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THE CONCEPT OF ALIENATION

1 The young Marx's 'theory' of alienation

In his essays and manuscripts of 1843 and 1844, the young Marx uses the terms *Entfremdung* ('alienation' or 'estrangement') and *Entäusserung* ('externalization' or 'alienation') to refer to a great many things. Apparently, the point of this usage is to indicate a close connection in reality between the various things to which the terms are applied. The challenge is to discover what this connection is, and in what way the notion of alienation serves to represent it.

The terms *Entfremdung* and *Entäusserung* themselves evoke images: they suggest the separation of things which naturally belong together, or the establishment of some relation of indifference or hostility between things which are properly in harmony. On the most obvious level, Marx's use of them expresses the idea that the phenomena he describes are characterized by abnormalities or dysfunctions which follow these general patterns. Moreover, we can see this quite clearly in some of the things to which Marx applies the concept of alienation. Workers are said to be deprived of, and hence 'alienated' (separated) from their products; they stand in an 'alien' (hostile) relation to the environment in which they work, and they experience the labor they perform as 'alien' to them (indifferent or inimical to their natural human desires and aspirations).[1] The division of labor is 'alienating' in that it separates people into rigid categories, and sets human activities in an 'alien' relation to each other by developing the ones needed for each specialization to the detriment of each person's individuality and integral humanity.[2] The economic system, as Marx depicts it, further separates or 'alienates' people from one another, by making them indifferent to the needs of others, and pitting the interests of each against those of everyone else.[3] Further, Marx tells us, in the modern state the individual's conscious participation in society as

'citizen' is separated from everyday life, experienced as an alien or false identity to be assumed at odd intervals for ritual purposes. The political state itself is 'alienated' from the realm of material production and exchange in which people sustain their actual common life.[4] And following Feuerbach, Marx views the prevailing Christian religion as separating everything valuable and worthwhile from humanity and nature, positing it (in imagination) in an alien being outside the world.[5]

All these phenomena, and more besides, are described by Marx as forms of 'alienation'. In his early writings, and especially in his celebrated fragment 'Alienated Labor', Marx seems to be trying to argue that they are all merely aspects of a single system or whole, based on one paradigm form of alienation: alienated laboring activity. Thus he describes his task in this manuscript as one of 'comprehending' (*begreifen*) the economic laws of modern society, 'grasping the intrinsic connection between them', by 'grasping the whole alienation' to which they belong. Marx ostensibly proceeds to perform this task by 'formulating the facts of political economy in conceptual (*begrifflich*) terms as estranged, externalized labor'. As the manuscript breaks off, Marx is in the midst of 'seeing further how the concept (*Begriff*) of estranged, externalized labor must express itself in actual life'.[6]

A great deal of paper and ink has been consumed in the attempt to spell out the 'theory of alienation' hinted at in this early fragment. But I think to no avail; there are strong reasons to doubt there could be any such theory worth explicating. Insofar as the various phenomena to which Marx applies the concept of alienation fall under that concept, they have in common only that they seem to involve some kind of unnatural separation or hostile relationship. That they have this feature in common does little to suggest that there is any real connection between them or that they all arise from a single underlying cause. It is hard to believe that 'alienation' (that is, unnatural separation or hostility) designates anything like a natural kind among human or social dysfunctions, and still harder to believe that it designates a 'concept' or essence whose presence in human laboring activity explains all the various sorts of separation or hostility which we find in the phenomena to which Marx applies the notion of 'alienation'.

Consider some of the claims made on behalf of Marx's 'system of alienation' by its exponents. Istvan Meszaros, perhaps the most painstaking of them, declares that 'Marx's system of alienation and

reification is not less but more rigorous than the philosophical systems of his predecessors', and that Marx's 'analysis of "alienation of labor" and its necessary corollaries' constitute 'the core of Marx's theory: the basic idea of the Marxian system'.[7] Both these statements, I submit, are simply preposterous. Marx's early writings are original, provocative, profound, rich in both social and philosophical insights. But they could be called 'rigorous' only by someone who has little familiarity with the property that term denotes. The theory presented two decades later in *Capital* is undoubtedly a 'system', even one possessing a certain degree of 'rigor'. But it certainly cannot be accurately described as a 'system of alienation'. Whatever continuity there is between Marx's early and his later writings, there is no evidence that he ever thought of 'alienation' as 'the basic idea of the Marxian system' at any time after 1844. Meszaros very accurately describes the ideas of the Paris writings when he calls them a 'system *in statu nascendi*'. But (to cite Hegel) neither a child nor a system is fully formed as soon as it is born; the idea which may have seemed 'basic' to Marx in his first groping sketch of this theory may very well assume a very different, even peripheral role in more mature versions.

One prominent theme which Marx stresses is the 'alienation' of human creations when they turn into hostile powers dominating or enslaving their human creators. Many writers have even identified the young Marx's concept of alienation with this theme. Marx's own emphasis (in the later as well as the early writings) supports the contention that this theme was central to his use of the terms *Entfremdung* and *Entäusserung*. Moreover, such a notion of alienation is arguably less diffuse than the image or metaphor of 'unnatural separation'. But even on this reading, the prospects are not bright for an explanatory theory of the sort adumbrated in the 'Alienated Labor' manuscript. The sorts of human 'creations' which Marx speaks of as 'alienated' and dominating their creators are extremely varied in character, including not only material products of labor, but also social institutions and practices (such as the state and private property) and even thoughts and ideas (such as religious ones) to which no extramental reality corresponds. These items are not all human 'creations' in the same sense (unless a rather slippery or rubbery one). And people are 'dominated' in very diverse ways by religious illusions, by the state, and by their product in the form of capital. Once again, it is extravagant to suppose that 'positing something which turns on its creators and enslaves them' designates a natural kind among human activities, or that all activities which this description can be made to fit

are caused by some fundamental or paradigm activity. If Marx's theory is to be taken seriously, such suppositions must once again be defended by arguments of a sort which neither the young Marx nor his enthusiasts have produced.

Our doubts on this score are not relieved by the reasoning Marx uses when he does attempt to establish a connection between the different forms or manifestations of alienation. 'Alienation', he says,

> shows itself not only in the result but in the act of production, in the producting activity itself. How could the laborer come to stand over against the product of his activity as something alien unless in the act of production itself he was alienating himself from himself? The product is only the resumé of the activity of production. If the product of labor is externalization, then production itself must be active externalization, the externalization of activity, the activity of externalization.[8]

Here Marx seems to be relying on some principle whose import is that the properties of an effect must always somehow pre-exist in the cause.[9] But even the scholastics who endorsed this dubious idea restricted it only to the 'perfections' in an effect, and alienation (whatever it is) is arguably not a perfection. If, moreover, we ignore the metaphysics of Marx's argument and examine the particular case in light of his other statements, it is difficult to make any sense of the explanatory claim he is making. Marx seems to be saying that alienation of the worker's product must result from alienation in the activity which produces it. Now as Marx describes it, 'alienation of the product' includes both the fact that workers do not appropriate or own the product of their labor, and the fact that they find themselves in servitude or bondage to it in the form of capital. The 'alienation of productive activity', on the other hand, consists in the fact that in labor the worker 'does not affirm himself but denies himself, feels not well off but unhappy, develops no free physical and spiritual energy but mortifies his *physis* and ruins his spirit'. Thus Marx's apparent claim is that wage labor's unpleasant and unfulfilling nature is what *explains* the fact that the worker's product belongs to someone else. Likewise, the unappealing nature of labor is what causes this product to dominate the worker in the form of capital. Those who wish to defend the young Marx's theory of alienation must discover a way of reading its explanatory claims which saves them from being mere gibberish.

2 What is 'alienation'?

The 'Alienated Labor' fragment contains Marx's first recognizable attempt at a systematic theory of capitalism. The attempt fails because the philosophical concept of alienation is simply too vague and metaphorical to perform the explanatory function Marx tries to assign it. The attempt is of interest, however, because it already embodies (though in a muddled form) three ideas which are central to Marx's mature theory of capitalist society.

First, Marx perceives a complex interconnection between the various ills and irrationalities which beset people in modern society. Second, he insists that what is distinctive about modern society, and what fundamentally explains its system of interconnected irrationalities, is something about the kind of labor or production which goes on in it. And third, he regards this peculiar kind of labor as characteristic of a determinate and historically transitory phase in the generally progressive movement of human history. ('Alienation', as the fragment puts it, 'is founded in the essence of human development.')[10] In the mature theory the interconnection does not consist in a 'system of alienation' but in the economic structure of capitalist society. The mature Marx traces this structure to a kind of labor or production because he holds that the social relations of production which make it up are determined by the degree of development of society's productive powers, and hence by the nature of its material labor. Finally, for the mature Marx the 'essence of human development' is not a process predetermined in the womb of the human species-essence but only the relentless expansion of society's productive powers, which determines the course of development taken by the social relations of production.

Marx's mature theory, then, does not assign to alienation the basic, explanatory role projected for it in the early fragment. Yet Marx does not simply abandon the concept of alienation in his mature writings. On the contrary, we still find it used in many places in the *Grundrisse, Capital* and elsewhere. Marx's use of it in these writings, I suggest, is no longer explanatory; rather, it is descriptive or diagnostic. Marx uses the notion of alienation to identify or characterize a certain sort of human ill or dysfunction which is especially prevalent in modern society. This ill is one to which all the various phenomena exemplifying the images or metaphors of 'unnatural separation' or 'domination by one's own creations' contribute in one way or another. These images or metaphors, however, seem insufficient to describe the ill

Marx has in mind. Perhaps it is impossible to improve upon them, but I will try.

One of the meanings *Entfremdung* had in Marx's day was 'madness' or 'insanity'.[11] Marx does not regard alienated individuals as insane, but he does regard them as involved in some sort of irrationality, as both producers and victims of life-circumstances which somehow do not make sense. Further, a central application of his image of 'unnatural separation' is that alienated individuals are in some sense separated from, at odds with, or hostile to themselves. These considerations motivate a provisional suggestion that alienation might be seen as the condition of a person who experiences life as empty, meaningless and absurd, or who fails to sustain a sense of self-worth. Of course, Marx regards many people as alienated who do not think of themselves or their lives in this way. (For example, religious believers, whose sense of meaning and self-worth is sustained by a faith in God's love for them.) But it seems to be Marx's view that such people possess a sense of meaning and self-worth only because they build their lives on consoling falsehoods.[12] He plainly believes that alienated people who sustain a sense of meaning and self-worth only through religious illusions would be unable to sustain such a sense if they were undeceived.

My provisional suggestion, then, is that we are 'alienated' if we either experience our lives as meaningless or ourselves as worthless, or else are capable of sustaining a sense of meaning and selfworth only with the help of illusions about ourselves or our condition.[13] Alienation, I think, is usually meant in some such sense when it serves as a vehicle of popular social criticism. So understood, of course, alienation is not an affliction only of men and women in modern capitalist society. And it is not plausible to think that in every case of it the primary cause must be found in the social arrangements which surround the victim. Yet Marx may be right in believing that alienation in this sense is more systematically prevalent and more serious in modern bourgeois society than in any other; and this fact makes it worthwhile to investigate whether there is something about bourgeois social forms which systematically produces it.

I have spoken of alienation both as a lack of sense of 'meaning' and a lack of a sense of 'self-worth'. The two things are different, but they are closely related. If I find little or nothing in myself which is worthy of value or esteem, I will have a hard time seeing any real meaning or serious purpose in my life. Conversely, if I experience my life as devoid of meaning, it will be difficult for me to place a high valuation

on the self whose life it is. Of course it might be (and I might recognize) that I am not to blame for the emptiness of my life. But a blameless self may still be an impoverished, impotent and degraded self, a worthless self. (Blamelessness is no strong recommendation for a self which finds itself unable to purpose or achieve anything which it can regard as meaningful or worthwhile.) A sense of meaning and a sense of self-worth, therefore, although they are different, usually go together, and a concept of alienation which refers indifferently to either will not be dangerously ambiguous.

Marx comes quite close to describing alienation explicitly as a lack of meaning or self-worth. He says that alienated workers are people 'robbed of all actual life content', and rendered 'worthless, devoid of dignity'. Under existing social relations, the human being is a degraded, enslaved, forsaken, despicable being'.[14] Moreover, the images of 'unnatural separation' and 'dominion by one's product' naturally lend themselves to the description of conditions which would give rise to alienation in the sense I have suggested. Someone lacking in self-worth may be described as 'alienated' from that person's true self or humanity, and Marx does speak of 'self-alienated' individuals in this way.[15] Alienated workers, according to Marx, spend their days in enervating drudgery, and must do so if they are to obtain the means of physical subsistence, and so sustain the whole absurd cycle of their alienated lives. 'Life itself appears as only a means of life, . . . [the human being's] life-activity, his *essence* is made into only a means to his *existence*.'[16]

Further, there seem to be a great many ways in which the disruption of harmonies or vital relationships either within a human self or between the self and the world, could contribute to a person's loss of a sense of self-worth or of coherence and meaning in life. Marx's early writings are full of examples (some of which I have already mentioned) of ways in which the metaphor of 'alienation' can be used to depict this vividly and compellingly.

Alienation, as the experience of one's self and life as empty, worthless and degraded, is admittedly a rather vague notion. But for our present purposes there is little point in trying to make it more precise. The vagueness is built into the notion of alienation both as it can be found in Marx's writings and as it belongs to popular social thought. It may be that the concept of alienation is too vague to serve as a useful tool of social analysis or criticism. But several generations of fruitful social thought have treated alienation as an important and a characteristically Marxian idea. This is reason enough for us not to ignore it.

Vague as the notion is, however, alienation is nevertheless a specific human and social evil, clearly distinguishable from others. It is not the sum and substance of all evils, and it is by no means the only important evil which Marx believes to be a systematic result of capitalist social relations. For capitalist relations, according to him, also produce social conflict, poverty, disease, ugliness, insecurity. And none of these evils, bad as they are, necessarily involves the loss of a sense of meaning or self-worth on the part of their victims. Yet perhaps even these evils, in their characteristically bourgeois form, are in fact allied with alienation, or contribute to it. Insecurity, for example, threatens me as a wage laborer in the specific form of unemployment, which poses not just the threat of not getting what I need to live, but of not getting it because I myself am not needed, because there is nothing productive for me to do, no place in society for me. Inuit seal hunters certainly know as much about deprivation and a precarious mode of existence as any wage laborer; but in this specific form, they do not know it at all.

3 Alienation and false consciousness

The concept of alienation is not original with Marx. His use of it in the early writings draws upon, and presupposes familiarity with, the philosophers through whom he acquired it, especially Hegel and Feuerbach. From the beginning, however, Marx's views about the nature and causes of alienation differ decisively from theirs.

Both of Marx's predecessors regard alienation as consisting fundamentally in a certain form of acute false consciousness, in a certain error or illusion about oneself, one's humanity or one's relation to ultimate reality. For Hegel, the paradigm of alienated life is the 'unhappy consciousness'. This term refers to a form of misunderstood Christian religiosity (that is, to any Christianity which has not yet reinterpreted itself according to Hegel's rationalistic pantheism). In *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, the unhappy consciousness is described as the finite, individual self-consciousness which mistakenly conceives of its own ground or spiritual 'essence' (*Wesen*) as a being outside it and opposed to it, a divine being dwelling outside the world in a supernatural 'beyond'. Because the unhappy consciousness takes itself, and the whole changeable world, to be at odds with its own essence, it regards itself and the natural world as 'inessential' (*unwesentlich*); it feels itself, its activity and the whole sphere of its finite temporal existence to be, empty, worthless, devoid of true reality or

significance. As Hegel puts it: 'The conciousness of life, existence and action is only a sorrowing over this existence and action, for it has in it the consciousness of its opposite as the essence, and of its own nothingness.'[17] The unhappy consciousness thus consumes itself in a desperate yearning after the beyond, and in a ceaseless penitential labor and desire aimed at reconciling it with its divine essence. Yet just because these acts proceed from it, they are straightway recognized as 'inessential' and hence futile. The only comfort for the unhappy consciousness lies in its faith that God has himself effected this reconciliation. Yet the unhappy consciousness is too permeated by a sense of its own poverty to be able to comprehend this reconciliation or enjoy it directly. It therefore conceives the act of atonement as wholly contingent and miraculous, performed in the remote past in a distant land, whose fruits it can hope to enjoy only in an after life. The unhappy consciousness can experience a sense of reconciliation with its own essence only in the rite of communion, which even here is mediated by the power of an external agency, the priesthood.

Hegel sees the unhappy consciousness as an important stage in human history, that is (in Hegelese), in the world spirit's coming to awareness of itself in time. In the unhappy consciousness, spirit's 'particularity', in the form of the individual human personality, feels separated or alienated from its essence or ground in the universal world spirit. Just for this reason, however, it is in the unhappy consciousness that the individual self in all its depth first becomes an object of awareness. In other words, according to Hegel, it is in Christianity that the individual human person first comes to be truly recognized as a spiritual power, and the proper vehicle of spirit's self-knowledge. This is why Hegel insists that the message of his philosophy itself is really just the Christian message of reconciliation, translated out of the 'unhappy' form of the contingent, the remote and the miraculous, and demonstrated to be a matter of metaphysical necessity.

On Hegel's diagnosis, the unhappy consciousness is unhappy only because it does not interpret the world aright. It does not recognize that the natural realm, far from being 'inessential', is the necessary expression or objectification of the divine world spirit, of which consciousness itself is only the particularization. The alienation of the unhappy consciousness is consequently just a matter of finite spirit's imperfect knowledge of its own infinite essence. The only remedy for alienation is the attainment of a higher stage of self-knowledge, where God and humanity, the universal essence of spirit and its particular

self-consciousness, are seen to be fundamentally in harmony or identical with each other.

Feuerbach's critique of religion frees Hegel's analysis of the unhappy consciousness from its mystical trappings, and makes explicit its latent humanism. According to Feuerbach, the idea of God is really no more than our idea of our own human essence, our *Gattungswesen*, erroneously conceived as an entity distinct from and opposed to us. Religion is the 'self-alienation of the human being, the division (*Entzweiung*) of the human being from himself'.[18] Religion's appeal is really the appeal of each person's own self-affirmation and love for the human species; but it involves a love and an affirmation which has been perverted, misdirected, focused on an imaginary being beyond humanity and nature. In order to love and praise God, men and women must despise and degrade themselves: 'What is positive, essential in the intuition or determination of the divine being can only be human, and so the intuition of the human being as an object of consciousness can only be negative, hostile to the human being. To enrich God, the human being must become poor; that God may be all, the human being must be nothing.'[19] Moreover, despite the fact that the central idea in Feuerbach's critique of religion is borrowed directly from Hegel, the Hegelian philosophy really fares no better in his judgment. For it, like the unhappy consciousness, locates what is essential in human thoughts and deeds not in real, natural, living human beings, but in an abstraction, a supernatural and superhuman world-mind. In this way, says Feuerbach, 'absolute [Hegelian] philosophy externalizes (*entäussert*) and alienates (*entfremdet*) from the human being his own essence and activity.'[20]

Feuerbach's account of alienation is aimed not only at prevailing religious ideas, but also at their harmful psychological and social consequences: the devaluation of our earthly well being, and the separation of men and women from one another and from their common essence as human beings. Like Hegel, however, Feuerbach thinks of alienation fundamentally as a form of false consciousness, an erroneous conception of the human essence. Hence he too conceives the overcoming of alienation as primarily a theoretical victory, a triumph of a true species consciousness over a false one. For him, the main requirement for a satisfying human life is that people should correctly understand and affirm their essence as species beings, at home in nature and destined for loving unity with other human beings. Marx thus attributes to Feuerbach, as to the other Young Hegelians, the view that once people renounce their religious illusions about

themselves and come to be animated by the true and rational ideal of what human life should be, the unhappy social consequences of their religious illusions will fall away of themselves, and a truly human society will naturally arise in place of the old, alienated one.

4 Alienation and practice

Marx agrees with Hegel and Feuerbach that alienation is closely associated with a certain kind of false consciousness about one's essence, and that the paradigm case of this false consciousness is to be found in religion, especially in Christianity. But he does not agree that alienation *consists* in a condition of false consciousness, or that it is *caused* by one. The curious thing about religious illusions is that they both give expression to alienation, to a sense of the emptiness and worthlessness of human life, and also offer us comfort and consolation for his alienation, in the form of an unworldly spiritual calling and the promise of an unalienated life in the beyond. Alienated consciousness thus involves two contrasting ideas: it laments that our natural human life, considered in itself, is alienated, unsatisfying and worthless; yet it proclaims that our existence is not really alienated after all, if only we place on it the right supernatural interpretation. Hegel and Feuerbach hold that people are alienated only because they misunderstand themselves and the real nature of the human condition. Consequently, it is their view that the illusion of alienated consciousness consists only in the first idea, in its negative attitude toward earthly human life. According to both philosophers, the comforting assurances of religion (at least when these assurances themselves are given the right philosophical interpretation) contain the real truth of the matter.

To Marx, however, the whole phenomenon of alienated consciousness becomes intelligible as soon as we adopt just the reverse supposition: that the unhappy consciousness tells the truth in its laments, not in its consolations. Religion gives expression to a mode of life which really is alienated, empty, degraded, dehumanized. 'Religious misery is in part an expression of actual misery and in part the protest against actual misery. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the soul of a heartless world, the spirit of spiritless conditions.' Religious illusions have a hold on us because their false promises provide a semblance of meaning and fulfillment to our alienated lives. Religious hopes are 'the fantastic actualization of the human essence, because the human essence possesses no true actuality'.[21] Religion reconciles

us to an alienated life and makes it *seem* tolerable to us; it offers us illusory meaning for a mode of life which without this illusion would be experienced directly for what it is: unredeemed meaninglessness.

An alienated society supports religious illusions because they support it. Society will obviously be more stable if alienated individuals accept some conception of themselves which encourages them to think either that their lives do affirm and fulfill their humanity, or else that their feelings of frustration and emptiness are due to the finitude of the human condition as such, and not to the transitory system of social relations in which they are entangled.

The social function of religion, then, is to cloud people's minds and anaesthesize them to the sufferings of their alienated condition. This is what Marx means when (famously) he calls religion 'the opium of the people'.

Marx thus rejects the view of Hegel, Feuerbach and the young Hegelians that alienation fundamentally consists in false consciousness. In so doing, he rejects the long tradition of philosophical and religious thinking based on the pious axiom that human life is always meaningful to those who have the wisdom of spirit to lay hold of this meaning. Marx need not deny that alienation might be due to a lack of wisdom. He only holds that this is not in fact the cause of the systematic alienation in modern bourgeois society. Marx holds then, that alienation is *real*: that we feel our lives to be empty and meaningless because they really are so, because we live under conditions which make a fulfilled and worthwhile mode of life impossible for us.

This is not the view of Hegel and the young Hegelians. The explicit aim of Hegel's speculative theodicy is to reconcile us to the world as it is, to teach us that what is must be, and that it is rational. Of course Feuerbach and the young Hegelians do not recognize any theodicy of this sort. Like Marx, they believe that society must be changed, made rational, brought into harmony with the human essence. But they too place their faith fundamentally in a kind of philosophical wisdom. For in their view the alienation of man in existing society consists in the fact that men and women misconceive the human essence, and consequently have only false or perverted ideals on which to model their lives. Philosophy will be their liberator, releasing them from these illusions, supplying them with a correct conception of the essence of man, and thus pointing the way to a fulfilling way of life.

Marx is prepared to agree that alienated individuals are in the dark about what goals to pursue, about how to lead fulfilling lives, about what sort of society to build. But he does not see this as the basic

problem. The basic problem is that alienated individuals lack the practical power to take meaningful action, whether individually or collectively, to realize whatever worthwhile ideals they might have. This is because there are real, extramental obstacles standing in their way. Before they can begin to decide how a truly human life ought to be constituted, they must first come to terms with these obstacles, understand their nature, and set about removing them.

It follows that the critique of false consciousness for Marx is not by itself a liberating act or a victory over alienation, as it was for Hegel and the young Hegelians. On the contrary, the only positive thing this critique can do is sharpen alienation, make people more painfully aware of their condition, and motivate them to do something about it:

> The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is the demand for its *actual* happiness. The demand to give up illusions about its condition is the demand to give up a condition which *needs* illusions. . . . the critique of religion undeceives or disappoints (*enttäuscht*) the human being, so that he will think, act and form his own actuality like a human being who has been undeceived, who has come to his senses.

Religious false consciousness is only a symptom of alienation. The battle against it must be seen as only one aspect of the struggle against alienated practice, a battle which cannot be wholly won until the more fundamental practical struggle is successful. 'Religion', says Marx, 'no longer counts for us as the *ground* but only as the *phenomenon*.'[22] In his view, people will continue to fall prey to illusions as long as they need them, and they will continue to need them as long as they are alienated in real life. It is primarily the struggle against alienation which Marx has in mind when he declares that 'the philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; but what matters is to *change* it.'[23]