ibid.*, Offprint No. 5, 1930, pp. 478-482.
 - (19) *Curriculum vitae*, p. 465.
 - (20) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xxxiii.
 - (21) "Die neue Ausgabe von Lassalles Briefen" (Book review), in: *Schriften zur Ideologie und Politik*, p. 227.
 - (22) "N. Buharin: Theorie des historischen Materialismus", in: *Schriften zur Ideologie und Politik*, pp. 196-197.
 - (23) "Karl August Wittfogel: Die Wissenschaft der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft", in: *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, 1925, pp. 224-227.
 - (24) See G. Lukács, *Demokratische Diktatur — Politische Aufsätze V (1925-1929)* (Darmstadt, Berlin and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1979), p. 11.
 - (25) *History and Class Consciousness*, pp. xxxiv-xxxv.
 - (26) "Moses Hess und die Probleme der idealistischen Dialektik", in: *Schriften zur Ideologie und Politik*, pp. 245-246.
 - (27) *Ibid.*, p. 264.
 - (28) *Protiv novyshey kritiki marksizma* (Against the latest criticism of Marxism), I. Luppel's Foreword (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1929), p. xiv.
 - (29) L. Mankovsky, "Marksizm G. Lukácsa", p. 49.
 - (30) A. Fogarasi, "Sotsiologiya znaniya i sotsiologiya intelligentsii" (Novaya popitka oproverzheniya marksizma)" (Sociology of Knowledge and Sociology of the Intelligentsia — A New Attempt to Refute Marxism), *Pod Znamenem Marksizma*

- 7-8/1930, p. 198. As the Deborin Debate proceeded, Fogarasi struck an even rougher note: "The fight against Lenin is linked to the fight against Marx and Engels, nor can it be otherwise. The Russian Machist and Lukács (History and Class Consciousness), as is well known, term Engels dogmatic. And Lenin, too." A. Fogarasi, "Sotsial-fashizm i idealizm" (Social-Fascism and Idealism), *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* 6/1931, p. 24.
- (31) "A Szovjetunió agrárpolitikájának kérdéséhez" (On the Question of the Agrarian Policy of the Soviet Union), in: *Ź. V. Sztálin művei* (The Works of J. V. Stalin) (Budapest: Szikra, 1950), XII: 153-158.
- (32) See "O raznoglasiyakh na filosofskom fronte" (On Controversies on the Philosophical Front), *Vestnik Kommunisticheskoy Akademii* 18-19/1930, pp. 40-41.
- (33) G. A. Deborin, *Lenin kak mislityel* (Lenin as a Thinker) (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929), p. 26.
- (34) "Sodoklad G. A. Deborina" (Report by Deborin), *Vestnik Kommunisticheskoy Akademii* 18-19/1930, p. 30.
- (35) G. A. Deborin, "Itogi i zadachi na filosofskom fronte" (Results and Tasks on the Philosophical Front), *Pod znamenem marksizma* 6/1930, p. 7.
- (36) "Ob itogakh i novykh zadachakh na filosofskom fronte" (On the Results and New Tasks on the Philosophical Front), *Pod znamenem marksizma* 4/1930, p. 7.
- (37) "Itogi filosofskoy diskussii" (The Results of the Philosophical Debate), *Pod znamenem marksizma* 10-12/1930, p. 17.
- (38) "Now we have the material basis to replace kulak production by the production of kolkhozes and sovkhoses. . . . This is the reason why we have recently switched over from the policy of *restraining* the attempts at exploitation on the part of the kulaks to the *elimination of the kulaks as a class*." See "A Szovjetunió agrárpolitikájának kérdéseihez" (On the Questions of the Agrarian Policy of the Soviet Union), in: *Ź. V. Sztálin művei* (The Works of J. V. Stalin), XII: 182. "... having broken up and disarmed the Trotsky-Zinoviev-Kamenev faction with the help of the Bukharin-group, and having expropriated the economic meanings of original Socialist accumulation (withouth using its terminology), Stalin now turned against his former allies to use the newly chosen tactical devices to annihilate this group. This is how Stalin became the absolute ruler, this is how the cooperatives were set up in 1929, the industry's forced development began, etc." See G. Lukács, *Demokratisierung heute und morgen* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985), p. 91.
- (39) "Jobboldali elhajlás az SZK(b)P politikájában" (Rightist Deviation in the Policy of CP(b)SU), in: *Ź. V. Sztálin művei*, XII: 18.
- (40) *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- (41) *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- (42) *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- (43) *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.
- (44) "Vazhneyshiy istoricheskiy dokument" (The Most Important Historical Document), *Pod znamenem marksizma* 10-12/1930, p. 5. (Emphasis added.)
- (45) *Record of a Life*, p. 97. "A piece of luck in the times of disasters (a) Bukharin-Radek, 1930. . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 166).
- (46) N. I. Bukharin, *Lenin kak marksist—Sbornik statei* (Lenin as a Marxist — A Collection of Articles) (Moscow, 1924), p. 255.

- (47) M. B. Mitin, "K itogam filosofskoy diskussii" (On the Results of the Philosophical Debate), in: *Pod znamenem marksizma* 10-12/1930, p. 31.
- (48) Ibid., p. 31.
- (49) *Materiali nauchnoy sessii — k piatidesiatiletiyu so dnya smerti Marksa* (Materials of a Scientific Session — Contributions to the Fiftieth Anniversary of Marx's Death) (Moscow—Leningrad, 1934), pp. 136-151.
- (50) "Zakluchitelnoye slovo t. Mitina" (Concluding Words of c[omrade] Mitin), *Pod znamenem Marksizma* 10-12/1930, pp. 194-195.
- (51) "O zhurnale *Pod Znamenem Marksizma*" (On the Journal "Under the Banner of Marxism") Postanovleniye CK VKP(b) of 25 ianvaria 1931. *Pod znamenem marksizma* 10-12/1930, pp. 1-2.
- (52) G. Lukács, *Curriculum vitae*, p. 466. "The debate that blew up Deborin's monopoly position was set off in the early thirties... We should present a one-sided and historically false picture if we failed to note that this debate... would not have been started, had it not been for the impetus provided by the Central Committee of the Party... Possibly there were superficial and morally unwarranted moments in this debate... As for me and Lukács, we lent full support to the moves against Deborin, although we saw its one-sided and naive facets as well. Regarding Lenin as a philosopher, there was a tempestuous debate in the Marx-Engels Institute where we worked at the time. I can't remember if Lukács took part in it — he must have —, but I participated actively in it." See M. Lifshits, interview with L. Sziklai, LAL.
- (53) A. Vasileva, "Gegel i sovremenniy revizionizm" (Hegel and Contemporary Revisionism), in: *Gegel i dialekticheskiy materializm. Sbornik statey k 100-letiyu so dnya smerti Gegelya* (Hegel and Dialectical Materialism — A Collection of Articles in Honour of the 100th Anniversary of Hegel's Death) (Moscow, 1932), pp. 196, 200, 209.
- (54) G. Lukács, Foreword to *Művészet és társadalom — Válogatott esztétikai tanulmányok* (Art and Society — Selected Studies on Aesthetics), ed. F. Fehér (Budapest: Gondolat, 1968), p. 9.

MAKING A DETOUR

- (1) *Művészet és társadalom*, p. 9.
- (2) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xviii.
- (3) W. Benjamin, "Bücher, die lebendig geblieben sind", *Die literarische Welt* 20/1929, p. 6.
- (4) G. Lukács, *Utam Marxhoz*, II: 13. In his last autobiographical sketch, he recalled the beginning of this turn in these words: "The positive-side: re-think *History and Class Consciousness*. The result: what was important about it, was not its hostility to Materialism but its completion of historicism in Marxism and with that, ultimately, the universality of Marxism as a philosophy: philosophical debate (against Deborin)." *Record of a Life*, p. 163.
- (5) In 1930, "the so-called philosophical debate took place in which Stalin opposed Deborin and his school. Of course, a number of late features of Stalin did manifest themselves in this debate, but for all that, Stalin defended an extremely important

- point of view which played a very positive role in my development. For what he did was to launch an attack on the so-called Plekhanov orthodoxy which was so prominent in Russia at the time. He protested against the need to view Plekhanov as a great theoretician who provided the main mediatory link with Marx. Stalin maintained that it was instead the Marx-Lenin tradition — and by implication the Stalin line as well — which had to be considered valid.” See *Record of a Life*, p. 86.
- (6) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xviii.
 - (7) G. Lukács, letter to M. Lifshits, 18 November 1932, LAL.
 - (8) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xxxv. Should the work at issue happen to be “Der Thermidor: der junge und der alte Hegel” (which indeed got lost), it is true that it was written upon commission — out of “exigency” — by Lukács and could not appear for reasons beyond his control.
 - (9) *Ibid.*, pp. xxxvi–xxxvii.
 - (10) I. Fetscher, “Laudatio Lukács Györgyhöz” (Laudatio to Georg Lukács), in: G. Lukács *Tanulmányok* (Studies) (Bucharest, 1973), II: 224–225.
 - (11) V. F. Asmus, *Marx és a polgári historicizmus* (Marx and Bourgeois Historicism) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1973).
 - (12) See G. Lukács, *Utam Marxhoz*, II: 9.
 - (13) “A Materializmus és empiriokritícizmus jelentősége a kommunista pártok bolsevizálásában” (The Significance of Materialism and Empiriocriticism in the Bolshevization of the Communist Parties), in: G. Lukács, *Curriculum vitae*, p. 111. First published: *Pod znamenem marksizma* 4/1934.
 - (14) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xxxvi.
 - (15) For more detail, see, L. Sziklai, “Szellemi közösségben — Lukács György és Mihail Lifsic” (Spiritually United—G. Lukács and M. Lifshits), *Világosság* 2/1984.
 - (16) M. Lifshits, “K voprosu ob esteticheskikh vzgliadakh Marksa” (On the Aesthetic Views of Marx), in: *Zhurnal Obiedineniya Kafedr Obshchestvennykh nauk Vhutemasa* (Journal of the Society of High School Faculties of Social Sciences), 1927.
 - (17) M. Lifshits, *Marx és az esztétika* (Marx and Aesthetics) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1966), p. 28.
 - (18) G. Lukács, “Marks i Engels v polemike s Lassalem po povodu Zikingena”, *Literaturnoye Nasledstvo* 3/1933 (The Polemics of Marx and Engels against Lassalle on Sickingen), “Marks i Engels o literature — Novyye materialy—Komentarii F. Schillera i G. Lukácsa” (Marx and Engels on Literature —New Materials — Commentary by F. Schiller and G. Lukács) (Moscow, 1933).
 - (19) See *Ferd. Lassalle’s Briefe und Schriften*, ed. Eduard Bernstein, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1892–1893). *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Lassalle und Marx*, ed. G. Mayer (Stuttgart, 1922). (In Russian: Berlin, 1923.) *Iskusstvo i literature v marksistskom osveschenii* (Art and Literature in the Marxian Perspective) (Moscow, 1925).
 - (20) “Principialniye voprosy isbiratynelnoy kampanyii” (The Principal Questions of the Election Campaign), *Collected Works of Lenin* (in Russian) (Moscow, 1961), XXI: 90.
 - (21) G. Lukács, “Marx und Lassalle in ihrem Briefwechsel”, in his *Organisation und Illusion — Politische Aufsätze, III* (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1977), p. 166. First published: *Die Rote Fahne*, 4 October 1922.
 - (22) G. Lukács, “Lassalle als Theoretiker der SPD (Sammelrezension)”, in his *Organisation und Illusion*, pp. 189, 192, 193. First published: *Die Internationale* 19–20/1924.

- (23) G. Lukács, "Lassalle új hívei" (Lassalle's New Followers), *Új Március* July–August/1925, p. 93.
- (24) G. Lukács, "Die neue Ausgabe von Lassalles Briefen", in his *Schriften zur Ideologie und Politik*, pp. 212–213.
- (25) *Ibid.*, p. 235.
- (26) G. Lukács, "Die Sickingen-Debatte zwischen Marx-Engels und Lassalle", in his *Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels als Literaturhistoriker* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1952), p. 11.
- (27) See G. Lukács's letter to M. Lifshits, 17 June 1970, LAL.
- (28) "Die Sickingen-Debatte etc.", p. 10.
- (29) *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.
- (30) *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36.
- (31) *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- (32) G. Lukács, "Marx és Engels a dramaturgia kérdéseiről" (Marx and Engels on the Questions of Dramaturgy), in his *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945* (Writings on Aesthetics), pp. 32–47. The original — then unpublished — German manuscript is deposited at LAL; "Marx és Engels a dramaturgia problémáiról" (Marx and Engels on the Problems of Dramaturgy), in: *ibid.*, pp. 131–134. First published: *The International Theatre* 2/1934. *Le Théâtre International*, 2/1934.
- (33) G. Lukács, "Marx és Engels a dramaturgia kérdéseiről" (Marx and Engels on Dramaturgy), in: *ibid.*, p. 33.
- (34) *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 40.
- (35) "Karl Marx und F. T. Vischer", in: *Probleme der Ästhetik* (Darmstadt und Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1969), pp. 233–234.
- (36) "Marx és Engels a dramaturgia problémáiról", p. 134.
- (37) G. Lukács, "Lassalle Ferdinand", in: *Literaturnay Enciklopediya* (Moscow, 1932), VI: 64–76. Published with minor alterations in German: "Kritik der Literaturtheorie Lassalles", *Die Rote Fahne* 19/1932.
- (38) G. Lukács, "Lassalle irodalomelméletének kritikája" (A Critique of Lassalle's Literary Theory), in his *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 65.
- (39) See, for example, G. Lukács, "A marxista esztétika Németországban a II. Internacionálé korszakában" (Marxist Aesthetics in Germany around the Time of the 2nd International), pp. 27–32. The German manuscript was written around 1933, LAL.
- (40) *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- (41) See "Marx és az irodalom" (Marx and Literature), p. 79. First published: *Deutsche Zentralzeitung* 17. August 1933.
- (42) "Marx és Engels a dramaturgia kérdéseiről", p. 33.
- (43) "Marx és Engels mint irodalomkritikusok" (Marx and Engels as Literary Critics), pp. 53–54. The German version was written around 1933, LAL.
- (44) "Marx és az irodalom" (Marx and Literature), p. 80.
- (45) M. Lifshits, "Marx halálának ötvenedik évfordulójára" (On the Fiftieth Anniversary of Marx's Death) in his *Válogatott esztétikai írások* (Selected Writings on Aesthetics), p. 389.
- (46) It is untenable to claim that Lifshits represented the Marxist "anti-position" and chose the Marx quotations for his book on Marx's aesthetics with a view to the fight against the turnaround of 1929–30. (See H.-D. Sander, *Marxistische Ideologie und*

allgemeine Kunsttheorie (Basel-Tübingen, 1970), pp. 178-193.) Sander simply equated vulgar art sociology with the Stalinian-Zhdanovian cultural policy, ignoring their complex and intricate interrelation.

- (47) G. Lukács, "On his Life and Work", interview in *New Left Review* July-August/1971, pp. 56-57. The German scholar was H. Huppert. See H. Huppert, *Wanduhr mit Vordergrund — Stationen eines Lebens* (Saale, 1977).
- (48) G. Lukács, Nachwort to his *Essays über Realismus*, p. 676.
- (49) When we say that their roads diverged, we do not mean that between the two thinkers had theoretical differences. In his discussion of the Sickingen Debate, Lifshits refers the reader to Lukács's "excellent" analysis (M. Lifshits, "Karl Marx und die Ästhetik", *Internationale Literatur* 3/1933, p. 90). Lukács does likewise when interpreting Marx's excerpts of Vischer. G. Lukács, *Adalékok az esztétika történetéhez* (Contribution to the History of Aesthetics), II: 65, 75.

MARX'S LEGACY

- (1) J. P. Mayer, "Über eine unveröffentlichte Schrift von Marx", *Rote Revue*, January 1931. S. Landshut and J. P. Mayer, "Die Bedeutung der Frühschriften von Marx für ein neues Verständnis", in: *K. Marx — Der historische Materialismus. Die Frühschriften*, Vol. 1 (Leipzig: Alfred Kröner, 1932). H. de Man, "Der neuentdeckte Marx", *Der Kampf* 5-6/1932.
- (2) S. Landshut and J. P. Mayer, p. 15.
- (3) *Ibid.*, p. 23. (Emphasis added.)
- (4) *Ibid.*, p. 35. For the critical reception of the conception of Landshut and Mayer, see: B. Bikhovsky, *Vragi i falsifikatori marksizma* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1933), pp. 58-81.
- (5) See H. Marcuse, "Zum Problem der Dialektik", *Die Gesellschaft* 2/1930; *Idem*, "Transzendentaler Marxismus?", *Die Gesellschaft* 4/1931. Bikhovsky describes the polemic between Marcuse and Marck on Hegelian dialectics as a squabble between two Social Fascist philosophers.
- (6) H. Marcuse, "Neue Quellen zur Grundlegung des historischen Materialismus, Interpretation der neu veröffentlichten Manuskripte von Marx", *Die Gesellschaft* 8/1932.
- (7) A. Rosenberg, *Geschichte des Bolschewismus — Von Marx bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin: Rohwolt, 1932).
- (8) See M. Jay, *Dialektische Phantasie. Die Geschichte der Frankfurter Schule und des Instituts für Sozialforschung 1923-1950* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1976), pp. 23-24. See also J. Mader, "1922/23 Dr. Richard Sorge in Ilmenau, Geraberg und Suhl", in: *Dr. Richard Sorge — Parteifunktionär und Gesellschaftswissenschaftler* (Berlin, 1985).
- (9) See G. Lukács, "Marx und Engels: Die deutsche Ideologie", *Deutsche Zentral-Zeitung*, 15 December 1933.
- (10) G. Lukács, "Der Briefwechsel zwischen Marx und Engels", *Illustrierte Neue Welt* 1/1933.

- (11) "It is mistaken . . . to say that the third volume of the collected works and the first volume of the Landshut-Mayer edition both contain the Philosophical and Economic Manuscripts as they were first published. A comparison of the two texts reveals that only the Collected Works can have a claim to scientific authenticity." See G. Lukács, "Marx, Karl und Engels, Friedrich, Werke und Schriften von Mai 1846 bis März 1848", Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe, Hrsg. v. V. Adoratsky, 1. Abt., B. 6. (Berlin, 1933); *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 2/1933 (Paris, 1934), p. 280.
- (12) J. Varga, "Teoriya krizisov K. Marksa i yeyo sotsialfashistskiye izvrashcheniya" (Marx's Theory of Crisis and its Social-Fascist Falsification), L. Madjar, "I. International o sotsialisticheskoy peredelke selskovo khozyaistva" (The First International on the Questions of the Socialist Transformation of Agriculture), in: *K piatidesiatiletiyu smerti K. Marksa 1883-1933* (Moscow, 1933).
- (13) L. Rudas, *Der dialektische Materialismus und die Sozialdemokratie* (Moscow-Leningrad: Verlagsgenossenschaft Ausländischer Arbeiter in der UdSSR, 1934), p. 5.
- (14) K. Sauerland, *Der dialektische Materialismus* (Berlin, 1932). Lukács's notes can be found in LAL.
- (15) M. B. Mitin, "Materialisticheskaya dialektika — filosofiya proletariata" (Materialist Dialectics — The Philosophy of the Proletariat), *Materiali nauchnoy sessii. K piatidesiatiletiyu so dnia smerti K. Marksa*, pp. 24-26.
- (16) A. Deborin, *Karl Marks i sovremennosty* (Marx and the Contemporary World) (Moscow-Leningrad, 1933), pp. 52-70.
- (17) See u. Migdal, *Die Frühgeschichte des Frankfurter Instituts für Sozialforschung* (Frankfurt-New York: Campus Verlag, 1981), pp. III-III.
- (18) F. Schiller, "Das Marx-Engels-Institut in Moskau", *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, 1930. (At the time, Riazanov was celebrating his sixtieth birthday.) Schiller also mentioned how many volumes of books one could find in each of the fourteen divisions of the Institute in 1930, which is important information because, referring to *Division IV for Philosophy of History*, he noted that it was just being set up (p. 426). This is the division that Lukács was to join. Lifshits said: "Riazanov put me in charge of preparing the division for the philosophy of history. I was given a large vaulted room in the basement of a former mansion, which housed the Marx-Engels Institute at that time . . . There is no denying that I was not very happy when Lukács appeared, because I expected to be appointed head of the division. After all, the division was not set up in this form and it had no head." See M. Lifshits, interview with L. Sziklai, LAL.
- (19) G. Lukács, *Literaturniye teorii XIX veka i marksizm*. Lukács writes in the Preface to the book edited by Lifshits: "The articles of this volume, dating between 1930 and 1933, were collected for republication in the autumn of 1933 . . . However, various circumstances prevented printing." (Op. cit., p. 5) The volume includes the following essays: "Ludwig Feuerbach és a német irodalom" (L. Feuerbach and German Literature); "Karl Marx und Friedrich Theodor Vischer"; "A Sickingen-vita Marx-Engels és Lassalle között" (The Sickingen Debate between Marx-Engels and Lassalle); "Franz Mehring".
- (20) A typewritten copy of Marx's excerpts from Vischer containing handwritten corrections by Lukács and Lifshits is preserved in LAL.
- (21) "Karl Marx und F. T. Vischer", in: *Probleme der Ästhetik*, p. 243.

- (22) Ibid., pp. 258–259.
- (23) Ibid., pp. 297–298. In fact, this is the politically–tactically emphasized point, which is proven by the fact that this section on the Fascistic outcome of liberal ideology was omitted from the text of the 1937 publication.
- (24) Ibid., p. 297.
- (25) Ibid., p. 294. (Emphasis added.)
- (26) Ernst Bloch, *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (Zürich, 1936), p. 55.
- (27) G. Lukács, “Die Erbschaft dieser Zeit”, in: *Ernst Bloch und Georg Lukács — Dokumente zum 100. Geburtstag*, Budapest, 1984, LAL.
- (28) G. Lukács, “Karl Marx und F. T. Vischer”, in: *Probleme der Ästhetik*, p. 287. (Emphasis added.)
- (29) G. Lukács’s letter to M. Lifshits, 18 November 1932, LAL.
- (30) G. Lukács, “Ludwig Feuerbach és a német irodalom” (L. Feuerbach and German Literature), in his *Adalékok az esztétika történetéhez*, I: 606.
- (31) G. Lukács, “Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872)”, *Neue Illustrierte Welt* 8/1932.
- (32) “Ludwig Feuerbach és a német irodalom”, p. 605.
- (33) Ibid., p. 608.
- (34) G. Lukács, “Ludwig Feuerbachs Erbe”, *Deutsche Zentral-Zeitung* 14 September 1937, p. 3.
- (35) “Ludwig Feuerbach és a német irodalom”, p. 604.
- (36) Ibid., pp. 576–577. See also pp. 599 ff.
- (37) *Record of a Life*, p. 86.
- (38) Mehring’s works, he wrote, “despite all their merits, bear the errors and shortcomings of the German left-wing opposition, which was pointed out with unique clear-sightedness by Marshal Stalin in a letter addressed to the editors of *Proletarskaya Revolutsiya*.” See G. Lukács, “Franz Mehring”, Manuscript, LAL.
- (39) See for instance, H. Koch, “Franz Mehring (1846–1919)”, in: *Positionsbestimmungen. Zur Geschichte marxistischer Theorie von Literatur und Kultur am Ausgang des 19. und Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1977), p. 87.
- (40) Preface to the Russian edition of Franz Mehring’s “Lessing Legend”, in: E. Czöbel *Válogatott írásai* (Selected Writings) (Budapest: Kossuth, 1963), p. 289.
- (41) G. Lukács, “Franz Mehring (1846–1919)”, in: *Legenda Lessinga — Lityeraturno-kriticheskaya statyi* (The Lessing Legend — Literary–Critical Papers) (Moscow–Leningrad: Academia, 1934).
- (42) G. Lukács, “Franz Mehring”, in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Ästhetik* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1954), p. 318.
- (43) Ibid., pp. 343–244.
- (44) See “Über die demokratische Jugendentwicklung Franz Mehrings”, *Internationale Literatur* 5/1939. Here, Lukács stressed the great historic importance of the young Mehring’s studies. “Those who get acquainted with the later development of Mehring will not see clearly how much the Marxist Mehring inherited from the German democratic press unless they have read the early works: They will not know what a great influence this legacy had on Mehring’s resistance to seductive Revisionism, on his persistence on the left of Social Democracy, and in the fight against Imperialism and compromises with Imperialism during the World War.” Ibid., p. 205.
- (45) G. Lukács, Foreword to *Utam Marxhoz*, I: 24–25.

MOSCOW REVIEW

- (1) Paul Ernst, "Aus den Erinnerungen (Wien, 1924)", in: *Paul Ernst und Georg Lukács — Dokumente einer Freundschaft*, ed. K. A. Kutzbach. Sonderband von "Der Wille zur Form", Jahrgabe 1973/74, pp. 165–166.
- (2) S. Vajda, "Az emigráció üvegbúrájában" — Emlékek Lukács Györgyről és másokról" (In the Bell Jar of Exile — Memories Concerning G. Lukács and Others), *Kortárs* 7/1981, pp. 1105–1106.
- (3) *Paul Ernst und Georg Lukács*, p. 164.
- (4) G. Lukács, "L'art pour l'art és proletárköltészet" (Art for Art's Sake and Proletarian Poetry), *Világosság* 12/1973, p. 751. First published: *Die Tat* June 1926.
- (5) Paul Ernst, "Kunst und Proletariat", in: *Paul Ernst und Georg Lukács*, pp. 185, 186, and 188. First published: *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* July 1926.
- (6) Georg Lukács to Paul Ernst, *ibid.*, p. 202.
- (7) G. Lukács, "L'art pour l'art és proletárköltészet", p. 753.
- (8) S. Vajda, "Az emigráció üvegbúrájában", p. 1110.
- (9) "Die politische Gruppierung der russischen Schriftsteller", in: W. Benjamin, *Angelus Novus. Ausgewählte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main, 1966) II: 181–182.
- (10) The letter is deposited at LAL. *Die Front* appeared from 1928 to 1931 under the editorship of Hans Conrad. From 19 November 1928 to August 1929, it was published as the journal of the organization of German revolutionary proletarian writers. (BPRS).
- (11) G. Lukács, "Új tartalom, régi forma" (New Content, Old Form), in his *Eszttétikai írások 1930–1945*, pp. 540–541. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 11 January 1931.
- (12) *Ibid.*, p. 543.
- (13) "Ilya Ehrenburg", in: *ibid.*, p. 3535. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 9 November 1930. The other Ehrenburg review: "A legszentebb javak" (The Holiest Goods), in: *ibid.*, pp. 553–555. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 4 October 1931.
- (14) *Ibid.*, p. 536.
- (15) *Ibid.*, p. 538.
- (16) See G. Lukács, Foreword to *Utam Marxhoz*, I: 27.
- (17) G. Lukács, "Gyár az erdőben" (Factory in the Forest), in his *Eszttétikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 544. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 8 February 1931.
- (18) "Új orosz szépirodalom" (New Russian Literature), in: *ibid.*, pp. 547–548. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 26 April 1931.
- (19) S. Vajda [G. Lukács], "Bogdanov: Az első lány" (The First Girl), in: *ibid.*, pp. 557–558. First published: *Sarló és kalapács* 3/1932. (The journal carried the first chapter of the novel.)
- (20) "E. D. Nikitina: Tizenhárom asszony megszökik" (Thirteen Women Escape), in: *ibid.*, pp. 551–552. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 19 July 1931.
- (21) "A mások oldalról..." (From the Other Side...), in: *ibid.*, p. 367. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 25, 30 August 1931.
- (22) See also Marx, "Einleitung" to *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, MEGA 1/3 (Moscow, 1939).

- (23) G. Lukács, *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 367. (First two emphasises added.)
- (24) *Ibid.*, p. 370.
- (25) “Talantlivaya knyizka” (A little Book of Some Talent), in: Lenin’s *Collected Works* (in Russian) (Moscow, 1962), XLIV: 249.
- (26) F. Joó, G. Lukács, “A kis Móric és az orosz forradalom” (A Jewish Observer Viewing the Russian Revolution), in: G. Lukács, *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, pp. 365–366. First published: *Társadalmi Szemle* 5/1932.
- (27) S. Vajda(!) G. Lukács(!), “Tolsztoj Leo”, 100% 1/1928. On the authorship of the article see M. Lackó, *Szerep és mű* (Role and Work) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1981), p. 105.
- (28) G. Lukács, “Tolsztoj Németországban” (Tolstoy in Germany), in his *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 254. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 21 September 1930.
- (29) *Ibid.*, p. 255.
- (30) *Ibid.*, pp. 255–256.
- (31) See G. Lukács, *Die Theorie des Romans* (Neuwied und Berlin: Luchterhand, 1971), p. 73.
- (32) G. Lukács, “A Dosztojevszkij-hagyatékáról” (On the Dostoyevsky Legacy), in his *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 65. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 22 March 1931.
- (33) G. Lukács, “Stawrogins Beichte — Besprechung von F. M. Dostojewsky: Die Beichte Stawrogins” (Munich: Musarin-Verlag, 1932), in: *Organisation und Illusion — Politische Aufsätze III*, pp. 157 and 156. First published: *Die Rote Fahne* 16 July 1922.
- (34) G. Lukács, *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 64.
- (35) *Ibid.*, pp. 61–62.
- (36) See “Az orosz gondolat” (The Russian Idea), in: *ibid.*, pp. 56–58. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 23 November 1930.
- (37) “Mihail Sholokhov”, in: *ibid.*, p. 534. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 12 October 1930.
- (38) “Gyár az erdőben” (Factory in the Forest), in: *ibid.*, p. 545.
- (39) “Mihail Sholokhov”, in: *ibid.*, p. 532.
- (40) “A Dosztojevszkij-hagyatékáról” (On the Dostoyevsky Legacy), in: *ibid.*, p. 62.
- (41) See A. Stephan, “Georg Lukács’ erste Beiträge zur marxistischen Literaturtheorie”, in: *Brecht-Jahrbuch* 1975, pp. 79–111. Stephan wants to prove that Lukács adjusted to changes in Soviet literary policy almost day by day. “One thing is certain”, he writes, namely “That the theoretical position of Lukács’s first Marxist articles in literary theory was determined by the Soviet–Russian debates taking place in the *Moskauer Rundschau*.” (p. 107). The other main defect of his study derives not so much from factual errors as from isolating Lukács’s writings for the press in this period from the works of the twenties, from explaining them exclusively on the basis of the Berlin period (1931–1933), and from interpreting them merely as signs of Lukács’s “guerilla warfare”.
- (42) See G. Lukács, “Mihail Sholokhov”, in his *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, pp. 532–533.
- (43) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 29. The criticism of vulgar sociology was not new at all; suffice it to remind the reader of Lukács’s article on Bukharin.

- (44) G. Lukács, "Mihail Sholohov", in his *Eszttétikai írások 1930-1945*, pp. 532-533.
- (45) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 234.
- (46) G. Lukács, "Roman der Kollektivisierung" (F. Panfiorov: Die Kommune der Habenichtse) (Vienna-Berlin: Verlag für Literatur und Politik, 1931), *Moskauer Rundschau* 7 June 1931.
- (47) *Record of a Life*, p. 127.
- (48) G. Lukács, "A proletár ifjúsági irodalomról" (On Proletarian Juvenile Literature), in his *Eszttétikai írások 1930-1945*, pp. 559-560 and 562. First published: *Sarló és kalapács* 6/1932.
- (49) G. Lukács, "Henri Barbusse: 150 milliónyian új világot építenek" (150 Millions Building a New World), in his *Eszttétikai írások 1930-1945*, pp. 530-531. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 14 September 1930.
- (50) M. Iljin, *Fünf Jahre, die die Welt verändern — Erzählung vom großen Plan* (Berlin: Malik Verlag, 1932), pp. 206-207.
- (51) G. Lukács, "Az ötéves terv himnusza" (Praise of the Five-Year Plan), in his *Eszttétikai írások 1930-1945*, p. 555. First published: *Moskauer Rundschau* 20 December 1931.
- (52) *Ibid.*
- (53) *Aktionen, Bekenntnisse, Perspektiven — Berichte und Dokumente vom Kampf um die Freiheit des literarischen Schaffens in der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1966), p. 232.
- (54) See E. Weiss, *Johannes R. Becher und die sowjetische Literaturentwicklung (1931-1933)* (Berlin, 1971), p. 219.

GERMAN PROLETARIAN LITERATURE — GERMAN INTELLECTUALS

- (1) H. Gallas, *Marxistische Literaturtheorie. Kontroversen im Bund proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller* (Neuwied and Berlin: Luchterhand, 1971), pp. 56-64.
- (2) F. J. Raddatz, *Georg Lukács* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1972), p. 76.
- (3) *Record of a Life*, p. 91.
- (4) *Curriculum vitae*, p. 466. The "leftist bourgeois writer" was Heinz Pol.
- (5) *Aktionen, Bekenntnisse, Perspektiven — Zur Tradition der sozialistischen Literatur in Deutschland — Eine Auswahl von Dokumenten* (Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1967). A. Klein, *Im Auftrag ihrer Klasse. Weg und Leistung der deutschen Arbeiterschriftsteller 1918-1933* (Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1972). *Zur Tradition der deutschen sozialistischen Literatur — Eine Auswahl von Dokumenten 1926-1935*, vol. 1 (Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1979).
- (6) "Entwurf zu einem Programm des Bundes proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller" in: *Zur Tradition der sozialistischen Literatur in Deutschland*, pp. 385-402. Around this time Lukács contributed considerably sectarian comments to the draft platform on Hungarian proletarian literature. "A régebbi magyar irodalomhoz való

- viszonyunk" (Our Relation to Earlier Hungarian Literature), in: *Esztétikai írások*, pp. 599–603. First published *Sarló és kalapács* 9/1931.
- (7) G. Lukács's letter to M. Lifshits, 20 September 1931, LAL.
- (8) B. Brecht, *Briefe 1913–1956* (Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1983), I: 145–146. The dating of the fragment by the editors is mistaken (late 1930, early 1931); Lukács resided in Berlin from summer 1931.
- (9) E. Schumacher, *Leben Brechts* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1984), p. 83. It is important to note that, already in late 1930, Benjamin informed Brecht he would not take part in editing the journal. See W. Benjamin, *Briefe*, ed. G. Scholem and T. W. Adorno (Frankfurt am Main, 1966), II: 521.
- (10) Quoted by E. Weiss, *J. R. Becher und die sowjetische Literaturentwicklung (1917–1933)*, p. 219.
- (11) T. Richter, *Die Plakette — Vom großen und vom kleinen Werden* (Halle, Saale: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1972), pp. 30–31, 32.
- (12) J. R. Becher, "L. Gy.", in: *Georg Lukács zum 70. Geburtstag*, p. 8.
- (13) "MASCH was attended not only by workers but also by a lot of leftwing young intellectuals. At least the lectures were." See G. Lukács's letter to G. L. Ulmen, 15 January 1966, LAL.
- (14) See T. Richter, "Wie arbeitet der Bund proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller", *Die Rote Fahne* 6/1932, p. 25.
- (15) A. Gábor, "Lukács György életrajz-bibliográfiája" (A Bibliography of G. Lukács), in: *Curriculum vitae*, p. 477. The bibliography is so detailed and factually authentic that it is highly likely to have been made with Lukács's assistance in 1941. There is a single point to be corrected: At that time Lukács did *not* take the side of Socialist Realism, in fact, he did not use this term.
- (16) *Magyar irodalom — magyar kultúra*, p. 288.
- (17) G. Lukács's letter to A. Seghers, 29 July 1938, in: *Essays on Realism* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1980), p. 176.
- (18) See "A riport mestere — Egon Erwin Kisch 50. születésnapjára" (The Master of Reportage — E. E. Kisch's 50th Birthday), in: G. Lukács, *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 408. First published: *Internationale Literatur* 4/1935.
- (19) G. Lukács, "Felvilágosításul" (By Way of Information), in: *Világsszemlélet és irodalom* (World View and Literature), ed. M. Szabolcsi, L. Illés, F. József (Budapest: Kossuth, 1982), p. 122. First published: *Vörös Újság* 18 April 1919. (Emphasis added.)
- (20) "A klasszikus szatíraelmélet és felbomlása a liberális esztétikában" (The Classical Theory of Satire and its Disintegration in Liberal Aesthetics), in: G. Lukács, *Adalékok az esztétika történetéhez*, I: 629–655. First published: *Internationale Literatur* 4–5/1932.
- (21) G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*, p. 18.
- (22) "Die Aktualität der Philosophie", in: Th. W. Adorno: *Philosophische Frühschriften — Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1973), I: 325, 326.
- (23) M. Horkheimer, "Geschichte und Psychologie", *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 1–2/1930, pp. 130–131.
- (24) M. Horkheimer, *Anfänge der bürgerlichen Geschichtsphilosophie* (Stuttgart, 1930), p. 92.

- (25) G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*, p. 100.
- (26) Th. W. Adorno, "Zur gesellschaftlichen Lage der Musik", *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 1-2/1932, p. 103.
- (27) G. Lukács's letter to M. Lifshits, 20 September 1931, LAL.
- (28) R. de la Vega, *Ideologie als Utopie — Der hegelianische Radikalismus der marxistischen "Linken"* (Marburg, 1977), p. 85.
- (29) H. Ulrich, "Vállvetve — A magyar és a német kommunisták közös imperializmus-és fasizmusellenes elméleti harcának hagyományai (1926-1933)" (Side by Side — Traditions of the Hungarian and German Communists' Joint Theoretical Struggle Against Imperialism and Fascism), *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* 6/1979, p. 836.
- (30) See E. Gábor, "Emlékek és emlékezősek — Reflexiók Horst Brandl-Bánhidi Bruno Raudszussal folytatott beszélgetéséhez" (Memories and Recollections — Reflections on Horst Brandl-Bánhidi's Interview with Bruno Raudsusich), *Filozófiai Figyelő* 1/1984, p. 101.
- (31) C. Schmitt, *Staat, Bewegung, Volk* (Hamburg, 1933), p. 32.
- (32) Articles by Lukács: "Goethe világnézete" (Goethe's World Outlook), *Valóság* 1/1932 (Under the pen-name Georg Laurent), in German: *Illustrierte Neue Welt* 2/1932; in Russian: *Oktyabr* 4/1932; "Goethe und die Gegenwart — Einige grundsätzliche Bemerkungen zu den Goethe-Vorträgen der deutschen Sender", *Arbeiter-Sender* 2/1932; "Goethe und die Dialektik", *Der Marxist* 6/1932; "Der faschisierte Goethe", *Die Linkskurve* 1/1932.
- (33) See "Staatsgefährliche Goethefeier", *Illustrierte Neue Welt* 2/1932, p. 2.
- (34) G. Lukács, "Goethe und die Dialektik", pp. 21, 24.
- (35) Thomas Mann, "Mario und der Zauberer", in: *Gesammelte Werke* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1955), vol. 9, p. 756.
- (36) *Ibid.*, p. 764.
- (37) G. Lukács, *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?*, ed. L. Sziklai (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982), p. 39.
- (38) "Aristokratische und demokratische Weltanschauung", in: *Schriften zur Ideologie und Politik*, pp. 429-431.
- (39) G. Lukács, "Die deutsche Intelligenz", *Zwei Welten* 3/1932.
- (40) G. Lukács, "Die deutsche Intelligenz und der Faschismus", Manuscript, LAL.
- (41) "It was like this: Lukács went to Prague, and in Prague it was arranged, I don't know through which organs, that he should go to Moscow from Prague. We remained to save the library. We did so by packing the books in trunks that a carrier had brought to the flat, and we packed the books in these trunks. The trunks were first mailed to Prague because no libraries were any longer allowed to be taken from Berlin to Moscow . . . In Moscow, the three of us lived in a hotel, in the Grand Hotel, and before that in another one . . . Not the Lux because Uncle Gyuri didn't want to go to the Lux. There, too, it was important for him that one shouldn't become an exile in Moscow, either. Just as he hadn't dealt with Hungarian matters in Berlin, he didn't want to be involved with German affairs in Moscow. I don't know anything concrete, but I'm sure he didn't want to go to the Lux. He always said: 'Anywhere but the Lux, please!'" Reminiscences of Ferenc Jánossy, LAL. On the Lux Hotel, see: R. von Mayenburg: *Lux Hotel — Mit Dimitroff, Ernst Fischer, Ho Tschí Minh, Pieck, Rákosi,*

Slansky, Dr. Sorge, Tito, Togliatti, Tschou Enlai, Ulbricht und Wehner im Moskauer Quartier der Kommunistischen Internationale (Munich, 1978).

- (42) It is highly likely that "Grand Hotel 'Abyss'" was written in part or in full in Moscow, and, that Lukács completed it in May 1933. (The formal features, misprints, e.g., the misspelling of the publisher of the Musil novel ("Rohwolt"), of the available typescript — a carbon copy — suggest that at least the duplicate was made in Moscow.) Proof of Lukács's intention to publish it comes in the form of two means (probably of editors) written in pencil on the margin of the first page of the typescript, as well as several corrections and marks in coloured and black pen and pencil. It is probably impossible now to find out why it was not published in the end, as Lukács had both German and Russian journals at his disposal.
- (43) G. Lukács, "Szakadék Nagyszálló" (Grand Hotel "Abyss"), in his *Eszttetikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 83.
- (44) Ibid., p. 86.
- (45) Ibid.
- (46) Ibid., p. 92.
- (47) Ibid., p. 88.
- (48) See "The New Solitude and its Poetry — Stefan George", in: *Soul and Form* (London: The Merlin Press, 1974), pp. 79 ff.
- (49) Even then Lukács did not assert that those who wanted to fight against Fascism had to become Marxists by any means. Although only Dialectical Materialism could help one fully to comprehend the anti-Fascist struggle, the struggle itself meant an inevitable, objective rapprochement with Marxism–Leninism, whether one became aware of it or not.
- (50) *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?*, p. 57.
- (51) "Kurhotels", in: Ernst Bloch, *Vom Hasard zur Katastrophe — Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1934–1939* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972), p. 18. First published: *Die Neue Weltbühne* 37/1934.
- (52) G. Lukács, "Die Erbschaft dieser Zeit", in: *Ernst Bloch und Georg Lukács — Dokumente zum 100sten Geburtstag*.
- (53) *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?* pp. 149–190.
- (54) G. Lukács, "Expressionism: its Significance and Decline", in: *Essays on Realism*.
- (55) Ibid.
- (56) G. Lukács's letter to A. Seghers, 28 July 1938, in: *Essays on Realism*.
- (57) B. Brecht, *Irodalomról, művészetről* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1970), p. 42.
- (58) G. Lukács, "A realizmus a mai német irodalomban" (Realism in Contemporary German Literature), in his *Eszttetikai írások 1930–1945*, pp. 390–406. First published: *Literaturny Kritik* 6/1934.
- (59) "Ernst von Salomon", *ibid.*, pp. 386–387.
- (60) "Gerhardt Hauptmann", *ibid.*, pp. 370–385.
- (61) G. Lukács, Foreword to *Thomas Mann — Két tanulmány* (Two Studies) (Budapest: Hungária, n.d.), p. 7. See *Essays on Thomas Mann*, New York, 1964.
- (62) See "A faszizmus és az irodalomelmélet Németországban" (Fascism and Literary Theory in Germany), in: *Eszttetikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 170. The ideological distrust was not absent on Thomas Mann's side, either, as is revealed by the following

episode. Mann acknowledged Lukács's study of 1945 with the following words: "This birthday essay — *In the Footsteps of a Bourgeois* — is such a comprehensive sociological-psychological presentation of my life and work as I have never encountered before; it generated a feeling of deep gratitude in me not least because its writer studied my life-work not only in an historical perspective but also linked it to the German future. The only odd thing is that despite all the goodwill coming from this zone or sphere of criticism, the writer consistently ignores or omits the *Joseph* novel. This is already the area of conformity to the rules and total adaptation: the Joseph legend, or escape, counterrevolution. That's a pity. And perhaps it's not true, either." See Th. Mann, "*Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus — Roman eines Romans*" (1949), in: *Gesammelte Werke* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1955), XII: 178 ff.

Lukács's reply (29 July 1949, LAL) makes it clear that the reason is not "total adaptation". We quote the letter in full:

"Dear Mr Thomas Mann,

It was with great pleasure and satisfaction that I read your comments on my essay in 'The Genesis of Doctor Faustus'. I was especially delighted to learn that you confirmed the possibility of the connection that I tried to demonstrate between your early and later works.

Allow me to make but a brief remark as to why I left out the Joseph legend at that time. In the meantime, you will have been convinced by my Faustus essay that your hypothesis was wrong when you assumed that the form of the Joseph legend had prevented me from clearly seeing this cycle's linkage with the whole oeuvre. The reason for the omission in 1945 was more simple and prosaic: I couldn't get the last volume of the cycle partly because book trade with Sweden had been blocked by the war and partly because, in 1941, the libraries in Moscow had been evacuated and, although the holdings were returned to Moscow, their arrangement took a long time. I did not want to write about a work as significant as this one without being able to review it from the vantage point of the ending. This little incident may also show how often the prejudices toward our "totalitarianism" turn out to be nothing but unwarranted prejudices.

I join my wife in wishing you all the best,

Sincerely yours
György Lukács"

(63) G. Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, p. 168.

HISTORY AND BOURGEOIS CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

- (1) Lukács's study *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?* outshines the whole anti-Fascist literature of the age. Only one work of similar standards is known, a masterpiece of Marxist journalistic literature by Hans Günther (who must have known Lukács's Manuscript): H. Günther, *Der Herren eigner Geist. Die Ideologie des Nationalsozialismus* (Moscow, 1935); new edition: Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1981.

- (2) G. Lukács, *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?*, p. 59.
- (3) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 115.
- (4) *Ibid.*, p. 142.
- (5) *Ibid.*, p. 148.
- (6) *Ibid.*
- (7) *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?*, p. 19.
- (8) *Ibid.*, pp. 72–73; see also p. 271.
- (9) *Ibid.*, p. 272.
- (10) *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- (11) *Ibid.*, p. 143.
- (12) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 303.
- (13) *Ibid.*, p. 197.
- (14) See also *Wie ist die faschistische Philosophie in Deutschland entstanden?*, p. 185.
- (15) *Ibid.*, p. 152.
- (16) *Ibid.*, p. 167.
- (17) *Ibid.*, p. 160.
- (18) *Ibid.*, p. 190.
- (19) G. Lukács, “A Materializmus és empiriokriticismus jelentősége a kommunista pártok bolsevizálásában” (The Significance of Materialism and Empiriocriticism in the Bolshevization of the Communist Parties), in: *Curriculum vitae*, pp. 110–111. New features are added to the portrait of Lukács as an ideologue by the “next part” of this paper, a recollection published in *Új Hang*: “Hogyan hatott Sztálin könyve, ‘A leninizmus alapjai’, megjelenésekor a kapitalista országokban? — Visszaemlékezés 1924-re” (The Impact of Stalin’s *Foundations of Leninism* on Capitalist Countries — A Recollection), in: *ibid.*, pp. 112–119.
- (20) See G. Lukács, “Alfred Rosenberg, a nemzetiszocializmus esztétája” (A. Rosenberg, the Aesthete of National Socialism), in his *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, pp. 136–139. First published: *Literaturnaya Gazeta* 4 March 1934.
- (21) “Nietzsche als Vorläufer der faschistischen Ästhetik”, *Essays über den Realismus*, pp. 314–315. First published: *Literaturny Kritik* 12/1934, *Internationale Literatur* 8/1935.
- (22) Apart from those referred to in the text: for instance, “Nietzsche”, in *Literaturnaya Entsiklopediya* vol. 8 (Moscow, 1934); “A harmadik ‘reneszánsz’ — Nietzsche mint a fasiszta esztétika előfutára” (Third Renaissance — Nietzsche as Forerunner of Fascist Aesthetics), in: G. Lukács, *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, pp. 122–126. First published: *Literaturnaya Gazeta* 16 January 1934; “Gehört Nietzsche dem Faschismus?” Manuscript, LAL.
- (23) “Nietzsche als Vorläufer der faschistischen Ästhetik”, p. 310. (Emphasis added.)
- (24) G. Lukács, “Nietzsche és a német fasizmus” (Nietzsche and German Fascism), in his *Nietzsche és a fasizmus* (Budapest: Hungária, n.d.) First published: *Internationale Literatur* 12/1943.
- (25) See L. Rudas, *Der dialektische Materialismus und die Sozialdemokratie* (Moskau–Leningrad, 1934).

MOSCOW (LITERATURNY KRITIK)

- (1) "In the West, Lukács would have had to take on some teaching job at a bourgeois university in order to support his family, which he saw as the worst of all possible worlds." See Recollections of Ferenc Jánossy. LAL.
- (2) *Curriculum vitae*. Lukács is mistaken about the dates. The LAL document reveals that he was arrested by the NKVD on 29 June 1941 (for unknown reasons) and released on 26 August 1941, when the case against him had been dropped. On his release, see: Julius Hay, *Geboren 1900. Erinnerungen* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1971), pp. 277-278.
- (3) *Curriculum vitae*, pp. 460-461.
- (4) See I. Mészáros, "Die Philosophie des 'tertium datur' und des Koexistenzdialogs", in: *Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Georg Lukács*, p. 199.
- (5) G. Lukács's letter to M. Lifshits, 17 September 1966, LAL.
- (6) On the history of the journal, see G. A. Belaya, *Ocherki istorii russkoy-sovietskoy zhurnalistiki 1933-1945* (Studies on the History of Russian-Soviet Press 1933-1945) (Moscow: Nauka, 1968).
- (7) Lukács wrote in 1967: "... that part of the old leadership of RAPP which was sectarian in literary theory but politically loyal to Stalin (Fadeev, Yermilov) was given a leading role in the new association. This meant that they strove to bring the old RAPP line to bear, to create a literature that would advocate the latest Party resolutions with the tools of literature, and do so within a general attempt to reorganize literature as a whole. But now this propaganda had to be rebaptized as the great art of Socialism ... The resultant situation was of course fraught with contradictions. For instance, it advocated a commitment to ideals, but the only ideals that it recognized were the latest resolutions of the Party; it paid lip-service to artistic perfections, but in practice, it declared the most shallow naturalistic works to be masterpieces if they were loyal to the Party. In spite of all this, this controversial situation also allowed for the existence of a kind of criticism that demanded real Socialist Realism, a truly great Socialist art, and tried to conceive in theoretical terms the principles and criteria of this art, and use them in practice. That is how a team evolved within *Literaturny Kritik*, the intellectual centre of which was Lifshits, Usievich and I, and also included I. Satz, the late Grib and Aleksandrov etc." See G. Lukács, *Művészet és társadalom*, p. 12.
- (8) Lukács was delighted to read the book reviews of the outstanding Soviet short story writer, Andrei Platonov, e.g., the one entitled "Pushkin — Our Comrade" (*Literaturny Kritik* 1/1937). When the journal issued a separate volume of essays to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution, which was meant as a survey of the achievements of Soviet literature in representing the heroes of the Socialist period, Lukács chose a short story by Platonov, "The Immortal" ("Emmanuil Levin", *Literaturny Obozreniye* 19-20(1937). Two short stories ("Bessmertiyé", "Fro") by Platonov, who was under fierce attack by Soviet critics at that time, were — quite anomalously — first published in issue number 8 of *Literaturny Kritik* 1936, after they had been turned down by the literary journals of Moscow. The unusual move was explained in an editorial.

- (9) *Literaturny Kritik* 5/1935, 3/1936, 8/1936.
- (10) "Die intellektuelle Physiognomie der künstlerischen Gestalten", in: *Essays über den Realismus*, p. 183.
- (11) "Erzählen oder Beschreiben?", in: *Essays über den Realismus*, pp. 235–236.
- (12) "Die intellektuelle Physiognomie der künstlerischen Gestalten", pp. 183–184.
- (13) One of these debates was held at the Section for Art and Literature on 19 May 1935, highlighting Nusinov's Paper, "Problema vekovikh obrazov" (The Problem of Literary Figures Through the Centuries). It was published in the second volume of *Literaturnaya Entsiklopediya*. M. Lifshits preserved the records of Lukács's contributions to the debate. These reveal that, in discussing the lasting value of a literary representation, he had to fight against such doctrines as the one that claimed that the positive heroes of classical world literature were more lasting than the negative ones. Lukács asked: Did that mean that Othello's figure would survive without Iago, Faust's without Mephistopheles? (A duplicate of the minutes is deposited at LAL.)
- (14) Preface (1962) to the German edition of the work in 1963. *The Theory of the Novel* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1971), pp. 16–17. (Emphasis added.)
- (15) "A regény" (The Novel), in: *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, pp. 622–653. First published: *Literaturnaya Entsiklopedia*, vol. 9 (Moscow, 1935).
- (16) The abridged and authorized text of the minutes was published in *Literaturny Kritik* 2–3/1935. Excerpts from the debate: *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* 1–2/1975. Lukács's paper (based on the original manuscript) and his closing address: "A regényelmélet problémái" (Problems of the Theory of Novel); "A regényvita zárszava" (Closing Paper of the Debate on the Novel), in: G. Lukács, *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, pp. 653–661, 662–665.
- (17) See *Oktyabr* 7/1934, p. 198.
- (18) F. Schiller, "Voprosi postroeniya kursa po zapadnoy literature" (Questions on Creating a Course on Western Literature), *Vestnik Kommunisticheskoy Akademii* 4/1935, pp. 10–16; *Preniye*, pp. 16–35.
- (19) P.: "Diskussiya o romane", *Literaturnaya Gazeta* 30 December 1934.
- (20) "A regényelmélet problémái" (Problems of the Theory of the Novel), in: *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, p. 653.
- (21) *Ibid.*, p. 660.
- (22) "A regény", *ibid.*, p. 650.
- (23) *Literaturny Kritik* 3/1935, p. 350.
- (24) See G. Lukács, "A regényelmélet problémái" (Problems of the Theory of Novel), in his *Esztétikai írások 1930–1945*, pp. 659–660.
- (25) *The Historical Novel*, p. 423.
- (26) *Ibid.*, p. 421.
- (27) M. Lifshits, "A leninizmus és a művészetkritika" (Leninism and Art Criticism), in his *Válogatott esztétikai írások*, p. 398.
- (28) "Marx und das Problem des ideologischen Verfalls", in: *Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels als Literaturhistoriker*, pp. 117–118.
- (29) G. Dimitrov's lecture delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, in: G. Dimitrov, *Egységfront, népfrent, szocializmus* (United Front, Popular Front, Socialism) (Budapest; Kossuth, 1974), pp. 161, 167.

- (30) "Those Communists who believe that all this has nothing to do with the cause of the working class, who do nothing to explain the past of our people to the working masses in a historically correct, truly Marxist, Marxist-Leninian spirit ... voluntarily surrender all that is valuable in the nation's past to the Fascist falsifiers for hoodwinking the masses ... We are interested in all the crucial questions, not only of the present and future, but also of the past of our people. See *ibid.*, p. 161.
- (31) "Marx und das Problem des ideologischen Verfalls's, pp. 108-109.
- (32) G. Dimitrov, *Egyésgfront, népfrent, szocializmus*, p. 192.
- (33) "Felhívás a Nagy Októberi Szocialista Forradalom 22. Évfordulójára" (Appeal on the Occasion of the 22nd Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution), in: *A Kommunista Internacionálé válogatott dokumentumai*, p. 467.
- (34) *Ibid.*, p. 468.
- (35) Lukács's writings, partly unpublished during the debate, in: G. Lukács, *Esztétikai írások 1930-1945*, pp. 686-803.
- (36) Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), pp. 402-403.
- (37) G. Lukács, "Zűrzavar a realizmus diadala körül" (Confusion Surrounding the Triumph of Realism), in his *Esztétikai írások 1930-1945*, p. 692.
- (38) "Mi az új a művészetben?" (What is New in Art?), in: *ibid.*, p. 761.
- (39) *Ibid.*, pp. 780-781.
- (40) M. Lifshits, "Kriticheskiye zametki", III. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* 15 August 1936.
- (41) "Tolstoy and the Development of Realism", in: *Studies in European Realism* (London: The Merlin Press, 1972), p. 195.
- (42) "Mi a normális viszony író és kritikus között?" (What is the Normal Relationship between Writer and Critic?), G. Lukács, *A realizmus problémái* (Problems of Realism) (Budapest: Hungária, 1948), p. 364. First published: *Internationale Literatur* 9-10/1939.
- (43) "Es geht um den Realismus", in: *Essays über den Realismus*, p. 342. First published: *Das Wort* 6/1938.
- (44) "O vrednikh vzgliadakh *Literaturnovo Kritika*" (On the Harmful Views of the Review *Literary Criticism*), *Krasnaya Nov* 4/1940, p. 159.
- (45) "Zűrzavar a realizmus diadala körül", p. 690.
- (46) *Ibid.*, p. 691.
- (47) G. Lukács, *The Young Hegel* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1976), p. 400.
- (48) *Ibid.*, p. 418.
- (49) "Marx und das Problem der ideologischen Verfalls', p. 78.
- (50) *Ibid.*, p. 92.
- (51) "Es geht um den Realismus" in: *Essays über den Realismus*, p. 320.
- (52) G. Lukács, *Record of a Life*, p. 165.
- (53) "Es geht um den Realismus", pp. 340-341.

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE: THE REAL GERMANY

- (1) "Es geht um den Realismus", p. 334.
- (2) "What is implied here is not the extent of talent. Brecht is an extremely talented writer. But let us just see what he has done to Maxim Gorky's marvellous, maturely humane, and profound *Mother* ... In Brecht, Gorky's sublime and suggestive vision is reduced to an acrid dialogue at an agitation class featuring Communist tactics and theses randomly picked from *Capital*. As for characterization, Brecht has consciously yielded to the tendencies of more recent developments ... Of course, I am aware that Brecht as a private person and politician is passionately opposed to this development ..." "Wozu brauchen wir das klassische Erbe?", in: *Ernst Bloch und Georg Lukács, Dokumente zum 100sten Geburtstag*, p. 270.
- (3) *Ibid.*
- (4) *Ibid.*
- (5) *Ibid.*, p. 269.
- (6) Ernst Bloch, "Der Nazi kocht im eigenen Saft", in: *Ernst Bloch und Georg Lukács — Dokumente zum 100sten Geburtstag*, p. 275. First published: *Freies Deutschland* (Mexico), April 1942.
- (7) *Ibid.*, p. 277.
- (8) G. Lukács, "Kritik von Rechts oder von Links — Antwort an Ernst Bloch". On the debate see: M. Mesterházi, K. Urbán, "A demokrácia jövője — Bloch és Lukács vitája" (Future of Democracy — Polemic of Bloch and Lukács), *Világosság* I/1985, pp. 9–12.
- (9) *Ibid.*, p. 282.
- (10) *Ibid.*, p. 280.
- (11) Closely related to this is the reconsideration of the historical past of Germany. In 1943, the Marx–Engels Institute issued a brochure commenting on Marx's and Engel's writings on the Prussians. (*Marx und Engels über das reaktionäre Preußentum*, Moscow, 1943.) In his review, Lukács pointed out that "this publication containing extremely valuable German historical material contributes ... to a clearer understanding of the opposition between Germans and Prussians and to drawing the necessary conclusions from this recognition." See *Internationale Literatur* 7/1943, p. 3.
- (12) "Es geht um den Realismus", in: *Essays über den Realismus*, pp. 329–330.
- (13) See G. Lukács, *Borba humanizma i varvarstva*, p. 3.
- (14) G. Lukács, *Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?*, p. 22.
- (15) G. Lukács, "Der Faschismus als theoretisches und praktisches System der Barbarei", in: *Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?*, p. 148.
- (16) *Ibid.*
- (17) *Ibid.*, p. 154.
- (18) *Ibid.*, p. 158.

- (19) Let us take a closer look at parallels to the structure of Lukács's *The Destruction of Reason*. Chapter One, "On Some Characteristics of Germany's Historical Development", (1942) is identical with Chapter One of *Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?* According to the list of publications in Russian preserved at LAL, chapters four (1944) and seven (1943) were written for *Uchoniye Zapiski Instituta Filosofii Akademii Nauk* (The Journal of the Philosophical Institute of the Academy of Sciences). Chapter seven, whose German version can be found at LAL, was published in abridged form in *Internationale Literatur* 1/1943 ("Der Rassenwahn als Feind des menschlichen Fortschritts"). In 1945, Lukács held some lectures for German POW's. This version has also come down to us ("Die Rassen-theorie — der Feind der Menschheit." *Nachlaß* of Wilhelm Pieck, Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim ZK des SED. Zentrales Partei-Archiv, NL 36/535). Chapter six of the book was also preserved in a revised version for a lecture, among the Pieck papers ("Die deutsche Soziologie der imperialistischen Periode", NL 36/525).
- (20) See G. Lukács, *Borba gumanizma i varvarstva*, p. 21.
- (21) *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- (22) *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- (23) G. Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, p. 304.
- (24) "Liberalizmus és demokrácia harca a német antifasiszták történelmi regényeinek tükrében" (Conflict of Liberalism and Democracy as Reflected in the Historical Novels of German Anti-Fascists), in: G. Lukács, *Eszttikai írások 1930-1945*, p. 452. First published: *Internationale Literatur* 5/1938.
- (25) See Ferenc Fehér, "Lukács in Weimar", *Telos* 39/1979, p. 118.
- (26) "Gottfried Keller", in: *Deutsche Literatur in zwei Jahrhunderten* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1964), p. 334.
- (27) *Ibid.*, p. 372.
- (28) *Ibid.*, p. 355.
- (29) Ferenc Fehér, "Lukács in Weimar", p. 118.
- (30) "Gottfried Keller", p. 353.
- (31) "Az igazi Németország" (The Real Germany), in: *Eszttikai írások 1930-1945*, p. 525. The manuscript, possibly dating from 1943, is preserved at the National Literary Archives of the Soviet Union, Moscow.
- (32) *Ibid.*, p. 522.
- (33) G. Lukács, "Der Faschismus als theoretisches und praktisches System der Barbarei", in: *Wie ist Deutschland zum Zentrum der reaktionären Ideologie geworden?* pp. 144 ff.
- (34) See G. Lukács, "Die neue Verfassung der UdSSR und das Problem der Persönlichkeit", *Internationale Literatur* 9/1936. Idem, "Persönlichkeitsentwicklung und Sozialismus", Manuscript, LAL.
- (35) *The Historical Novel*, p. 417.
- (36) "Hölderlin's Hyperion", in: *Goethe and His Age* (London: Merlin Press, 1968), p. 138.

YES AND NO

- (1) G. Lukács, *Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1963), I: 14.
- (2) G. Lukács, "Autobibliographie", *International Literatur* 6/1938, p. 155.
- (3) See copy of Protocol, No. 17, 28 August 1943. Deposited at LAL.
- (4) "I am in the position to have some rest in the course of pleasant and calm work. I am going to start translating *The Young Hegel*. In the meantime, Yurochka, with the help of Gertrud, is writing several excellent works for the translator, first of all, a biography of Goethe, the manuscript of which has been found." Letter of I. Sats to G. Lukács, 28 July 1942. See *Kritika* 5/1980, p. 17.
- (5) G. Lukács, *Utam Marxhoz*, II: 304.
- (6) *Ibid.*, I: 26.
- (7) *History and Class Consciousness*, p. xxxv.
- (8) M. Lifshits, "Hegel esztétikája és a dialektikus materializmus" (Hegel's Aesthetics and Dialectical Materialism), in his *Válogatott esztétikai írások*, p. 124.
- (9) *Ibid.*, p. 127.
- (10) *Ibid.*
- (11) M. Lifshits, interview with L. Sziklai, LAL.
- (12) *Ibid.*
- (13) *The Young Hegel*, p. 513.
- (14) *Ibid.*, p. 399.
- (15) "Faust Studies", in: *Goethe and his Age*, p. 193.
- (16) *The Young Hegel*, p. 150.
- (17) *The Historical Novel*, p. 113.
- (18) See "Tribune or Bureaucrat", in: *Essays on Realism*, p. 235. First published: *Internationale Literatur* 3/1940.
- (19) "A dialektikus és történelmi materializmusról" (On Dialectical and Historical Materialism), in: J. V. Stalin, *A leninizmus kérdései* (Questions of Leninism), p. 653.
- (20) *Ibid.*, p. 659. (Emphasis added.)
- (21) "Tribune or Bureaucrat", p. 235.
- (22) J. V. Stalin, *A leninizmus kérdései*, p. 567.
- (23) "Tribune or Bureaucrat", p. 228.
- (24) *Ibid.*, p. 236.
- (25) *The Young Hegel*, pp. 104-105.
- (26) *Ibid.*, pp. 408, 417.
- (27) "Faust Studies", in: *Goethe and his Age*, p. 181.
- (28) *Ibid.*, p. 97.
- (29) "Karl Marx und F. T. Vischer", *Probleme der Ästhetik*, pp. 471-472.
- (30) *The Young Hegel*, p. 311.
- (31) *Ibid.*, p. 502.
- (32) *Ibid.*, p. 539.
- (33) *Ibid.*, p. 541.
- (34) *Ibid.*, p. 560.
- (35) *Ibid.*, p. 566.

- (36) G. Lukács, *Utam Marxhoz*, II: 304-305.
(37) G. Lukács, "Die Widersprüche des Fortschritts und die Literatur", in: *Moskauer Schriften*, pp. 82-83.
(38) See G. Lukács, *The Young Hegel*, p. 401.
(39) Ibid., p. 513.
(40) Ibid., p. 419.
(41) Ibid., p. 547.
(42) Ibid., pp. 551-552.



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The monograph gives an overall account of Georg Lukács's work in the Soviet Union from the early thirties to the mid-forties. Unlike the activity of the "young" or late Lukács, this part of the philosopher's career has had relatively less emphasis in scientific research. The author, leaning on facts as well as the results of recent research, furthermore breaking with the legendary of the era, and a contradictory assessment of Lukács in the thirties and forties, focusses on the scientific achievements of the philosopher.



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