

of the Germans (how accurately I could not tell, but it seems significant in any case): "it was the most intelligent thing that the Germans could do, lacking, as they did, the physical power to overthrow Hitler, but being able to force him to suicide by becoming *a nation of Gandhis . . .*". On the other hand, it is reasonably sure that the Italian people brought about Mussolini's downfall with their refusal to cooperate with him.

Would it be far-fetched to consider conscientious objection, passive resistance, refusal to obey and to cooperate as new forms, however intensified and charged with a greater potential of individual responsibility, of that old method of struggle, which the proletariat discovered instinctively and which brought them so many essential conquests: the *strike*?

It is to give a clear direction to such an effort, whose signs are still rather dim and confused, that every socialist and every group of socialists should work, by developing

some fundamental principles to be followed consistently in private life as well as in all public manifestations.

We should come to an agreement on the radical refusal to submit to the idolatrous trinity "Nation-Fatherland-State".

The International, conceived as a compound of nations, has been proved illusory. A new International should be based on the radical negation of the Nation insofar as it is an organism armed with means of compulsion.

Since 1789, the Nation has become a divinity. We must desecrate it.

As for the State, once it is deprived of the national sacrament, it becomes a machinery, and nothing else. As such, the only proper answer to its unbearable claims is sabotage.

But our third principle should be: final, irrevocable renunciation of any form of organized violence.

EUROPEAN

Paul Goodman

Revolution, Sociolatry and War

1. A Miscalculation in the Marxian Dynamics of Revolution

ACCORDING to Marx and Engels, the dynamism of the people's revolution into socialism rises from the interaction of two psychological attitudes: (a) the spiritual alienation of the proletariat, because of extreme division of labor and capitalist productive relations, from man's original concern with production and from natural social cooperation; (b) the brute reaction to intolerable deprivation brought on by the falling rate of profit and the capitalist crises. To expand these points somewhat:

(a) To Marx and Engels the specific properties of humanity are the ability to produce things and to give mutual aid in production. But the sub-division of labor and the capitalist use of machine technology de-humanize production: a man makes only a part of a commodity sold on a distant market; and, performing an automatic operation, he employs only a modicum of his powers. Further, the conditions of bourgeois competition and wage-slavery isolate men from each other and destroy mutuality, family-life, comradeship. There is therefore nothing in the capitalist institutions to engage the deep interest or keep the loyalty of the proletariat. They are made into fractional people and these fractions of men are indifferent to the bourgeois mores and society.

(b) On the other hand they are not indifferent to starvation, disease, sexual deprivation, infant mortality, and death in war; but these are the results of the wage-cuts, imperialism, unemployment and fluctuation inherent in the bourgeois need to counteract the falling rate of profit and to reinvest. At the level of resentment at frustration and animal reaction to pain, there is concern for a violent change, there is latent rebellion.

From these attitudes, the revolutionary idea emerges somewhat as follows: Driven by need to consult their safety, and with understanding given by teachers who explain the causes of their hurt, and with their original human aspirations recalled from forgetfulness and already fulfilled somewhat by comradeship, the proletariat turns toward a new order, new foundations, a socialism immeasurably improved, and yet in its main features not unlike original human nature. By contrast to this idea, the life of the bourgeoisie itself seems worthless. And being increased in numbers and with their hands on the productive machinery of all society, the proletarians know that they can make the idea a reality.

Psychologically—and even anthropologically and ethically—this Marxian formula has great power, if indeed all of its elements exist as prescribed. But, on the contrary, if any of the elements is missing the formula is disastrous and takes us as far from fraternal socialism as can be. Now there is no question that point (b) is missing: that by and large over the last century in the advanced industrial countries the real wages of the working class as a whole have not lingered at the margin of *physical* subsistence and reproduction*; they have advanced to a point where even revolutionary writers agitate for a "sociological standard of living" and cry out against "one-third of a nation" being ill-fed and ill-housed. (The reasons, of course, are the astounding increase in productivity, the need for domestic markets, and such gross profits that the rate of profit has lost paramount importance.) What has been the result?

The spiritual alienation of point (a) has gone even further, I suppose, than Marx envisaged. He followed the

*The argument is meant to apply especially to the United States, where the increase in real wages has been due not preponderantly to overseas exploitation, but to increased productivity.

de-humanization of production to the last subdivision of labor into an automatic gesture, but I doubt whether he (being sane) could have foreseen that thousands of adult persons could work day in and day out and not know what they were making, as was the case in the atomic-bomb plants. He did not foresee the de-humanization of consumption in the universal domestic use of stream-lined conveniences whose operation the consumer does not begin to understand; the destruction of even the free choices in the marketplace by mass-advertising and monopolistic controls; the segregation among experts in hospitals of all primary experience of birth, pain, and death, etc., etc.

Yet it is not the case that these fractional persons, alienated from their natures, are brought sharply to look out for themselves by intolerable deprivation. On the contrary, they are even tricked, by the increase in commodities, into finding an imitation satisfaction in their "standard of living"; and the kind of psychological drive that moves them is—emulation! The demand of the organized proletariat for a living-wage and tolerable working-conditions, a demand that in the beginning was necessarily political and revolutionary in its consequences, now becomes a demand for a standard of living and for leisure to enjoy the goods, *accepting the mores of the dominant class*. (What are we to say of "leisure" as a good for an animal whose specific humanity is to be productive?) Then if these persons have gone over to the ideals of another class, it is foolish to call them any longer "proletarians" ("pro-

ducers of offspring", as Marx nobly and bitterly characterized the workers); but given the apparently satisfied alienation from concern in production—and where do we see anything else?—it is also unjust to call them workers.

Marx saw wonderfully the emptiness of life in the modern system; but he failed to utter the warning that this emptiness could proceed so far that, without the spur of starvation, it could make a man satisfied to be a traitor to his original nature. What he relied on to be a dynamic motor of revolution has become the cause of treason.

Lastly, the scientific teachers of the masses are no longer concerned to recall us to our original creative natures, to destroy the inhuman subdivision of labor, to look to the bands of comrades for the initiation of direct action. On the contrary, their interest has become the health and smooth functioning of the industrial machine itself: they are economists of full employment, psychologists of vocational guidance, and politicians of administrative bureaux.

So far the psychology of the masses. But in the psychology of the bourgeoisie there is a correlated difference from what Marx envisaged. The Marxian bourgeois has the following characteristics: (a) Pre-occupied with exchange-value, with money which is featureless, he is alienated from all natural personal or social interests; this makes all the easier his ruthless career of accumulation, reinvestment, exploitation, and war. (b) On the other hand, he embodies a fierce lust, real even tho manic, for wealth and power. The conditions of his role are given by the

Announcing:

The Forthcoming Publication of
ART AND SOCIAL NATURE
by
Paul Goodman

With Essays On:

Reflections on Drawing the Line
 On Treason Against Natural Societies
 A Touchstone for the Libertarian
 Program
 Natural Violence
 Revolution, Sociolatry, and War
 Unanimity

Western Tradition and World
 Concern

The Meaning of Abstraction in
 Literature

The Shape of the Screen and the
 Darkness of the Theatre

Literary Method and Author-Attitude

Mail Orders Now Accepted

VINCO PUBLISHING COMPANY

500 East 161st St., New York 56, N. Y.

Price \$3.00

economy, but he plays the role with all his heart; he is an individual, if not quite a man. The spur of a falling rate of profit or of closed markets, therefore, drives him on to desperate adventures.

By and large I do not think that this type is now very evident. Partly, to be sure, it is that the owning classes adopt a democratic camouflage for their protection; but the fact that they are willing to do this already shows that they are different men. Other factors seem to me important: (1) In absentee-ownership there is an emasculation of the drive for maximum exploitation of the labor and the machine; the owner does not have the inspiration of his daily supervision; he is not approached by inventors and foremen, etc.; but the salaried manager is usually concerned with stability rather than change. (2) But even if the drive to improve the exploitation is strong, the individual capitalist is disheartened by the corporate structure in which most vast enterprises are now imbedded; he is embarrassed by prudent or timid confrères. (Government regulation is the last stage of this corporative timidity.) (3) Not least, it now seems that even in peace-time there is a limit to the falling rate of profit; technical improvement alone guarantees an annual increment of more than 2%; by deficit spending the state can subsidize a low but stable rate of profit on all investment; there is apparently no limit to the amount of nonsense that people can be made to want to buy on the instalment plan, mortgaging their future labor. And in fact we see, to our astonishment, that a large proportion, almost a majority, of the bourgeoisie are even now ready to settle for plans that guarantee a low but stable profit. Shall we continue to call them bourgeois? They are rentiers.

The more dynamic wolf, on the other hand, is no longer a private enterpriser, but increasingly becomes a manager and administrator of the industrial machine as a whole: he is in the Government. He bares his teeth abroad.

2. Sociolatriy

With the conclusions so far reached, we can attempt a formal definition of the mass-attitude that we call *Sociolatriy* (after Comte):

Sociolatriy is the concern felt by the masses alienated from their deep natures for the smooth functioning of the industrial machine from which they believe they can get a higher standard of living.

The revolutionary tension of the people is absorbed and sublimated by the interesting standard of living; but this standard is not physiological (which would be potentially revolutionary) nor is it principally economic, a standard of comfort and luxury (which would slow down the machine by breeding idleness, dilettantism, and eccentricity); it is a sociological standard energized by emulation and advertising, and cementing a sense of unanimity among the alienated. All men have—not the same human nature—but the same commodities. Thus, barring war, such an attitude of alienated concern could have a long duration. I say “barring war”—but we must ask below whether the war is not essentially related to the attitude.

On the part of the political élite: sociolatriy is the agreement of the majority of the bourgeoisie to become rentiers of the industrial corporation in whose working they do

not interfere; and the promotion of the more dynamic bourgeoisie to high-salaried, prestigious, and powerful places at the controls of the machine. Sociolatriy is therefore the psychology of state-capitalism and state-socialism.

3. What Must be the Revolutionary Program

Still barring from consideration the threat of war, we must now ask: what is a revolutionary program in the sociolatriy? (By “revolutionary” I here refer to the heirs of Rousseau and the French Revolution: the conviction that man is born free and is in institutional chains, that fraternity is the deepest political force and the fountain of social invention; and that socialism implies the absence of state or other coercive power.)

For if indeed, with the steady expansion of technical productivity, the attitude of the masses has for a century moved toward sociolatriy and the attitude of the bourgeoisie toward accepting a low but stable rate of profit, then the Marxian program is not only bankrupt but reactionary. The Marxian economic demands (for wages and conditions) cement the sociolatriy; the Marxian political demands (for expropriation of the expropriators by seizing power) lead to state-socialism.

It is with diffidence and sadness that I here openly dissent from statements of Karl Marx. When I was young, being possessed of an independent spirit I refused to embrace the social science of Marx, but proceeded, as an artist and a human-being, to make my own judgments of the social behavior I saw about. And then I found, again and again, that the conclusions I slowly and imperfectly arrived at were already fully and demonstrably (and I may say, beautifully) expressed by Karl Marx. So I too was a Marxist! I decided with pleasure, for it is excellent to belong to a tradition and have wise friends. This has to do with Marx as a social psychologist. As regards political action, on the other hand, I do not see, it has not seemed to me, that the slogans of the Marxians, nor even of Marx, lead toward fraternal socialism; rather they lead away from it.

Now (*still* barring the war!) there is a great advantage for the revolutionist in the existence of sociolatriy and of even a tyrannical state-socialism. The “standard of living” and the present use of the machinery of production may rouse our disgust, but it is an ethical disgust; it is not the fierce need to act roused by general biological misery.* We may therefore act in a more piecemeal, educational, and thoroughgoing way. The results of such action will also be lasting and worthwhile if we have grown into our freedom rather than driven each other into it. Our attack on the industrial system can be many-sided and often indirect, to make it crash of its own weight rather than by frontal attack. (“One of the Evil One’s most effectual arts of seduction,” says Kafka, “is the challenge to battle. It is like the fight with woman, that ends in bed.”)

Nor is it the case that the absence of tension and despair makes it impossible to awaken revolutionary feeling. For we know that the society we want is universally present in the heart, tho now generally submerged: it can be brought

* Since I wrote this, the foreign scene has already again become such that we weep with dismay and disgust. Can one’s reaction be ethical?

into existence piecemeal, power by power, everywhere: and as soon as it appears in act, the sociolatriy becomes worthless, ridiculous, disgusting by comparison. There is no doubt that, once awakened, the natural powers of men are immeasurably stronger than those alien institutions (which are indeed only the pale sublimations of natural powers).

On the one hand, the kind of critique that my friends and I express: a selective attitude toward the technology, not without peasant features, is itself a product of our surplus technology; on the other hand, we touch precisely the vulnerable point of the system.

Then, as opposed to the radical programs that already pre-suppose the great state and corporative structure, and the present social institutions in the perfected form of the Sociolatriy, we must—in small groups—draw the line and at once begin action directly satisfactory to our deep nature. (a) It is essential that our program can, with courage and mutual encouragement and mutual aid, be put into effect by our own effort, to a degree at once and progressively more and more, without recourse to distant party or union decisions. (b) The groups must be small, because mutual aid is our common human nature mainly with respect to those with whom we deal face to face. (c) Our action must be aimed not, as utopians, at a future establishment; but (as millenarians, so to speak) at fraternal arrangements today, progressively incorporating more and more of the social functions into our free society.

1. It is treasonable to free society not to work at a job that realizes our human powers and transcends the inhuman subdivision of labor. It is a matter of guilt—this is a hard saying—to exhaust your time of day in the usual work in offices and factories, merely for wages. The aim of economy is not the efficient production of commodities, but cooperative jobs themselves worth doing, with the workers' full understanding of the machines and processes, releasing the industrial inventiveness that is in each man. (Nor is it the case, *if we have regard to the whole output of social labor*, that modern technical efficiency requires, or is indeed compatible with, the huge present concentrations of machinery beyond the understanding and control of small groups of workers.*)

2. We must re-assess our standard of living and see what parts are really useful for subsistence and humane well-being, and which are slavery to the emulation, emotional security, and inferiority roused by exploitative institutions and coercive advertising. The question is not one of the quantity of goods (the fact that we swamp ourselves with household furnishings is likely due to psychic causes too deep for us to alter), but that the goods that make up the "standard of living" are stamped with alien values.

3. We must allow, and encourage, the sexual satisfaction of the young, both adolescents and small children, in order to free them from anxious submissiveness to authority. It is probably impossible to prevent our own neurotic prejudices from influencing small children, but we can at least make opportunity for the sexual gratification of adolescents. This is essential in order to prevent the patterns of coercion and authority from reemerging no matter what the political change has been.

*This point is argued at length in the forthcoming *Communitas* by Percival and Paul Goodman, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1946.

4. In small groups we must exercise direct political initiative in community problems of personal concern to ourselves (housing, community-plan, education, etc.) The constructive decisions of intimate concern to us cannot be delegated to representative government and bureaucracy. Further, even if the Government really represented the interests of constituents, it is still the case that political initiative is itself the noble and integrating act of every man. In government, as in economic production, what is superficially efficient is not efficient in the long run.

5. Living in the midst of an alienated way of life, we must mutually analyze and purge our souls until we no longer regard as guilty or conspiratorial such illegal acts as spring from common human nature. (Needless to say, I am here referring to ethical discussions, not amateur psychoanalyses.) With regard to committing such "crimes", we must exercise prudence not of inhibition but such prudence as a sane man exercises in a madhouse. On the other hand, we must see that many acts commonly regarded as legal and even meritorious are treason against our natural society, *if they involve us in situations where we cease to have personal responsibility and concern for the consequences.*

6. We must progressively abstain from whatever is connected with the war

I am sensible that this program seems to demand very great initiative, courage, effort, and social invention; yet if once, looking about at our situation whatever it is, we *draw a line* (wherever we draw it!), can we not at once proceed? Those of us who have already been living in a more reasonable way do not find these minimal points too difficult; can those who have all their lives taken on the habits (if not the ideas) of the alienated society, expect not to make drastic changes? If we are to have peace, it is necessary to *wage* the peace. Otherwise, when their war comes, we also must hold ourselves responsible for it.

4. The War

The emergency that faces sociolatriy and state-socialism is the War, and we know that this catastrophe of theirs must overwhelm us all. Is it a necessity of their system? Must one not assume, and can one not observe, that beneath the acceptance and mechanical, unspontaneous pleasure in the current social satisfactions there is a deep hatred for these satisfactions that makes men willing to rush off to armies and to toy with the idea of loosing explosive bombs?

(To put this another way. In a famous passage Freud pathetically justifies competitive capitalism as a means of releasing aggression without physical destruction. Now if, under improved economic arrangements of full-employment and non-competitive profits, this means of release is thwarted, how will the general aggression find an outlet—if the aggression itself is not moderated by small-scale fraternal competition, mutual aid, and instinctual gratification?)

We have defined a mass alienated from deep natural concerns, but occupying the conscious and pre-conscious with every manner of excitement, news, popular culture, sport, emulation, expenditure, and mechanical manipula-

tion. Now let us draw from the individual psychology what seems to be an analogy, but it is more than an analogy.

When an ego-system is set up against the id-drives, rather than as the interpreter, guide, purveyor, and agent of those drives, then this ego is basically weak and "tends to destroy itself". Further, the more elaborate the distractions sought by the ego, the tighter is the defense and rationalization against the instincts, the greater the tension, the more suggestive and hypnotic the daily experiences, and the more inevitable the self-destruction. During the last years of his life, largely in order to explain the phenomena of war, Freud introduced into his theory the primordial death wish. But whether or not, as is hotly debated among the analysts, such a drive is really primitive (in general a hunch of Freud is better than the clinical evidence of a lesser man)—nevertheless, to explain the tendency to self-destruction that we are here considering, no such primitive drive is required. On the contrary, the rebellion of the instincts against the superficial distractions of the ego is a healthy reaction: it is a healthy kind of violence calculated not to destroy the organism but to liberate it from inanity. To the ego, however, this desire to "burst" (Wm. Reich) might be interpreted as the desire for suicide—and if the ego can indeed control the movements of the body and the imagination, that is in fact the end of the organism.

Let us return to the real social context (for all individual psychology is an abstraction): we see on all sides an ill-concealed—concealed only to those who are expressing it—hatred for the social satisfactions. The most refined champions of our civilized arena, namely the technicians and practical scientists, seem almost the most inspired to feverish cooperative activity if once it has in it the promise of violence. Further, the people as a whole can the more cheerfully rush to the destruction of what they have and what they are, because, inspired to it en masse and suggesting it to one another, they release one another from the guilty restraint that each would feel by himself.

The behavior of the Americans during the last interbellum was terribly significant. On the one hand, people were almost unanimously opposed to the coming war; there was even a certain amount of successful pacifist agitation (such as the barring of military training from many colleges). On the other hand, one economic and political action after another was committed that led directly to a world-wide war; and these acts were acquiesced in by the people despite the clear, demonstrative, and thousand times reiterated warnings from many quarters that the acts were heading towards a general war. It is absurd to claim that such warnings did not get a hearing, for the point is: why did they not? To me it seems that the public behavior was exactly that of a person in the face of danger that he consciously wants to flee, but he is paralyzed because unconsciously he wants to embrace it: thus he waits and will not think of it.

But alas! this social violence that wants, not to destroy mankind, but only to get back to natural institutions, cannot be healthy, because it will in fact destroy us.

We others had better wage our peace and bring them quickly into our camp.

Periodicals

"Racial and Religious Prejudice in Everyday Living." *The Journal of Social Issues*. Vol. I, No. 1, Feb. 1945.

This journal deserves mention only because it is part of a significant trend that has carried the social sciences from aloofness to application and from application to popularization. Sociology became an applied science long ago with that sorry creature the social worker, and the professional consideration of delinquency, criminology, divorce, the mob, etcetera. In fact sociology was practically conceived in sin, from the wedlock of campus and incestuous culture. Anthropology, stronghold of the esoteric and inutile, was happily financed by the great endowments in pursuit of broken pots, cephalic indices and antique customs. Only now is it developing practical notions with a newly sprouted *Journal of Applied Anthropology* and the stirrings of Drs. Warner, Linton, Dollard, Chapple, Benedict, et al.

The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues represents the liberal academic psychologists who have turned their attention to "social problems." *The Journal of Social Issues* will henceforth be the regular quarterly publication of the SPSSI. The present number edited by Dr. Gene Weltfish, deals with economic and social discrimination against Negroes, Jews, Catholics. Future issues will discuss psychological aspects of re-education, social change, and bureaucracy in large enterprises. Each will be a symposium by prominent authorities and laymen. This one carries contributions by Drs. Daniel Katz, Kurt Lewin, Goodwin Watson and Gardner Murphy, and an assorted collection of "practitioners."

The style is uniformly simple, typed for high-schools and organized around "episodes"—short fictional statements of typical discriminatory situations à la Lloyd Warner. Practical suggestions by the authorities follow each episode. It is SPSSI's bid for the teen-age trade. Only the format betrays an academic origin.

Extensive analysis of the contents is unwarranted. The professors are outstandingly competent in social psychology—that is, each knows pretty well how people tick and how they can be tinkered with. But competence does not preclude banality, nor the fallacies which stem from unstated orientation. SPSSI's first yearbook, *Industrial Conflict*, was more honest in this regard, openly declaring its allegiance to the values of labor. Striking out for a wider audience, these values are subsumed here and, we may infer, diffused over the broader virtues of the middle-class community. Psychologists, too, have retreated with the CIO.

What remains to be declared is that these authorities are conditioned by the same forces they analyze. Economically secure if morally perturbed, their judgments predicate a system whose aberrations they would curb. So the substance of their wisdom is a measure of reform to which their bourgeois compeers were committed half a century ago, when the academician's conscience was yet undeveloped.

This can be seen from the nature of the "practitioners" whose comments supplement the professors. They represent the FEPC, the Jewish Theological Seminary, Freedom House, and the YMCA. Their milk and water diet has nourished the activities of uplift societies, inter-faith movements, and sewing circles for decades: freedom for