

IS MARX OBSOLETE?

Reports and discussions should be aimed at deciding whether the capitalist system still reigns—however much it may have modified itself—or whether industrial development has made the very concept of capitalism, the difference between capitalist and non-capitalist states, and the very critique of capitalism redundant. In other words, is the thesis that Marx is obsolete (a very widespread thesis in sociology) correct? According to this thesis, the world is so permeated by the previously undreamed-of development of technology that the social relation which once defined capitalism—the conversion of living work into goods, and the class separation which it brought about—has lost its relevance, if indeed it has not degenerated into a superstition. And here one may point to unmistakable signs of convergence between the most technically advanced countries, the United States and the Soviet Union. In the principal western countries class differences in living-standards and class consciousness are altogether far less in evidence than in the decades during and immediately after the industrial revolution. The prognoses of the class theory, such as the prediction of impoverishment and collapse, have not come true as drastically

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as they were meant to—as they must have been meant to, unless one is to deprive these predictions of most of their meaning. Even if Marx's by no means unambiguous law of falling profit rates had proved true, within the system, we should have had to concede that capitalism had discovered resources within itself which enabled the collapse to be relegated to the Greek kalends. There is no doubt that the immense increase in technological potential and the large amount of consumer goods available to all inhabitants of the highly industrialized countries are foremost among these resources. And at the same time the relations of production proved to be more elastic, in the face of this technological development, than Marx credited them with being.

The criteria of class relationships (which empirical researchers like to call "social stratification," i.e. stratification by income, living standards and education) are generalizations of the state of single individuals. To this extent they may be called subjective. The older class concept, on the other hand, was objective, independent of indices derived directly from the life of the people concerned (however much such indices may themselves reflect objective social facts). Marx's theory was based on the situation of employers and workers in the process of production; ultimately, with the control of the means of production. In current trends of sociological thought, this solution is rejected outright as too dogmatic. The conflict must be resolved theoretically, and not merely by the presentation of facts; for facts may contribute a great deal to the critique, but they also, according to the critical theory, obscure the structure in many ways. Even the opponents of the dialectic are no longer willing to delay indefinitely the acceptance of a theory which falls in with the interests of sociology itself. The controversy is essentially one of *interpretation*—unless the search for interpretation itself is to be banished to the outer darkness of the realm of the unscientific.

A dialectical theory of society is concerned with the structural laws which determine the facts, manifest themselves in the facts and are themselves modified by the facts. By structural laws, one means tendencies which follow more or less stringently from the historical constituents of the total system. Marx's models for such structural laws were the law of value, the laws of accumulation and the law of collapse. Dialectical theory, in talking of structure,

does not mean schemes of classification into which social states can be incorporated as completely, continuously and indisputably as possible. It does not mean a systematization, therefore, but the *system* of society which stands above the procedures and data of scientific knowledge. Such a theory can in the last analysis detach itself from the facts; but it may not alter and adapt the facts to fit a *thema probandum*. Otherwise it would indeed fall back into dogmatism, and would repeat in thought what consolidated power had carried out through the instrument of dialectical materialism: the immobilization of that which can inherently only be imagined as endowed with motion. The fetish of facts corresponds to the fetish of objective laws. Dialectic, which is imbued through and through with the painful experience of the real dominance of these laws, does not glorify them, but criticizes them just as it criticizes the appearance of control by the overall course of world development over individual and concrete matters; such matters are probably not yet under its control at all. The word *pluralism* presupposes Utopia, as if it were already present; it serves to allay unease. But this does not mean that the dialectical theory, which reflects its own self critically, may make itself at home in its turn in the realm of generality. Its intention is precisely to break out of this medium. Even it is not exempt from the false separation of energetic thought and empirical research. It was not long ago that a very influential Russian intellectual declared to me that sociology was a new science in the Soviet Union. He meant empirical sociology; the idea that this might have anything to do with the dogma of society that was approved as a State religion in his country had no more occurred to him than the idea that Marx might have carried out public opinion surveys. Objectified consciousness does not end where the idea of objectivity finds a place of honour. To talk glibly about concepts like "Imperialism" or "Monopoly," with no regard to the situations that correspond to these words, is as false and irrational as it would be to have such a blind and nominalistic idea of the situation that for its sake one refused to admit the objectivity of concepts like "a barter-society," or the subordination of a general concept to objective situations which can by no means always be adequately translated into an operationally defined situation. Both tendencies have to be countered; to this extent the thematic of the congress witnesses

to the methodological intuition of freedom-based self-criticism.

One can neither expect, nor really look for, a simple answer to the question inherent in this thematic. Alternatives which compel one to opt—even theoretically—for one or other answer, themselves constitute a situation of compulsion modelled on that obtaining in an unfree society and carried over to apply to the spirit, which ought to do what it can to break down constraint through its stubborn reflection. Altogether, the dialectician must not allow himself to be driven to a concise separation of late capitalism or the industrial society, however little satisfaction he may find in arguments, far from binding, of “on the one hand... on the other hand...” Against Brecht’s advice, he must beware of simplification above all, because readymade thought-processes will suggest the readymade answer to him, just as the opposite answer will come naturally to his opponents. If one does not allow one’s experience of the superiority of structure over situation to be obstructed, then one will not—as one’s contracting partners mostly will—belittle contradictions as being merely contradictions of method, errors of thought, or try to eliminate them through the unanimity of scientific systematology. Instead, one will follow them back into the structure, which has always been antagonistic, ever since society, in the full sense of the word, has existed; and has remained so—as international political conflicts and the permanent possibility of a military catastrophe, and recently, increasingly, internal economic events, clearly show. This mistakes an alternative mode of thought, which projects the formal logical absence of contradiction directly onto that which is to be thought. One is not faced with a choice, according to a scientific standpoint or taste, between the two formulae; the relation between them expresses the contradiction which characterizes the present phase and which it is sociology’s task to articulate theoretically.

The relationships between many predictions of dialectic theory are contradictory. Some are simply not being fulfilled; certain theoretical-analytical categories lead in the mean time to *aporiae* which can only most artificially be imagined as non-existent. Other predictions, originally closely related to these, have come spectacularly true. Even those who cannot catch sight of the sense of theory in the predictions will not, in the face of the claims of dialectical theory, be content to allow that they are partly true

and partly false. These divergences, for their part, need theoretical explanation. The fact that one cannot speak of a proletarian class consciousness in the foremost capitalist countries does not itself contradict—contrary to common opinion—the existence of classes: class was defined by the relation to the means of production, and not by the consciousness of its members. There is no lack of plausible reasons for the lack of class-consciousness; it could not have been foreseen that the workers would not grow ever more wretched, that they would become increasingly integrated into bourgeois society and its way of thinking—when during and immediately after the industrial revolution, the industrial proletariat was recruited from the pauper class and stood half outside society. Social being does not necessarily create class consciousness. Precisely because of their social integration, the masses have no more control over their social fate than they did 120 years ago; and yet they must do without not only class solidarity but even the full consciousness of the fact that they are objects, not subjects, of the social process, though they keep it going as subjects. Class consciousness, on which (according to Marx's theory) the qualitative leap depended, was, again according to this theory, at the same time an epiphenomenon. If, however, in the countries that serve as prototypes in the matter of class relations, no more class consciousness appears for long periods; if the question of the proletariat turns into a picture-puzzle, then quantity turns into quality and the suspicion of conceptual mythology can certainly be suppressed by decree but not eliminated in thought. It is hard to separate the development from the nucleus of Marx's theory, the doctrine of added value. This was meant to give an objective economic explanation of class relations and the growth of class antagonism. If, however, the share of human labour—according to Marx's idea the sole source of added value—falls towards an asymptotic limiting value, due to the extent of technological progress and in fact to industrialization, then the central theory of added value is affected. The present lack of an objective theory of value is due not only to the scholastic economy that is today accepted almost exclusively in the academic world. It arises from the prohibitive difficulty of giving an objective basis to the formation of classes without a theory of added value. It will appear to non-economists that the so-called neo-Marxist theories also

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attempt to stop the gaps in their treatment of the constitutive problems with fragments of subjective economics. It is certainly not only the weakening of theoretical capability that is responsible. One might think that present-day society is moving away from a self-coherent theory. Marx's problem was easier to the extent that he was faced by the fully-developed system of liberalism. He only needed to ask whether capitalism corresponded to this model in its own dynamic categories, in order to be able to reject decisively the system he was presented with, bringing forth at the same time a theory which itself looked systematic. Meanwhile market economics have become so full of holes that they mock at any such confrontation. The irrationality of the present structure of society prevents its rational development in theory. The prospect of the control of economic processes coming into the hands of the political powers does indeed follow from the deducible dynamics of the system; but it is also a prospect of objective irrationality. This, and not the scientific dogmatism of its devotees, should help to explain why we have had nothing like a convincing objective theory of society. From this point of view the renunciation of such a theory would not be a critical step forward on the part of the scientific spirit, but the expression of forced resignation. The retrogression of society runs parallel to the retrogression of thought about it.

Meanwhile no less drastic facts oppose this; and they can again only be interpreted arbitrarily and forcedly unless the key concept of capitalism is introduced. Men are still dominated by means of the economic process. Its objects have for a long time been not only the masses but those in control. In accordance with the old theory, they became to a large extent functions of their own apparatus of production. The much-discussed question of the managerial revolution, the supposed transition of power from the legal owners to the bureaucracy, is a secondary one by comparison. That process may not produce classes in the same way that they are represented in Zola's *Germinal*, but it still produces and reproduces, now as before, at least the structure which Nietzsche the anti-socialist anticipated by his formula "the flock without a shepherd." In it, however, there lies hidden that which he did not wish to see: the old social oppression, now merely become anonymous. Even though the theory of increasing wretchedness

has not come literally true, it has nevertheless been fulfilled in the no less disturbing sense that unfreedom, dependence on an apparatus that has escaped from the consciousness of those who serve it, now extend over all men everywhere. The universally deplored immaturity of the masses is only a reflection of the fact that they are as little as ever autonomous masters of their lives; as in myth, fate overtakes them. Moreover, empirical investigations point to the fact that even subjectively, according to their consciousness of reality, the classes are by no means so levelled as has sometimes been thought. Even the theories of imperialism have not become simply outdated with the forced renunciation of the colonies by the great powers. The process implied in these theories continues in the antagonism of the monstrous power blocs. The supposedly superseded doctrine of social antagonisms, with the final result of collapse, is enormously surpassed by the political antagonism. Let us not here go into the question of whether and how far the class relationship has been transferred to the relations between the leading industrial nations and the much-courted developing countries.

In categories of critical-dialectical theory, I should like to suggest as a first and necessarily abstract answer, that present-day society is an industrial society entirely according to the state of its *productive forces*. Industrial labour has become the model of society everywhere, crossing all borders of political systems. It develops towards a totality through the fact that modes of behaviour which mimic industrial ones extend with economic inevitability to areas outside that of material production: to management, distribution, and what is called culture. In the face of this, society is capitalism in its *relations of production*. Men are still the same as they were in Marx's analysis in the middle of the last century: appendages of machinery; no longer merely literally the workers who have to adapt themselves to the nature of the machines they serve, but in a much wider metaphorical sense, compelled as they are to adjust themselves and their very innermost feelings to the machinery of society, in which they must play their rôles and to which they must shape themselves with no reservation. Production takes place today as ever before for the sake of profit. Needs have become functions of the apparatus of production to a far *greater* extent than anything that could have been foreseen in Marx's day,

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rather than less so. True, the needs of the people were tagged along, fixed and adapted to the interests of the apparatus, in the course of this change; the apparatus can thus effectively appeal to this fact. But the concept of the value of goods in use has meanwhile lost its last “natural” and self-explanatory character; needs are no longer satisfied indirectly, by their exchange value; in economic sectors where the profit motive is relevant, they are actually created, to the detriment of the objective needs of the consumer, such as those of adequate living-space, and certainly those of education and information about the most important events affecting him. In the sphere of things which are not absolutely necessary for the bare maintenance of life, exchange values are enjoyed in the absolute, for their own sake; this is a phenomenon that comes up in empirical sociology in terms such as “status-symbol” or “prestige”—without being objectively grasped for all that. The highly industrialized regions of the earth have learned to avoid over-blatant poverty (as long as no new natural economic catastrophes take place, *pace* Keynes); though this may not be true to the full extent assured by the doctrine of the Affluent Society. But the spell that the system exerts over men has become stronger—insofar as such analogies can be meaningfully made—through integration. It cannot be denied in this context that in the increasing degree of satisfaction of material needs, in spite of their deformation by the social apparatus, the possibility of a life without indigence is incomparably more concretely possible than before. Even in the poorest lands, no-one would need to go hungry any more. The fact that the veil over our consciousness of the possible has become thin is demonstrated by the panic aroused by all forms of social enlightenment that do not fall in with the official system of communications. That which Marx and Engels—who wanted society organized in a way consonant with human dignity—attacked as an utopia which would only sabotage this sort of social organization, has now become a palpable possibility. Critique of utopias has now sunk to being part of the stock-in-trade of ideology, and at the same time the triumph of the technical forces of production is able to pretend that Utopia, which is really incompatible with the relations of production, has come true within their framework. But the contradictions in its new, international-political quality—such as

the arms race between East and West—make possibilities impossible.

To see through this of course demands that one should not heap all the blame onto technology, that is to say onto the forces of production—as criticism is constantly allowing itself to be seduced into doing; this would mean acting as a sort of Luddite on a wider and theoretical plane. It is not technology that is fatal, but the fact that it gets matted together with the social relations that surround it. Let us only remember that considerations of profit dictated the channels taken by technological developments; at the present time it is in fateful harmony with the needs of control and mastery. It is not for nothing that the invention of means of destruction has become the prototype of the new quality of technology. In contrast, those of its potentials which lie further from domination, centralization and violence towards nature, have atrophied, though these might have made it possible to heal much of the harm that technology has perpetrated in the literal and the figurative sense.

Present-day society, in spite of all assertions to the contrary, shows up the static aspects of its dynamics, of the growth of production. These include the relations of production. The latter are no longer merely those of ownership, but those of administration, going right up to the rôle of the state as the collective capitalist. While its rationalization mimics technical rationality, that is the forces of production, these latter have indisputably become more flexible. This gives rise to an appearance as if the universal interest was now merely an interest in the *status quo*, and full employment was the ideal, rather than liberation from heteronomous labour; but the *status quo*, which is anyway highly labile in terms of international politics, is merely one of temporary balance, the resultant of forces whose mutual tension threatens to tear it asunder. Within the dominant relations of production, mankind is virtually its own reserve army, and it is fed through the winter. It was far too optimistic on Marx's part to expect that the primacy of the forces of production would inevitably arrive and necessarily explode the relations of production. Thus far did Marx, the sworn enemy of German idealism, remain true to its affirmative construction of history. Trust in the World Spirit (the *Weltgeist*) was able to help with a justification of the world-order which ought

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according to Feuerbach's eleventh thesis to have been changed. The relation of production have—for pure self-preservation—used a stitch there, and taken particular individual steps, to keep the forces of production, now that they had been let loose, under its control. The predominance of the relations of production over the forces of production, which have long mocked them, is the trademark of the age. The fact that the long arm of mankind can reach out to distant and empty planets, but is unable to bring about permanent peace on our own, brings out the absurdity towards which the social dialectic is moving. The fact that things have developed otherwise than had been hoped is not ultimately due to the fact that society incorporated into itself what Veblen called the *underlying population*. Only someone who placed the happiness of the whole in the abstract above that of individual living beings could wish that this had never happened. This development itself depended again on the development of the forces of production. But it was not identical with their superiority over the relations of production. This could never have been represented mechanically. Its realization would have needed the spontaneity of those who are interested in altering the relations of production, and their number is by now many times greater than that of the actual industrial proletariat itself. There is a gulf between objective interests and subjective spontaneity; the latter has atrophied under the disproportionately superior might of the data. Marx's statement that even theory would turn into real power as soon as it took hold of the masses has been stood on its head by the course of world events. If the organization of society prevents the simplest knowledge and experience of threatening events and of essential critical ideas and theorems—whether it does so automatically or intentionally through the culture and consciousness industry and through its monopoly of opinion; if (what is much more serious) it paralyzes the very faculty of imagining the world otherwise than it appears overpoweringly to those of whom it consists: then the fixed and manipulated state of people's minds becomes a real power, the power of repression, which its opposite, the free spirit, once aimed at eliminating.

On the other hand, the term "industrial society" suggests in a sense that the technocratic moment of Marx, which they wanted

to prove to be non-existent, is very much alive and present; as though the nature of society followed directly from the situation of the forces of production, independently of their social circumstances. It is astonishing how little is said about these in established sociology, how little they are actually analysed. The best—which by no means needs to be the best—is forgotten: the totality, or in Hegelian terms the all-pervading aether of society. But this is something far from ethereal; it is, rather, the *ens realissimus*. Insofar as it seems abstract, this is not the fault of sophisticated, obstinate and unrealistic thinking but of the exchange relationship, the objective abstraction, which the social life-process obeys. The power of this abstraction over mankind is more tangible than that of any single institution which constitutes itself in advance according to the schema, silently, and then hammers home its existence to the people. The helplessness that the individual feels in the face of the whole is the drastic expression of this. True, in sociology the governing social relations, the social conditions of production in their extensively logical classificatory essence look much thinner than this concrete generality. They are neutralized to concepts like “power” or “social control.” In categories such as these the sting is lost, and with it, one might say, the truly social aspect of society, that is its structure. Present-day sociology ought to work towards a change here.

Simply to make a polar contrast between the forces of production and the relations of production would be suitable least of all for a dialectical theory. They are mutually interlinked; it is this very fact that leads us to have recourse to the forces of production, when the relations of production have the upper hand. More than ever do the forces of production work through the medium of the relations of production; so completely, perhaps, that the latter appear precisely for this reason to be the essence; they have become second nature. They are responsible for the fact that human beings, in a crazy contradiction to what might be, are compelled to starve over large parts of the earth. Even where there is an abundance of goods, this abundance seems to be under a sort of curse. The needs that tend towards the character of sham needs infect the goods with their sham character. Objectively real and false needs could certainly be distinguished from one another, however little one could deduce a right bureaucratic settlement

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anywhere in the world from this. It is always the whole of society that experiences a need; they may be the closest concern of market research, but in themselves they are not the first question. Real and false needs ought to be judged according to one's insight into the structure of the totality of society with all its arrangements. The fictitious element that deforms all need-satisfaction today is unquestionably perceived, subconsciously; no doubt it contributes to the present unease in the field of culture. More important in this context even that the almost impenetrable *quid pro quo* of need, satisfaction and profit-motive is the unswervingly persistent threat of the one need on which all the others depend: that of simple survival. Enclosed as it is by a horizon into which the Bomb may fall any moment, even the most abundant supply of consumer-goods has an air of insolence about it. But the international antagonisms which are mounting up towards what would now for the first time be really total war, are blatantly related to the relations of production in the literal sense. These could scarcely maintain themselves so obstinately without the incalculable shocks of new economic crises, if a shatteringly large proportion of the social product, which could otherwise never find a market, were not diverted to the production of means of destruction. The same situation obtains in the Soviet Union, in spite of the elimination of the market economy. The economic reasons for this are visible: the desire for a quicker rise in production in the more backward country brought forth a dictatorially stern administration. From the unshackling of the forces of production, new shackles arose in the relations of production; production became its own end, and obstructed the aim of uncurtailed freedom. In both systems, the bourgeois concept of socially useful work is satanically parodied; in the market this turned out to be a question of profit, and never of transparent usefulness for mankind itself, or even of its happiness. This sort of domination of men by the relations of production presupposes the degree of development of the forces of production. This is the reason for the difficulty that lies in the fact that while both elements have to be distinguished from one another, if one wants to come to some sort of an understanding of the bogey in the situation, one always needs one element in order to understand the other. The overproduction that demanded this expansion, by means of which the apparently sub-

jective need was ensnared and substituted for, is spewed out by a technological apparatus which has become so self-sufficient that it becomes irrational—that is to say, unprofitable—below a certain level of production; so this overproduction is necessarily brought about by the relation of production. Only in respect of total annihilation have the relations of production not fettered the forces of production. But the authoritarian methods with which the masses are in spite of everything kept in order presume both concentration and centralization, which have not only an economic side but also a technological side, as can be seen in the mass media: in that it has been possible to equalize the consciousness of countless numbers, using a limited number of sources, merely by the choice and presentation of news and commentary.

The power of the relations of production that have not been overturned is greater than ever; but at the same time they are everywhere sick, damaged, full of holes, being as they are objectively anachronistic. They no longer function independently. Economic interventionism is not propped up from outside the system, as the older liberal school would hold; it is propped up from within, as an embodiment of self-defence. Nothing could illustrate more spectacularly the concept of dialectics. In an analogous way Hegel's *Philosophy of Law*, in which bourgeois ideology and the dialectic of bourgeois society are so deeply intermixed, once quoted the State that intervened from outside, purportedly outside the social power-game, and softened the antagonisms with police-like help, in his immanent dialectic of society itself, which in accordance with Hegel's theories would otherwise have disintegrated. The invasion of elements not immanent in the system is at the same time also a piece of immanent dialectic, just as—at the opposite pole—Marx saw the overthrow of the relations of production as something that was at the same time forced to happen by the very course of history, and could only be brought about by an action that was qualitatively different from the closed nature of the system. If however one meets the argument that late capitalism (on the grounds of interventionism, and far more so on the grounds of large-scale planning) has escaped from the anarchy of production of goods and is therefore no longer capitalism, then one must reply that the social fate of the individual is as much a matter of chance for capitalism as it ever was. The model of

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capitalism has itself never held in as pure a sense as the liberal apology supposes. Already in Marx's hands it was an ideological critique, intended to show how little the idea that bourgeois society had of itself was in accordance with reality. One cannot escape the irony in the reflection that precisely this critical idea—that liberalism in its best period was no liberalism at all—has now been turned about to prove the thesis that capitalism is no longer really capitalism at all. This too indicates a change of direction: that which had always been for bourgeois society the ratio of free and just exchange, and by virtue of the very implications of this, irrational—that is, unfree and unjust, has now been raised to such a high degree that the model itself falls to bits. And this very fact is entered on the credit side by the state of affairs whose integration has become a cover for disintegration. That which is foreign to the system reveals itself as a constituent of the system, reaching into its very political tendency. The power of resistance of the system has proved itself in interventionism; but so, indirectly, has the theory of collapse; the transition to power independently of the market mechanism is its end. The story of the formed society has carelessly leaked this fact. Such retrogression of liberal capitalism has its correlate in the retrogression of consciousness, in a regression of mankind behind the objective possibilities that could be open to it today. Men lose the qualities that they no longer need and which get in their way; the nucleus of individuation begins to disintegrate. Only recently have traces of an opposite tendency become visible, precisely among bourgeois youth: resistance to blind conformism, freedom for rationally chosen aims, a reckoning with the possibility of change. Whether the socially increasing destructive urge will triumph over this has yet to be seen. Subjective regression is once again favourable to retrogression of the system. Because, to quote an expression of Merton's very much out of context, it becomes dysfunctional, the consciousness of the masses likens itself to it, by increasingly divesting itself of the rationality of the firm, identified *ego* which was still implied in the concept of a functional society.

The idea that productive forces and the relations of production are today one and the same, and that society could therefore be constructed directly on the basis of the productive forces, is the

present form of a socially necessary sham. It is socially necessary because it is true that moment of the social process that had once been separated from one another, and this includes living men, have now been brought to a sort of common denominator. Material production, distribution, consumption, are controlled in common. Their boundaries, which once limited and separated the related spheres contained in the total process, are now blurred. The totality of the processes of mediation—in fact, of the exchange principle—produces a second deceptive immediacy. It allows one to attempt to forget what is divisive and antagonistic when it lies before one's very eyes, or to repress it from our consciousness. But this consciousness of society is a sham, because although it gives its due to technological and organizational unification, it ignores the fact that this unification does not do all it has to do in rationality, but remains subordinate to blind and irrational regularity. There is no aggregate social subject. The sham should be brought to the formula that everything existing in society is today so completely mediated in itself that the very moment of mediation is disguised by its totality. No standpoint outside the events can be occupied, from which the bogey could be called by name; the lever can only be applied to their own discordance. This is what Horkheimer and I meant decades ago by the concept of the technological veil. The false identity of the ordering of the world and its inhabitants by means of the total expansion of technology leads to the confirmation of the relations of production, which persist unchallenged although in the meantime one could look almost as vainly for its beneficiaries as for the invisible proletariat. The achievement of independence by the system from everything, even its controllers, has reached a limiting value. It has become that fatality which finds its expression in the ever present free-flowing *Angst* (as Freud put it); free-flowing, because it cannot attach itself to any living being, whether it be a person or a class. But ultimately it is only the relation between human beings, buried as they are under the relations of production, that have become independent. That is why the predominant order of things remains at the same time their own ideology, virtually powerless. However unbreakable the spell, it is only a spell. If sociology, instead of merely providing agencies and interested parties with welcome information, is to fulfil something of the

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task for which it was once conceived, then it must make its contribution, however modest, using means that do not fall victims themselves to the universal fetishism; thus may the spell be broken.