

Marxist Paradigm and Academic Freedom*

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THE Russian October Revolution dealt a devastating blow to Marxism from which Marxist sociology did not begin to recover until recently. Stalin's "contributions" to Marxist theory and practice had a particularly adverse effect on the fate of Marxism in the West. Whatever hopes were generated by the de-Stalinization campaign in the Soviet Union proved short-lived. By the time Soviet tanks entered Prague and Soviet authorities resumed show trials, few intellectuals in the capitalist West could speak of Soviet Marxism without acute resentment or at least tacit embarrassment.

In Mills's words, "... marxism-leninism has become an official rhetoric with which the authority of a one-party state has been defended, its expedient brutalities obscured, its achievements proclaimed."¹ Any attempt to revive the Marxist creed under these circumstances must have entailed a denunciation of what has come to pass for Marxism in the Soviet Union. Not surprisingly, the Marxist renaissance in the West was marked by the virtually unanimous rejection of Soviet Marxism.

The neo-Marxist movement in the West is no monolith. It is supported by social scientists of various denominations who may refer to themselves as radical, humanist, or critical sociologists. What draws them together is: (1) a Marxist-activist image of sociology as a practical enterprise and an explicit commitment to rational remodeling of society and human

¹ C. W. Mills, *The Marxists* (New York: Dell, 1962), p. 22.

emancipation; (2) readiness to move beyond Marx and to dispense with those of his propositions that failed the historical test; and (3) a critical attitude toward "official Marxism" as practiced by Soviet-style communists.

Only a decade ago, the prospects for the academic legitimization of Marxism seemed negligible to its proponents. Among others, Ehrlich, Colfax, Horton, and Nicolaus cited various political and organizational obstacles hampering the conversion of Marxism into an academic endeavor.² Despite the gloomy forecasts, Marxist sociology did not go underground. In the 'seventies, the academic legitimization of Marxism in the United States proceeded at an accelerated pace: Marxist sociology departments appeared in the universities; radical and humanist sociologists consolidated their efforts organizationally; a Marxist section was established under the auspices of the ASA; dissertations fostering Marxist tradition were successfully defended; some thirty journals devoted to the Marxist cause were available to scholars in the United States by the end of the 1970s.

Prejudices against Marxist scholars still run high in the United States. Some incidents where Marxists are reported to be treated unfairly are genuine cases of discrimination. However, the very nature of complaints about hiring practices, promotional hazards, tenure and salary considerations sounded by Marxist scholars suggest that they move in the mainstream of academic life. Many of these complaints can be heard from scholars working in other, newly established, nonmainstream sociological traditions. Reviewing the recent progress of neo-Marxist sociology in the United States, Flacks and Turkel reported "the growing acceptance of Marxism within the discipline and as a feature of graduate training" and expressed a cautious optimism that this trend is becoming irreversible.³

² In J. D. Colfax and J. L. Roach, eds., *Radical Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, 1971).

³ R. Flacks and G. Turkel, "Radical Sociology: The Emergence of Neo-Marxian Perspectives in U.S. Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 4 (1978): 193-238, at p. 234.

It is hard to avoid a sense of irony as one follows the progress of Marxist sociology in the West. Despite the Marxists' claim to the contrary, academic bourgeois sociology managed to accommodate Marxism within its confines. Marxist sociologists can now enjoy the fruits of academic freedom. They occupy better positions and have greater resources in their fight with academic bourgeois sociology than ever before. Are they ready to go on until their paradigm is recognized as the only humane and rational way of doing sociology?

Most sociologists would discard such a possibility. Skeptics may even argue that the Marxist revival is actually a degeneration of Marxism or the newest trick designed by the old foes to emasculate Marxism under the guise of its academic legitimation. The last argument, favored by Soviet Marxists, has a strong functionalist flavor. Whatever truth one is ready to accord to this interpretation, it cannot answer many important questions posed by the ascent of academic Marxism in the West.

Flacks and Turkel, in their comprehensive review of neo-Marxist sociology in the United States, repeatedly use the expressions "a definite Marxist paradigm," "the neo-Marxist paradigm," "the original Marxist paradigm."⁴ The authors do not make a direct reference to Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. But the parallel between their usage and Kuhn's theory of scientific paradigms is not accidental. One wonders how far Flacks and Turkel are ready to go in their (re)vision of Marxist sociology as a set of exemplary studies and unquestioned presuppositions which provide a paradigm for normal science that keeps functioning "as long as the paradigm itself is taken for granted."⁵ Should we interpret the above statements to the effect that the present-day Marxists accept paradigm pluralism as a sound policy for sociological research

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 145.

and thereby acknowledge a scientific value for non-Marxist sociologies?

The question is not only rhetoric. For Marx apparently saw his theory as the one and only paradigm for doing authentic social science, incompatible with bourgeois sociology. The question is also far from academic. For in the countries where Marxism emerged as a dominant sociological paradigm, non-Marxist sociologies and sociologists all but disappeared.

Here we come to the central issue of this paper. The question with which this paper is concerned is: "Is the Marxist paradigm compatible with academic freedom?"

I propose the following plan for the discussion. First, I will review the state of academic freedom in one communist state—the Soviet Union. Then I will try to show how practical experience gained by communist countries feeds back to the Marxist paradigm. Next, I will attempt to show that Soviet experience has some relevance to academic Marxism in the West. And finally, I will share some thoughts about the controversy over value-partisanship and value-neutrality as strategies for sociological research.

I have some first-hand experience of doing sociology in the Soviet Union.⁶ Yet my knowledge as an "eyewitness" is inevitably of limited value and should be treated critically. I did not poll Soviet sociologists' opinion about the state of academic freedom in the Soviet Union. My account need not be shared either by my Soviet or by my Western colleagues. I hope, however, that this analysis will help to stimulate a much-needed discussion involving each side. To the extent that this objective is met, I would consider this endeavor useful.

The Ethos of Ideology

Academic freedom is commonly understood in the West as "the freedom of the teacher or research worker in higher

⁶ I received my doctoral (Kandidat Nauk) degree from the USSR Academy of Science Institute of Sociological Research and worked in this Institute on several research projects until I emigrated to the United States in 1976.

institutions of learning to investigate and discuss the problems of his science and to express his conclusions . . . without interference from political and ecclesiastical authority . . .”⁷ Marxists view this definition as ideological camouflage. In capitalist society, they argue, the scholar is bound to serve class interests. He is paid by academic institutions as long as he helps to fortify the institutions of capitalist society. In Horton’s graphic words, the scholar “is hired to do the political job of apology; therein lie the limits to his academic freedom . . .”⁸

This is a negative image of academic freedom. The question is whether this notion has any positive meaning for a Marxist scholar, or if the term is meaningful for him only as a description of an ideological distortion of reality under capitalism. Put differently, does it make sense to speak of academic freedom in communist society?

Soviet Marxists apparently give a negative answer to this question. The very category of academic freedom is absent from the official Soviet vocabulary. The recently published edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* does not have an entry under this heading. Neither does the previous edition, published in 1949. The first and the last time academic freedom was spelled out by an authoritative Soviet source was in 1927, when the first edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* informed its reader that the term signifies “freedom of learning and teaching (autonomy) guaranteed by the statutes of the Higher Learning Institutions” and refers specifically to “the privileges which were granted to the universities in the West.”⁹ Given the absence of a direct reference to academic freedom in the Soviet Union and the failure to specify its meaning in the later publications, one can assume that the category is a misnomer, insofar as the Soviet Union is concerned. Much of what we know about Marxist social science supports this impression.

⁷ A. O. Lovejoy, “Academic Freedom,” in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan, 1930), 1:384–388, at p. 384.

⁸ J. Horton, “The Fetishism of Sociology,” in Colfax and Roach, *Radical Sociology*, p. 182.

⁹ *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (Moskva: Izdatelstvo Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, 1972), p. 769.

The social scientist is seen in Soviet society as a partisan scholar who willingly binds himself to the working class and caters to its interests as stipulated by the Communist Party. Technically, he is free to pursue his scholarly interests, to discuss and criticize the established ideas. Even Stalin encouraged creativity and independence in scientific work. The famous Short Course of the Soviet Communist Party, written under Stalin's personal supervision, insisted that "Marxist-Leninist theory cannot be seen as a sum total of dogmas, as a catechism, as a creed, and Marxists themselves as pedants and dogmatists As a science, it cannot stand and does not stand in one place—it is constantly developed and perfected."¹⁰ The principle of "criticism and self-criticism" was advocated in Stalin's time as a guarantee for the freedom of scientific work. In practice, it was instrumental in suppressing any vestiges of academic freedom in the country. Venturing beyond the formulas offered by the official organ of Soviet Marxism, the journal *Problems of Philosophy*, entailed a grave personal risk.

Cautious and defensive as it is, the testimony of the official Soviet press shed some light on the state of academic freedom under Stalin's rule:

During the VASKhNIL (1948) Meeting, throughout the discussion of the problems of linguistics (1950), at the Pavlov Congress (1950) some correct judgements were often dismissed "off hand," certain mistakes magnified and overemphasized. Many scientists were denied the possibility to report and to argue their views and conclusions. . . . In this situation the temptation often built up to resort to the authority of one's official position as a final argument. . . . In the atmosphere of distrust and prejudice, labels were sometimes attached to scholars who were "excommunicated" from Marxism, whereas unprincipled disavowal of one's views and conspicuous "repentance" were sometimes presented as a positive example of self-criticism and of ideological maturity.¹¹

¹⁰ *Istoriia VKPB. Kratkii Kurs* (Moskva: Gospolitizdat, 1954), p. 339.

¹¹ "Razvivat Leninskii Stil v Filosofshikh Issledovaniakh," *Voprosy Filosofii* 4 (1965): 3–8, at p. 6.

I set aside the generally non-Marxist explanation proffered by this editorial that links the plight of a social institution—Soviet science—to the lack of morals among scientists and to Stalin's personality response traits. I wish to bring attention to the heavy burden of daily face-work that the Soviet scholar must have endured in his professional activities. The editorial only alludes to this phenomenon. Its destructive potential and pervasiveness, its role as an indicator of academic freedom in the country, deserve much closer attention.

To retain his position in academia, a Soviet scholar had to do an enormous amount of face-work. He had to project an image of a person totally committed to the Marxist cause. Moreover, he had to be ready to denounce his past selves and to disavow his stated views as immature, mistaken, non-Marxist, and, in an extreme case, as anti-Marxist. The speed and skillfulness with which he could perform his role were important ingredients in the scholar's academic career, if not in his physical well-being.

If this picture of science as a social institution is reminiscent of what Goffman called "total institutions,"¹² it is because Soviet science in Stalin's time (and Soviet society as a whole) approximated a total institution. Few scientists could withstand the pressure when the authority of a scientific community was mobilized against their "mistaken" views. The scholar was forced to make an uneasy choice between the roles of hypocrite and true believer or face moral and physical harassments.

Looking back, we can find no traces of academic freedom in the partisan Soviet science of those years, except in the narrow sense in which Horton defined the term as freedom "to do the political job of apology."

The situation changed after Stalin's death. The de-Stalinization campaign was launched in 1956. It brought new hopes to many Marxists. The notion of academic freedom was not rehabilitated, unlike other concepts such as "sociol-

¹² E. Goffman, *Asylums* (New York: Anchor, 1961).

ogy," "quantification," or "verification." But the new spirit in academia was unmistakable. The break with the past was underscored in the numerous publications that condemned past abuses and proclaimed that "... the Party first of all opposes every effort to impose any one standpoint as the only correct one and denounces rule by decree and incompetent interference in theoretical debates."¹³

The policy statements issued in post-Stalin Russia suggested a definite shift toward "the ethos of science."¹⁴ The norm of "communism" was underscored by the recognition that "the Marxist partisan approach to the contest of ideas in science entails ... *dialogue* without which serious contacts are inconceivable"¹⁵ and was endorsed by the call to strengthen ties with foreign scientists, to expand "personal contacts and correspondence" which "make for an atmosphere of trust and friendship between scientists."¹⁶ "Universalism" was fortified by the rejection of "the rule by decree."¹⁷ Criticism of "incompetent interference in theoretical debates"¹⁸ and denunciation of the "monopoly" established by certain schools in Soviet science¹⁹ reinforced the norm of "disinterestedness" and "organized skepticism."

Perhaps even more indicative of the improved climate for scientific work were the enhanced quality and the critical overtone of sociological research. During the 'sixties, Soviet sociologists conducted numerous studies that shed new light

¹³ "Za Razvitie i Ukreplenie Sviazei Mezhdru Filosofami Raznykh Stran," *Voprosy Filosofii* 2 (1958): 3-8, at p. 8.

¹⁴ R. K. Merton, "Science and the Social Order," in N. W. Storer, ed., *The Sociology of Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), pp. 254-266.

¹⁵ A. M. Rumiantsev, "Gumanisticheskaia Ideologiya i Sotsialnye Nauki," *Voprosy Filosofii* 11 (1968): 3-13, at p. 12.

¹⁶ "Za Razvitie i Ukreplenie Sviazei Mezhdru Filosofami Raznykh Stran," p. 8.

¹⁷ "Razvivat. Leninskii Stil v Filosofskikh Issledovaniakh," p. 6.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ N. P. Dubinin, "I. V. Michurin i Sovremennaya Genetika," *Voprosy Filosofii* 6 (1966): 59-70; V. P. Efroimson and N. M. Iuditskaia, "Nauchnaia Kompetentnost—Nepremennoe Uslovie Filosofskogo Issledovaniia," *Voprosy Filosofii* 2 (1966): 62-165; A. F. Shishkin, "Ob Etike Uchenogo," *Voprosy Filosofii* 2 (1966): 14-25.

on the social structure, mobility, consumption patterns, and public opinion in the country.²⁰

Soviet researchers generally avoided sweeping conclusions and generalizations that could compromise the validity of Marx's theory. But the critical thrust of their findings could not be concealed. It would be unthinkable in the previous years, for example, to confront a Soviet audience with sociological data indicating that "various social groups in our society are not yet equal in their education, in their material status and have unequal opportunity for obtaining a middle-level education, for consuming cultural goods, for organizing their daily life."²¹ It must have come as a revelation to many Soviet readers that the intelligentsia in Soviet society may be self-perpetuating as a class, that the workers in a socialist state may be alienated, or that various segments of the Soviet population may be critical of existing institutions.

The new developments in Soviet sociology posed an interesting problem for the sociology of science. Empirical findings gathered by Soviet sociologists during the 'sixties indicated that there are anomalies in Soviet society that did not accord well with certain propositions and predictions derived from Marx's theory. As these anomalies gradually accumulated, Soviet Marxists were confronted with the dilemma: either to modify the Marxist paradigm so that it could explain anomalous events or to look for a better conceptual framework.

²⁰ Some of these studies are reviewed in S. M. Lipset, "Commentary: Social Stratification Research and Soviet Scholarship," in M. Yanovich and W. A. Fisher, eds., *Social Stratification and Mobility in the USSR* (White Plains, N.Y.: International Arts and Science Press, 1973), pp. 355-391; R. B. Dobson, "Mobility and Stratification in the Soviet Union," *Annual Review of Sociology* 3 (1977): 297-330; D. N. Shalin, "The Development of Soviet Sociology, 1956-1976," *Annual Review of Sociology* 4 (1978): 171-191; D. N. Shalin, "Between the Ethos of Science and the Ethos of Ideology," *Sociological Focus* 12 (1979): 275-293; I. Zemtsov, *IKSI: The Moscow Institute of Applied Research. A Note on the Development of Sociology in the USSR*, Soviet Institutions Series No. 6 (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1976).

²¹ B. Rubin and Iu. Kolesnikov, *Student Glazami Sotsiologa* (Rostov: Izdatelstvo Rostovskogo Universiteta, 1968), p. 33.

The situation would not pose an insurmountable problem for an academic bourgeois sociologist, particularly in the age of paradigms. The manifest function of academic freedom is to insure that the scientist can follow either path. Not so in the case of a Marxist sociologist. He renounces the institution of academic freedom because he believes that its latent function is to insure that any paradigm shift would not jeopardize the existing order. He also refuses, as a matter of principle, to separate his role as a scientist (that forces him to be a revisionist) from his role as an ideologist (that urges him to fight revisionism). As a result, he is left with no choice but to stretch out his paradigm to the utmost limit and to suppress the findings that do not fit his grand theory. The dramatic events that have shaken Soviet sociology in this decade can be seen as an unanticipated consequence of the Marxist radical attempt to merge the ethos of science and the ethos of ideology.

I will not recount the course of the campaign for the promotion of the class-bound, partisan approach in Soviet sociology.²² The point I want to make here is that the Marxist picture of academic freedom as "but an ephemera fostered by the elites which run their institutions"²³ and academic bourgeois sociology as "the enterprise commonly known as the oldest profession"²⁴ very aptly describes the current situation in Soviet sociology. The remarkable difference between Soviet and Western sociologists is that the former make no bones of their serving a partisan cause, the state Party. They readily admit that "sociology in the USSR is an active weapon in the

²² The details of this campaign can be found in D. N. Shalin, "On Current Trends in Soviet Sociology," *La Critica Sociologica* 38 (1976): 173-184; Shalin, "The Development of Soviet Sociology, 1956-1976"; Shalin, "Between the Ethos of Science and the Ethos of Ideology"; A. Simirenko, "Soviet and American Sociology in the Seventies," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 6 (Spring/Summer 1973): 25-50; Zemtsov, *IDSJ: The Moscow Institute of Applied Research*.

²³ J. D. Colfax and J. L. Roach, "Introduction" in Colfax and Roach, *Radical Sociology*, pp. 3-21, at p. 7.

²⁴ M. Nicolaus, "Why Sociologists?," in Colfax and Roach, *Radical Sociology*, pp. 45-59, at p. 46.

hands of the Communist Party."²⁵ "Marxist sociology clearly and unambiguously, without any hesitation, takes the side of the working class, of its Party. . . . It does not hide this fact. It is proud of it. . . ."²⁶ A proponent of this position is not likely to be embarrassed by the following disclosure: "The Central Committee of the CPSU put the task [before Soviet sociologists] to develop 'historical materialism as the general sociological theory.'"²⁷

Having taken this stand, Soviet Marxists are facing a delicate question: How to handle those sociologists whose views are at variance with the established paradigm? The answer to this question was made clear during the ideological purges that Soviet sociologists underwent in this decade. Unorthodox scholars were condemned by the Party for "drifting away from the positions of class analysis"²⁸—read: for deviating from the Marxist paradigm. Some of the earlier published books, containing unconventional ideas, were destroyed.²⁹ Historical materialism was declared *the* general sociological theory binding to every Soviet sociologist. Soviet Marxists were called upon to "maintain the purity of Marxism-Leninism, of the class-bound, partisan approach in the social sciences."³⁰ And Marxism was once again ossified into a "truth that must be believed and enacted against all the evidence to the contrary."³¹

²⁵ G. V. Osipov, *Teoriia i Praktika Sotsiologicheskikh Issledovaniï v SSSR* (Moskva: Nauka, 1979), p. 261.

²⁶ G. P. Davidiuk, *Vvedenie v Prikladnuu Sotsiologiu* (Minsk: Vysshiaia Shkola, 1975), p. 27.

²⁷ Osipov, *Teoriia i Praktika*, p. 172. The inside quotation is from *KPSS v Rezoliutsiiakh i Resheniiaakh Sezdov, Konferentsii i Plenumov*, tom 9 (Moskva: Gospolitizdat, 1972), p. 348. To appreciate the absurdity of this statement, the Western reader is advised to replace "The Central Committee of the CPSU" by "the State Department" in the above quotation, and "historical materialism" by "structural functionalism."

²⁸ G. E. Glezerman, "Istoricheskii Materializm i Problemy Sotsialnykh Issledovaniï," *Kommunist* 4 (1979): 76–87, at p. 84.

²⁹ B. Rabbot, "A Letter to Brezhnev," *The New York Times Magazine*, Nov. 6, 1977; Shalin, "The Development of Soviet Sociology, 1956–1976."

³⁰ S. T. Trapeznikov, "Marksistko-Leninskaia Filosofskaia Nauka i Sovremennost'," *Voprosy Filosofii* 8 (1973): 16–30, at p. 28.

³¹ H. Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 89.

It is arguable how far the new trends in Soviet sociology might have led had they not been blocked by the Party. But one thing is painfully clear: most of the gains in the domain of academic freedom made by Soviet social scientists were lost in the 'seventies. The shift back from the ethos of science to what I have called "the ethos of ideology"³² is omnipresent. The times are gone when the editorials were renouncing as "unacceptable the replacement of substantive arguments in polemics by political and ideological arguments."³³ Instead, we hear the familiar precept that "partisanship in Marxist-Leninist philosophy coincides with the search for scientific truth"³⁴ and an open call to revive the principle of "criticism and self-criticism."³⁵

Those sociologists who still insist that the spirit of partisanship and bourgeois academic freedom are two names standing for one thing should examine more closely the experience of their colleagues in communist societies.³⁶

Marxist Academics in the West

So much for academic freedom in a Marxist state—the Soviet Union. But is it a Marxist state, one can ask. Does Soviet experience have any value for the testing and developing of Marx's theory? These questions must particularly interest neo-Marxists in the West. For the credibility of Marxism with a

³² The ethos of ideology is an ideal-typical construct that is designed to complement Merton's concept of the ethos of science. I consider both concepts as comprising an ideal continuum for describing practical scientific enterprise. The concept of the ethos of ideology contrasts to the norms of universalism, disinterestedness, communism, and organized skepticism the values of imperialism, partisanship, privatism, and organized ostracism. For details, see Shalin, "Between the Ethos of Science and the Ethos of Ideology."

³³ "Razvivat' Leninskii Stil v Filosofshikh Issledovaniakh," p. 6.

³⁴ "S Pozitsii Partiinosti," *Voprosy Filosofii* 1 (1974): 47–56, at p. 47.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

³⁶ The confrontation between Marxist ideology and Marxist sociology in Poland is documented by Z. Walaszek, "Recent Developments in Polish Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 3 (1977): 331–362, and in Yugoslavia by S. Deutsch, "Sociological Currents in Contemporary Yugoslavia," *The American Sociologist* 12 (1977): 141–147.

human face largely depends on "whether Stalinism follows from Marxism itself or whether it was simply a contingent aberration peculiar to Russian culture."³⁷ The problem assumes a new dimension with the rise of academic Marxism. Having raised the claim that Marxism is a scientific paradigm, Marxists may be expected to specify what they are prepared to count as evidence against their conceptual framework.

Marx and Engels did not hesitate to make empirical statements about the course of historical events. Drawing on their theory, they made several theoretical predictions as to where and when the proletarian revolution was to begin. Their forecasts failed to materialize. And when it became clear that the proletariat in developed capitalist countries would not behave in accordance with theoretical expectations, Marx and Engels turned their attention to the revolutionary process in the East.

In October 1917, the Revolution struck czarist Russia. The Bolshevik faction of Russian Marxists took power and declared Russia the first socialist state. From the standpoint of Marxism as a political ideology, that was a significant achievement. From the standpoint of Marxism as a scientific paradigm, that was a disaster. The odds against recognizing the Soviet state as a Marxist society were overwhelming: the proletarian revolution took place in a country where the proletariat made up less than 3 percent of the population; the revolution occurred in a predominantly peasant country that was economically and culturally one of the most backward in the capitalist world system; the revolution happened in one country in spite of Marx's warning, issued specifically in response to the question posed to him by Russian revolutionaries, that this was theoretically inconceivable; the revolution was disavowed by major Marxist theoreticians in the West.

Bolsheviks brushed aside all these questions as irrelevant. They charged Western Marxists with theoretical timidity,

³⁷ A. W. Gouldner, "Stalinism: A Study of Internal Colonialism" *Telos* 5 (1978): 5-48, at p. 7.

dogmatism, and revisionism, and at the same time they praised their own reading of Marx as a model for a creative development of scientific theory in the face of unique historical circumstances. They staunchly insisted and are still convinced that theirs is the only authentic Marxist science. I suspect that theirs is neither Marxist nor science.

I challenge Soviet theoreticians to explain why, in their allegedly Marxist state, they consistently refuse to publish some of Marx's works, most notably the collection of Marx's essays *Secret Diplomatic History of the Eighteenth Century*. Understandably, it would be awkward to publish the following query that Marx raised about the Russian state: "How did this power, or this phantom of a power, contrive to assume such dimensions as to rouse on the one side the passionate assertion, and on the other the angry denial of its threatening the world with a rehearsal of Universal Monarchy?"³⁸ In the era of détente and SALT, such a testimony is clearly subversive (one could easily get jailed for it in present-day Russia). But if Soviet Marxists find Marx's extensive analysis of Russia and of its political future unduly polemic and unscientific, they must have the courage to state this openly and let every Soviet Marxist judge the matter for himself. As long as they decline to do this, their Marxism is truncated, at best.

Unlike some works written by Marx, Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* has been published in Russian. Soviet experts' attitude toward Kuhn's theory of scientific paradigm is mixed. But the very fact of the translation suggests that they are ready to grant it some relevance. If so, they must have noticed the following thesis, central to Kuhn's argument: "The very existence of science depends upon vesting the power to choose between paradigms in members of a special kind of community."³⁹ Kuhn clearly means here "scientific community." Soviet authorities understood the message correctly, in-

³⁸ K. Marx, *Secret Diplomatic History of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1899), pp. 74-75.

³⁹ Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, p. 167.

sofar as the natural sciences are concerned. The ideological authorities no longer dare to issue instructions to biologists on how to respond to corpuscular genetics. Yet that is exactly what is happening in the Soviet social sciences, where the Central Committee of the CPSU instructs Soviet sociologists what they should adopt as a general sociological theory. If every social scientist is judged to be an ideologist, every ideologist is entitled to make judgments about scientific matters. As long as the division of labor between Marxist sociology and Marxist ideology is not institutionalized, the Soviet sociologist will remain "a scientific ideologist," a craftsman whose trade is to expertly manufacture false consciousness.

The failure of East European countries to live up to Marx's expectations does not discourage Marxists in the West. They persuasively argue that the mistakes committed in communist societies need not be attributed exclusively to Marx's theory. Granted this, Western Marxists still have to face up to the spectacular fiasco of Marx's predictions about Western capitalism.

Neo-Marxist sociologists readily admit that some of the Marxist propositions can now be certified as wrong. Says Mills: "Marx is often wrong. . . . After all, obsolescence is part of history; as such it is part of Marxism."⁴⁰ Flacks and Turkel mention several major points where Marx's theory requires a thorough revision.⁴¹ Among them are the deterministic vision of the relationship between material being, class consciousness, and class action; the simplistic account of the state as a ruling class's executive committee; the idealized perception of the working class; the underestimation of the role played by intellectuals in the revolutionary movement. In the face of these revisions, one is tempted to ask how many cornerstones must be taken from the foundation of Marxism before the whole building is to collapse?

To quote again Flacks and Turkel, "departures from Marx's

⁴⁰ Mills, *The Marxists*, p. 37.

⁴¹ Flacks and Turkel, "Radical Sociology."

expectations are to be viewed not simply as refutations of a theory but as occasions for deepening understanding of the dynamics of contemporary society."⁴² This statement would probably do more than raise the brow of a Popperian falsificationist. For it sounds like an invitation to multiply auxiliary hypotheses. A sophisticated falsificationism, such as advocated by Lakatos,⁴³ may be more tolerant to theoretical adjustments. But it would demand an unambiguous answer to the question of whether a given paradigm shift is progressive or degenerative.⁴⁴

The logic of Kuhn's and, even more to the point, of Feyerabend's argument may come to the rescue of the Marxist paradigm. Following this logic, Marxists could argue that whether or not a paradigm shift is degenerative or progressive can be determined only retrospectively; that a judgment of this matter is itself paradigm-bound; and that none of the currently operating sociological paradigms could claim serious *in vivo* predictive power.

It is not my objective here to evaluate the validity of the Marxist paradigm or to discuss the merits of competing philosophies of science. My point is that Marxist academics in the West find themselves progressively involved in the language game played by their bourgeois colleagues. They demand the same privileges for themselves, compete for the same scarce resources, and expect their works to be judged by the same standards of excellence as do members of other scientific paradigms. Given all the revisions already accepted by neo-Marxists, is it too much to expect that they take one more step, acknowledging that academic freedom is more

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 209.

⁴³ I. Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," in I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 91-196.

⁴⁴ This question is very much to the point in the case of Soviet Marxism. The "vestiges of the past" theory aimed to explain the failures of a socialist society and the thesis of "insufficient utilization of the advantages of the socialist system" are paradigmatic cases of a degenerative paradigm shift.

than an ideological fiction and that academic bourgeois sociology does more than a job of political apology?

To some Marxists this question must appear unduly rhetorical. It does not do justice to a great diversity among neo-Marxists in the West. Indeed, Mills and Birnbaum, Althusser and Gouldner, Colfax and Bottomore are all associated with Marxist tradition, but things that draw them apart are more salient than those drawing them together. While some neo-Marxists denounce academic freedom as a trick, others take it for granted. Yet that is exactly what one should not do. One cannot take for granted one's freedom to conduct social inquiry without accepting the obligation to protect the opponent's right to pursue his research and acknowledging scientific value for alternative ways of doing sociology.

The idea of a dialogue between Marxist and non-Marxist scholars is still anathema to orthodox Marxism. But the recent advances of Marxism in the West suggest that academic and Marxist sociologies can peacefully co-exist. To the extent that neo-Marxists are willing to fortify the established trend, Marxism becomes one of the paradigms in the contemporary sociological community. In my view, the academization of Marxism does not mean, as Gouldner's thesis about academic legitimation of sociology implies,⁴⁵ that Marxists are surrendering their right to criticize and remodel the existing institutions. What it implies is that Marxists accede to working beside and, whenever possible, together with non-Marxist humanists and critics of the present order without giving up their special commitment to human emancipation or denying their opponents the right to argue their cause.

To be sure, this is a difficult step. To take it means to dispense with the monopoly on critical and humanist insight into the institutions of the establishment claimed by Marxist scholars. The most unsettling thing for a Marxist in this option is that it threatens to erode his identity. Like most of us, he

⁴⁵ A. W. Gouldner, *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, 1970).

longs for a clear-cut identity, for a distinct cause that would set up a sharp boundary between "them" and "us." And as most humans, he can experience anxiety when he finds the boundary blurred. But if he takes into account that social boundaries are man-made and man-sustained abstractions, that no boundaries can hedge off social particulars of one denomination from those in the next taxon, the Marxist scholar may find it easier to face up to the erosion of his theoretical identity. After all, identity crisis is germane to living beings as long as they keep growing, and, if anything, it signifies maturity.

I am fully aware that the peaceful co-existence of Marxist and bourgeois sociologies can be viewed in a quite different perspective. An alternative scenario would picture academization of Marxism as a means to augment the resources in the Marxist struggle with bourgeois sociology and capitalist society. This tactic was advocated by Lenin and is popular among modern communists. They do not miss the opportunity to publicize their views through *The New York Times*, to lecture an American public about the state of human rights in the Soviet Union, or to invoke the Freedom of Information Act in order to receive needed information from the State Department. All this does not oblige them to reciprocate or to stop denouncing the lack of freedom in the West.

I do not know how many neo-Marxists favor this scenario. Some of them are definitely moving in this direction. When I read about Marxist scholars "jamming" their bourgeois counterparts in the conference hall and subjecting them to public ostracism,⁴⁶ I am vividly reminded of the militant scientific partisanship in the Soviet Union. When I hear about a Marxist sociology department that bars non-Marxist sociologists from its rank, I cannot help remembering my Soviet colleagues

⁴⁶ W. A. Gamson, "Sociology's Children of Affluence," in Colfax and Roach, *Radical Sociology*, pp. 450-459; P. M. Hauser, "On Actionism in the Craft of Sociology," *ibid.*, pp. 425-439; R. H. Robins, "Up Against the Statler-Hilton Wall: Politics in the Scholarly Associations," *ibid.*, pp. 440-449.

censured for adopting improper views. No, I am not trying to establish "guilt by association." The point I am trying to make is this: critics of academic sociology and of bourgeois society can pursue their criticism and thereby contribute to human emancipation as long as they are protected by, and are able to protect, the bourgeois institution of academic freedom. This is one of the most important lessons that Western Marxists can learn from the experience of their East European colleagues.

Value-Neutrality and Value-Partisanship

Weber once noticed that the honesty of a contemporary scholar can be judged by his attitude toward Marx. I take it to mean that the scholar must not let his ideological and substantive differences with Marx blind him to the intellectual horizons opened by Marx. A man of rare sociological imagination, Marx brought to life powerful conceptual frames which survived long after his general conceptual framework shared the fate of the Hegelian system. The latter fact should not be a cause for distress: as the founding fathers of Marxism liked to stress, "system" is the most conservative part of a scholar's intellectual contribution.

As happened with Hegel's grand system, Marx's theoretical edifice was taken apart by his disciples. Contemporary Marxists often disagree on which reading is closer to the original spirit of Marxism. But there is a solid consensus among them that sociological research is a value-bound, partisan enterprise. This vision sets them apart from those who, following Weber, advocate value-neutrality as a strategy for social research. The controversy over value-partisanship and value-neutrality has become a standard theme of twentieth-century sociological discourse. What is often overlooked in this polemic is that the same author who rejected scientism and the idea of an ideologically uncommitted science prided himself upon discovering "natural laws . . . working with iron necessity to in-

evitable results."⁴⁷ It is not also fully appreciated that Weber grounded social knowledge in human values, and almost invariably ignored that the founder of positivism, Auguste Comte, was a passionate propagandist of the religion of humanity.

It seems to me that value-neutrality and value-partisanship represent a perfect dialectical contradiction, a thesis and antithesis requiring a theoretical and practical synthesis. An attempt to radically separate them or to subordinate one to the other is self-defeating. An encounter of value and truth, of pure and practical reason, is a major stimulus to sociological research. Their creative tension can be sustained only if there is enough room for conflict between the individual's role as a scientist and his role as an ideologist.

Elsewhere, I have hinted that it might be possible to combine value-neutrality and value-partisanship in a third approach which I tentatively called value-tolerance.⁴⁸ The value-tolerant orientation is predicated upon the special role played by a scholar in contemporary society. Mannheim sensed very acutely this special position of a scholar-intellectual.⁴⁹ Yet I would argue that the intellectual's position is peculiar not because he is chronically unattached, as Mannheim believed, but because he can attach himself to several causes simultaneously.⁵⁰ He develops to the utmost limit the social mechanism of intelligence⁵¹ by taking the value per-

⁴⁷ K. Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1967), p. 8.

⁴⁸ Shalin, "Between the Ethos of Science and the Ethos of Ideology." The theoretical and methodological rationale for the following ideas is given in D. N. Shalin, "The Genesis of Social Interactionism and Differentiation of Macro- and Microsociological Paradigms," *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 6 (Fall/Winter 1978): 3-38, and "On Things Themselves and the Art of Their Accounting; Or How We Go About Assigning Individuals to a Class and Ascribing a Class to Individuals," unpublished manuscript, 1979.

⁴⁹ K. Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1936).

⁵⁰ The macrostructuralist can reasonably argue that the development of the mechanism of taking the role of the other in the twentieth century has been facilitated by the structural changes in society.

⁵¹ G. H. Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934).

spective of the other. Drawing on different paradigms for making sense of reality, the social scientist can bridge the gap between conflicting and incommensurable universes of discourse. Tolerance to multiple realities, simultaneous membership in different paradigms, and relative independence of any particular reference frame—these features of scientific work in academic institutions are central to value-tolerant science.

As a politician, the individual can declare: "Here I stand; I can do no other."⁵² He can lend his face to dramatizing any particular cause and use it as a single source of his identity. As a scholar, the individual is doomed to be alienated, is bound to oscillate between alternative frameworks, and is deprived of the right to take refuge in a "real me." He must be ready to act as a devil's advocate or, if you will, to take the role of "the devious other."

The principle of value-tolerance suggests a new perspective on academic freedom. The latter can be conceptualized as the freedom of self-alienation, or to put it in the language of Goffman's dramaturgical analysis,⁵³ as the freedom of face-work. The scholar must be free to dramatize any cause and dispense with any contingent self-identity pressed upon him by a class. *Academic freedom is the freedom to alienate oneself from the inherited class commitments and official self-identities.* Looked at in this perspective, academic freedom is not so much a license as a yoke that the scholar imposes upon himself. He is always tempted to evade his responsibility, to escape into the clearly defined, unambiguous "authentic self." But the authenticity afforded by a given partisan cause is an unreflexive mode of being in the world-taken-for-granted, and as such it is antithetical to freedom.

The "authentic" social research that Horton contrasted to

⁵² M. Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, edited by G. H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 127.

⁵³ E. Goffman, "On Face-Work: An Analysis of Ritual Elements in Social Interaction," *Psychiatry: Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes* 18 (1955): 213–231, and *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor, 1959).

the "alienated" sociological labor in a capitalist society is fully realizable in a totalitarian society.⁵⁴ The totalitarian state establishes a monopoly on the individual's face-work, turning it into face-labor. It forces the individual to dramatize an official reality as objective and meaningful and persecutes public display of alienation as a federal crime. A social scientist in such a state has no choice but to lend his face to the Party-controlled production of ideological surplus meaning or quit sociology as a vocation (if he can) and leave the country altogether (if he can). A modern communist state confronts the scholar with such a choice.

Capitalism may be an evil but, compared to any known society claiming Marx's legacy, it is a mild one. Bourgeois academic freedom is preferable to proletarian scientific partisanship because the former protects the freedom of self-alienation and encourages value-tolerance, whereas the latter suppresses them, and thus impedes the ongoing transcendence of the ossified social structures. It must be difficult to live in a world where one's identity spills over the classificatory borderlines. But if we realize that, contrary to Marx's belief, demystification cannot be achieved once and for all, that dereification is not an instantaneous revolutionary achievement but an ongoing accomplishment—a Sisyphean labor—we may find the courage to shoulder the heavy burden of academic freedom.

⁵⁴ Horton, "The Fetishism of Sociology."

* I wish to thank Professor Lewis A. Coser for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper.