REPRESENTATION IN THE EIGHTEENTH BRUMAIRE OF KARL MARX

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A finalidade do artigo é relacionar a idéia de representação em arte, ciência e política à obra de Marx, levando em conta especialmente **O Dezoito Brumário de Luís Bonaparte**. *A primeira parte ("Personagem") serve de preâmbulo geral à ação principal, ilustrando o papel de certas figuras literárias – sobretudo Hamlet – no pensamento de Marx. A segunda parte ("Ação") expõe o drama e o meta-drama subjacentes ao* **Dezoito Brumário**. *. A terceira parte ("Representação") apresenta a teoria de Marx da representação de classe relacionando-a a sua teoria da ideologia como sistema de representações. A aplicação que faz Marx desta teoria a Luís Bonaparte e à Revolução de 1848 é sujeita a uma crítica detalhada, tendo por referência a obra análoga de Max Weber,* **Parlamento e Governo em uma Alemanha Reconstruída**. *O resultado desta confrontação é "representacionalmente real" mais enquanto arte do que enquanto ciência.*

The paper aims to relate artistic, scientific and political representation in Marx focussing on **The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte**. *Section I begins with an exposition of dramatic representation by briefly illustrating the role of a few literary types, specifically Hamlet, in Marx's thought. It goes on with an account of the drama and metadrama underlying* **The Eighteenth Brumaire**. *Section II presents Marx's theory of class representation and relates it to his view of ideology as a system of representations. Marx's application of this theory to Louis Bonaparte and the 1848 Revolution is subjected to a thorough critique by reference to an analogous work of Max Weber* **Parliament and Government in a Reconstructed Germany**. *What emerges in Section III from this confrontation is that Marx's work is more representationally real as art than it is as science.*

". . . All facts and personages of great importance in world history occur, as it were, twice . . . the first time as tragedy, the second as farce". With these oftquoted words Marx begins an historical text which itself enacts the theme of repetition and re-presentation that it ascribes to history as text. In both texts repetition is re-presentation and representation is also repetition. If Louis Bonaparte's Eighteenth Brumaire is the "second edition" (Marx 1977, p. 10) of the original, Karl Marx's *Eighteenth Brummaire* might be considered the third edition. The "responsible publisher of the coup d'état" (Ibid., p. 8) is an author just like the author responsible

Manuscrito. XII, 1 (1989), pp. 7-37.

for its republication. And the latter edition reproduces the former, for the dramatic farce of Louis Bonaparte is repeated by being represented in the farcical drama of Karl Marx.

Marx's historical drama is thus a play of representation; it is a play on "representation" — this one word, surely the password to the text, is turned and troped like a key to all its meanings. Dramatic, political, literary, scientific representation, representation as idea, ideology, symbol and sentiment; parliamentary, press, class representatives, representative personages, types, cases, and acts — subtly and slyly Marx modulates from one theme of representation to another. In our attempt to represent Marx's multiple representations we begin as he does with the original sense of representation as performance and then go on to develop all the other plays on "representation".

In the *Eighteenth Brumaire* history is conceived as drama because action is also acting: political actors utilize all the props and plots of the stage in their performance. In order to be represented their acts must be presented dramatically. The play of history is best displayed through a history as play. But for the action of the *Eighteenth Brumaire* only a very special play will do, since for Marx in this work" the play's the thing to catch the conscience of the king". We know which play it is, but who is the king?

I. *Dramatic Representation*

Marx's farcical drama recalls an earlier tragedy. As in a palimpsest, beneath the scientific-sounding surface script lurks the ghostly trace of an effaced prior literary text: behind the characterization of the "facts and personages ' of the *Eighteenth Brumaire* there hovers the ghost of *Hamlet*. Hamlet is not mentioned, but his presence is strongly felt through the agency of the Ghost of his murdered father, Hamlet the King. In Marx's work, however, the Ghost appears not as a dead king, but as a dead revolution: "drowned in the blood of the Paris proletariat, it haunts the subsequent acts of the drama like a ghost" (Marx 1977, p. 101). He is referring, of course, to the "June Insurrection, the most colossal event in the history of European civil wars" (Ibid., p. 17). Nevertheless, to represent a dead revolution as a dead king is to take considerable poetic license. Marx is able to grant himself this because he conceives of the proletariat as the uncrowned sovereign in the underground, but it does set up unwelcome complications concerning the king that will emerge presently. Like the Ghost, the "revolution. . . is still journeying through purgatory" (Ibid, p. 103); it grubs away in the cellarage like Hamlet's old mole, "a worthy pioneer"; and when its pioneering spirit breaks through, "Europe will leap from its seat and exultantly exclaim: well grubbed, old mole!" (Ibid., p. 104).

If the Ghost is the dead proletariat of the June Insurrection, then the Hamlet who calls on it and who tries to avenge it can be none other than

Marx himself. Marx takes on the voice of Hamlet when he rails against a time out of joint; and especially so when he denounces Louis Bonaparte whom he implicitly casts in the role of Claudius, the usurping, lecher king. He is an "old crafty roué" (Ibid., p. 63) who has seduced "la belle France" in the role of Gertrude and whom Marx castigates as does Hamlet his mother: "a nation and a woman are not forgiven the unguarded hour in which the first adventurer that came along could violate them" (Ibid., p. 15). Like Gertrude, "she feels dishonoured", "hence the downcast despair, the feeling of most dreadful humiliation and degradation that oppresses the breast of France and makes her catch her breath" (Ibid., p. 105). Marx displays to France the image of her ruler as "a Vice of kings, a cutpurse of the empire and the rule", "a king of shreds and patches" (*Hamlet*, III, iv). He is a "serious buffoon" (Ibid., p. 64), a cardsharp, a mountebank, who "robs the Bank of France. . . and comes together with his accomplices like a thief in the night" (p. 99). Like Claudius, Louis Bonaparte mouthes all the cant "phrases about order, religion, family and property" (Ibid., p. 65), against which he himself transgresses in order to gain his seat of power. He is gluttonous and swinish (crapule or Crapulinski) in the "orgies that he kept up every night" (Ibid., p. 95), which disgusts Marx as much as it does Hamlet when Claudius keeps wassail and "drains his draughts of Rhenish down" (*Hamlet*, I, iii). Louis Bonaparte also plies his officers with "cigars and champagne, cold poultry and garlic sausage" (Ibid., p. 64) and the men "he has bought with liquor and sausages, and whom he must continually ply with sausages anew" (Ibid., p. 105).

If Marx plays Hamlet to Louis Bonaparte's Claudius then his book *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* is his mouse-trap play to catch the conscience of Europe. A literary critic, John-Paul Riquelme (1980) notes: "Like Shakespeare's Hamlet, Marx produces a drama-within--a-drama to indict a head of state and avenge a ghost in purgatory". In fact the thema enacted in the mouse-trap play of stealthy assassination, seduction and usurpation parallels almost exactly Louis Bonaparte and the 1848 revolution, beginning with the murder of the proletariat, the rightful sovereign, and ending with the coup d'état. Like Hamlet, Marx seeks to hold up the mirror of art to Louis Bonaparte to represent him as he is and expose him for what he represents, "irredeemably unmasking Bonaparte before France and Europe in his true character. . ." (Marx 1977, p. 70). This act of dramatic exposure turned out no better for Marx in the drama of history than it did for Hamlet in Shakespeare's play. Louis Bonaparte was no more overcome with guilt or dethroned than was Claudius, and, like Hamlet, Marx went to his exile in England – the artist is no match for the politician. Louis Bonaparte was only overcome when the duel of the Franco-Prussian war, which he himself had stage-managed, backfired against him. But in the confusion, in a sense, Marx's Hamlet, too, perished as the proletariat was

once again drowned in the blood of the Paris Commune. The ultimate inheritor was Fortinbras, the man of blood and iron, the new Caesar whom Marx despised.

Almost as if in anticipation of the outcome, in the preface of 1869 Marx sought to invoke his *Eighteenth Brumaire* to forestall it: "I hope that my work will contribute towards eliminating the school-taught phrase now current, particulaly in Germany, of so-called Caesarism" (Ibid., p. 6). Such an attempt could hardly be successful because Caesar had already seized hold of *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, more even than Marx was perhaps aware. When the Ghost first appears in its pages it is not that of Hamlet the Dane but of "Caesar himself" and other "ghosts from the days of Rome" (Ibid., p. 11); and a page later "the ghost of the old revolution walked about" (Ibid., p. 12). For Marx "conjuring up of the dead of world history" (Ibid., p. 10) is the work of the bourgeoisie in their earlier revolutions: "the awakening of the dead in those revolutions served the purpose of glorifying the new struggles" (Ibid., p. 11). The proletariat, by contrast, is given the task of "finding once more the spirit of revolution, not of making its ghost walk about again" (Ibid., p. 12). But, as we have seen, the proletariat, too, has its pioneering Ghost grubbing away, so what distinguishes the conjuring up of its ghots from that of the bourgeoisie? When speaking of the "idées napoléoniennes" of Louis Bonaparte, Marx calls them "words that are transformed into phrases, spirits transformed into ghosts" (Ibid., p. 112). These "idées napoléoniennes" are, of course, the spirit of the revolutionary Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte. Louis Bonaparte is accused of transforming this spirit into ghosts. Perhaps one might say that the proletariat is being enjoined to transform its Ghost, formed of the blood of the June Insurrection, back into revolutionary spirit.

But the whole alchemical process whereby blood is transmuted into spirit and spirit into ghost is precisely the one that Shakespeare dramatizes in *Julius Caesar*. What is thus dramatically represented there is the process whereby the ideology of Caesarism is distilled. It is a religious performance officiated over by the revenger Mark Antony which begins with the intent merely to "bury Caesar" and ends with the aroused crowd shouting:

> We'll burn his body in the holy place
> And with brands fire the traitors' houses.
>
> (*Julius Caesar*, III, ii)

Thus the blood of Caesar shed and his corpse burned become aetherealized by fire into the murderous spirit of Caesarism to be used by Mark Antony and the young Octavius as an ideological weapon to defeat the republican Brutus, while his conscience is befuddled by the Ghost of Caesar. If Louis Bonaparte, himself the author of a *Julius Caesar* (1865-6), might be allowed to answer back to Marx he could well claim that this was the play he was enacting and that like Octavius, the future Emperor Augustus, he, too, was

distilling the spirit of Caesarism, his idées napoléoniennes, from the blood and bones of his great Uncle slain by the reactionary Brutuses of the old order on whom he would be avenged. Marx would undoubtedly reply to him as Hamlet answers Polonius' boast to have played the ill-fitting role of Caesar:

Pol. – I did enact Julius Caesar. I was killed i' th' Capitol; Brutus kill'd me.
Ham. – It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.

(*Hamlet*, II, ii).

Marx's imagination is, however, more enthralled by Julius Caesar than he cares to admit. The lumpenproletariat which Louis Bonaparte wins over to form the Society of December 10 – "the party fighting force peculiar to him" (Marx 1977, p. 64) and the forerunner of blackshirts, brownshirts and many other gangs – this so-called class is none other than the mob of Rome which Antony stirs up, "the Roman proletariat (which) lived at the expense of society" (Ibid., p, 6). This "scum, offal, refuse of all classes", "the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass" (Ibid., p. 63) is also what envious Cassius apostrophizes:

> . . . What trash is Rome?
> What rubbish and what offal: when it serves
> For the base matter to illuminate
> So vile a thing as Caesar.
>
> (*Julius Caesar*, I. iii)

Antony speaks of "carrion men" (III, i) and this is taken up by Coriolanus in the later Roman play when he compares the crowd to "the dead carcasses of unburied men" (*Coriolanus*, III, iii). The metaphor was already common among Roman historians, Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of "that carrion crew" when referring to the mob of Rome (Auerbach 1957, p. 44).

Sociologically considered, there is no such class as the lumpenproletariat and the motley assortment of types that Marx portrays as making it up, ranging from "decayed roués with dubious means of subsistence" to "literati and beggars" (Marx 1977, p. 63), in no sense constitutes a class. As a class it is a mere literary fiction standing in for the city mob as portrayed in Shakespeare's Roman plays together with what the nineteenth century bourgeoisie would have called the canaille or scum, of which they became increasingly contemptuous as the century went on. Mixed in with this mob were also members of the proletariat. For the idea that self-respecting workers, mechanics and their apprentices will out of sheer class-allegiance exclude themselves from the mob and refrain from joining Societies

of December 10 or their latter-day equivalents is a psychological naiveté repeatedly disproved by events. Marx's unconscious motive for constituting the lumpenproletariat as a class is to have a foil for his own proletariat — the bad proletariat as against the good proletariat. Thus Louis Bonaparte as "chief of the lumpenproletariat" (Marx 1977, p. 63) is the negative counter-image of himself as putative chief of of the real proletariat.

The struggle between Marx and Louis Bonaparte, figured as that of Hamlet against Claudius, is continually crossed by the implicit counter-theme of Caesarism in which Louis Bonaparte plays Augustus to the Caesar of Napoleon. Both plays concern revenge. Louis Bonaparte is politically successful as the heir of Caesar on the real stage of history; Marx is politically impotent; he can only rail like mad Hamlet or Thersites, another of his Shakespearean personae, against the powerful of the world[1]. His thirst for revenge for the murder of the proletariat can only be assuaged on the literary stage, inside his own staged drama where Louis Bonaparte can be assigned the role of Claudius the usurping king. But Louis Bonaparte continually keeps slipping out of that role into the self-assigned one of nephew and heir of Caesar. The Ghost, too, keeps shifting uneasily between Hamlet's Ghost and Caesar's Ghost.

Marx's openly revealed motive of revenge, and his implicit assumption of the role of Hamlet, can be interpreted psychologically as an imaginative attempt to overcome the evident failure of his revolutionary hopes through the partial wish-fulfillment of a literary reworking which holds out the promise of eventual success in the future revolution of the nineteenth century: ". . . the overthrow of the parliamentary republic contains within itself the germ of the triumph of the proletarian revolution" (Marx 1977, p. 103). Thus he "counters present defeats by prophesying future victories" (Ibid., p. 34). Marx's prophetic spirit is in the service of the future proletarian revolution. He represents the present only so as to present the future. The future is the positive image drawn from the negative of the present. Representation is not always repetition, it can also be anticipation.

The present is a world upside down. "The February Revolution was a surprise attack, a taking of the old society unawares, and the people proclaimed this unexpected stroke as a deed of world importance . . . " (Ibid., p. 13). But before too long, already by 1849, this deed had become "a motley mixture of crying contradictions" (Ibid., p. 34). What ensued was a saturnalia of history which superstitiously imagined itself as the "Day of Judgement" (Ibid., p. 34). In this "phantasmagoria" (Ibid., p. 15) everyth-

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[1] ". . . he could believe that if Thersites spoke out clearly enough and often enough, the 'kings' he cavilled at might be seen for what they were. And that in its turn might be a step towards ridding the world of those who dominated it and the order they supported" (Prawer 1978, p. 130) This is an early intimation of what he was to try to achieve in the mouse-trap play *The Eighteenth Brumaire*.

ing is inverted and all connections come apart. Character and action are dissociated, there appear "heroes without heroic deeds" (Ibid., p. 34). Actors who do not act produce "history without events" (Ibid.). There ensues a history with no "development . . . , wearying with constant repetition of the same tensions and relaxations" (Ibid.). Politics is made through a representation that does not represent: "the collective will of the nation, as often as it speaks through universal suffrage, seeking its appropriate expression through the inveterate enemies of the interests of the masses" (Ibid.). "Men and events appear as inverted Schlemihls, as shadows that have lost their bodies" (Ibid., p. 35). Worst of all, they evince "passions without truth, truths without passion" (Ibid., p. 34).

Time is moving backwards as the revolution has gone into reverse, it "moves in a descending line" (Ibid.) from the most radical back to the most reactionary parties. Like a row of clowns in a circus act, "each party kicks from behind at that driving forward and in front leans over towards the party which presses backwards", until each "collapses with curious capers" (Ibid., p. 33). Out of this crap game emerges Crapulinski, the Joker of the pack, as "the official collective genius of France is brought to nought by the artful stupidity of a single individual" (Ibid., p. 34). So that before too long confusion is swept away because "all has vanished like a phantasmagoria before the spell of a man whom even his enemies do not make out to be a sorcerer" (Ibid., p. 15). He is not a magician, but a "conjurer . . . under the necessity of keeping the public gaze fixed on himself, as Napoleon's substitute, by springing constant suprises . . . " (Ibid., p. 116). Napoleonic peace is restored when all meaningful action gives way to acting and conjuring.

In this phantasmagoria of history all the key terms are confused and dissociated: character, act, event, representation, development, revolution; all are in conceptual turmoil. In the *mêlée*, through "artful stupidity" Louis Bonaparte floats like scum to the top. Meanwhile Marx, who has gone underground, strives to keep a sure hold on history. He paints chaos "grey on grey" (Ibid., p. 35) so as to create order out of it and depict progress. The real and true relations of character, act, event, representation, development and revolution are apparently known only to him. The doubt and disillusionment of modern dramatists and historians are not yet on the horizon. Action in history can be given a clear and unequivocal meaning even when it appears at its most distorted. He has no fear of confusing the approaching apocalypse with street theatre, or "the danger of the world coming to an end (with) . . . the pettiest intrigues and court comedies played by the world redeemers" (Ibid., p. 34). World redemption will ensue but only as the culmination of the "world comedy" (Ibid., p. 64) that Marx has foreseen.

At the very opening of his work Marx grasps hold firmly of the confusion of his contemporary present by placing it in a clear relation to an understood past and a promised future. He sees the revolution of the present

as confused because it is a distorted, upside-down repetition of the revolution of the past, and a foreshadowing anticipation of the revolution of the future. The revolutionaries of the past, especially of the Great French Revolution, could not understand what they were doing because in order to do it, in this case to carry through the sober task of setting up bourgeois society and capitalism, they had to "drug themselves concerning their own content" (Ibid., p. 13), to assume the roles, characters, masks, costumes and speeches of an heroic Roman past. Character and act were already ideologically dissociated, and necessarily so. However, in the present revolution of 1848 this dissociation is twice compounded because it is a mere imitation of the past revolution, and so the imitation of an imitation twice removed from reality.

All history is trapped in the past because enactment is always also re-enactment, action is repetition, origination is imitation and acting is impersonation, or in a word, presentation is always also re-presentation in all the possible senses of that word. This is the "nightmare" (Ibid., p. 10) of history; but Marx believes that it is a nightmare from which men can wake. They will wake to reality when they confront the future not the past. "Earlier revolutions required recollections of past world history . . . " (Ibid., p. 13), but the coming "social revolution of the nineteenth century" (Ibid., p. 12) "has stripped off all superstition in regard to the past" (Ibid., p. 13); it "must let the dead bury their dead" (Ibid.). It "cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future" (Ibid.).

But what can it mean to draw poetry from the future? Marx does not explain. Was he perhaps a Futurist avant la lettre? If so, then the poetry of the future is that which the Futurists glorified: speed and simultaneity, the new technology and science, and, most ominous of all, violence and war. Some Marxists have interpreted it that way. But it is doubtful whether this is what Marx had in mind, since he himself most surely drew his own poetry from the past, mainly from past literature. How his proletariat could do otherwise remains in doubt. Could they do other than "borrow names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language" (Ibid., p. 10)? Could they strip off all ideological costumes of appearance and act in the naked truth of reality? Could they act without acting?

Marx believes that the proletariat will have the inestimable advantage of being able to rely on the truth contained in his work, precisely in this text itself, *The Eighteenth Brumaire*. And he is convinced that to attain to this truth he does not have to rely on the past in the way that Louis Bonaparte does. Louis Bonaparte can only imitate his original, Napoleon Bonaparte; his Eighteenth Brumaire is only a parody of that of the authoritative text; it is "the second edition of the Eighteenth Brumaire" (Ibid., p. 10); and the whole performace of the 1848 Revolutions is the re-enactment of an earlier tragedy and so only farce. As an author of history Louis

Bonaparte is a mere *farceur:* only "the Society of December 10 belonged to him, it was his work, his very own idea — that is, Bonaparte himself as original author, and the history of the Society of December 10 is his own history" (Ibid., p. 64). Marx takes himself for an original author of history in a quite superior sense. Louis Bonaparte has only the "authority of an individual without authority" (Ibid., p. 103), so he is an author without authority. But whence derive Karl Marx's authorship and authority?

Marx regards his own *Eighteenth Brumaire* as above the drama of history as it has hitherto been played, therefore as superior to "the entire literature, the political names and the intellectual reputations, the civil law and the penal code, the liberté, égalité, fraternité. . . (Ibid., p. 15) of bourgeois society. He is above literature because in the work immediately prior to this one, the *Communist Manifesto*, together with Engels he had laid down the general scientific principles of history; and as late as 1872 they considered that "the general principles laid down in this Manifesto are, on the whole, as correct today as ever"[2]. But such principles of scientific historial materialism do not play a major explanatory role in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. From a materialist point of view Marx does no more than providing a brief sketch of the changing economic conditions from 1848 till 1851 (Ibid., pp. 92-4) in order to explain the support of the bourgeoisie for the coup d'état. Nevertheless, on the basis of this claim to science Marx takes his *Eighteenth Brumaire* to be more than just literature. He thinks that science opens up to him the secrets of the drama of history, of all revolutions: past, present and future. He believes that it gives him authority over history and makes him a greater author of history than Louis Bonaparte, as superior to him as his political creation, the party of the proletariat, is to be superior to the party of the lumpenproletariat, the Society of December 10. This is why Marx believes that he can repeat and defeat the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte inside the pages of his own *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte.*

What kind of scientific principles structure the action of his historical mouse-trap play? It has the appearance of being dialectical, for throughout there are triplets of terms. Unfortunately, these terms do not constitute a dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis but rather a triad of past, present and future — hardly a very scientific principle. The original "thesis" is the heroic past of the bourgeoisie of the Great Revolution, the Great Napoleon, the original Eighteenth Brumaire; its "negation" is the mean-spirited present of the 1848 Revolution, Louis Bonaparte, the mock Eighteenth Brumaire; and their "synthesis" is the glorious future of the proletariat, the coming social revolution, its future leader Karl Marx and, to complete the parallel, the Eighteenth Brumaire of Karl Marx. This sequence

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[2]Preface to the German Edition of 1872, in (Marx and Engels (1970), p.21).

is mythologically symbolized by the three heraldic beasts: eagle, trained vulture and mole. The eagle of Caesar is mocked and "brought down to earth by a trained Swiss vulture playing the part of Napoleonic eagle" (Ibid., p. 63), and both are undermined by the pioneering mole (Ibid., p. 104). "C'est le premier vol de l'aigle" (Ibid., p. 115) is thus the joke of history and its truth because *vol* (flight, aspiration) is really *vol* (theft, confiscation); the thieving bird on the ground reveals the truth of the robber bird of the air — but both will be expropriated by the grubbing beast in the underground[3].

The dramatic and aesthetic terms according to which Marx judges history also line up along this triadic grid. As dramatic genre, the past revolution is "tragedy" (Ibid., p. 10) played in the grand classical style "on the high plane of great historical tragedy" (Ibid., p. 11); the present revolution is "farce" (Ibid., p. 10) played by a "serious buffoon who no longer takes world history for a comedy but his comedy for world history" (Ibid., p. 64); and the future revolution will be tragi-comedy, the tragic acts of violence and death culminating in the comic fulfillment of world history. As literary genre, the past is the high art of heroic poetry and serious prose "in its sober reality begotten (by) its true interpreters and mouth-pieces" (Ibid., p. 11); the present is the low art of satire, parody, clownerie, circus spectacle and army parades (in short, what eventually became Offenbach); the future is "poetry of the future", scientific socialism, and, Marx wants to suggest, beyond mere literature and art altogether. "Proletarian revolutions, like those of the nineteenth century, criticize themselves constantly" (Ibid., p. 14), they are critical philosophy in action; whereas "bourgeois revolutions, like those of the eighteenth century, storm swiftly" (Ibid., p. 13), like works of art whose "dramatic effects outdo each other" (Ibid.), they are "brilliant" but " short-lived" (Ibid.); the present revolution cannot even be considered serious art, it is a "motley mixture" of buffoonery and show. Aesthetically considered, in the past the "phrase went beyond the content", in the future "the content goes beyond the phrase" (Ibid.), whereas the present is "words transformed into phrases" (Ibid., p. 12) and sheer "force without phrases" (Ibid., p. 103).

In all these terms history is considered by Marx as art not as science. The different kinds of revolutions are judged aesthetically, as if they were works of art in different styles. Marx's own work therefore emerges primarily as a work of art, or at least as a work of art criticism. But does this mean that science does not enter into it? As we shall see, science comes to the fore when Marx becomes involved in politics. But at first sight this appears unlikely, for like those of history and art the terms of politics also tend to come in the now familiar threes.

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[3] The symbolic relation between eagle and mole is taken up by Jeffrey Mehlman (1977, p. 27), but he does not bring in the crucial mediating third term, the vulture trained to play the part of eagle.

The triadic grid of representation, which is inherently artistic, is imposed on politics as well. The state of the past is a bourgois republic; the state of the present is a "république cosaque" (Ibid., p. 102), a "monster" autocratic regime; the state of the future is a social republic (Marx had not as yet thought of the dictatorship of the proletariat). The bourgeois republic is ruled by a representative parliamentary democracy; the "monster" state (Ibid.) is domination by an "executive" that is unrepresentative; the coming democratic republic is the representation of the real interest of the masses. There are three main classes involved, each with its own ideology: the bourgeoisie who expound liberty, equality and fraternity; the lumpenproletariat whose chief mouthes "property, family, religion, order" (Ibid., p. 19) but really means " infantry, cavalry, artillery" (Ibid., p. 48); the proletariat whose programme is Socialism which is beyond mere ideology. Each of these classes has its own party which represents it: respectively, the Party of Order, the Society of December 10, and the workers' party. Each of these parties in turn has its leaders who speak and act on its behalf. But any such scheme must break down for politics cannot be so neatly arranged. Marx also brings in other classes to fill out the social picture, above all the petty-bourgeoisie whose party is the Montagne and the peasantry who support Bonaparte. The formal artistic grid of representation transforms itself into a more scientific representation as soon as Marx undertakes a more conceptually rigorous class analysis. What distinguishes art and science at this point is still not clear, but we shall return to this issue.

The triadic grid cannot even be called dialectical, it is not, as Riquelme believes, "a transformation of chronological sequence and apparently antithetical forms and attitudes into dialectic" (1980, p. 67). It is a spurious, mock dialectic in which the negative term, that of the present, is a parody, inversion, repetition, re-presentation or really a misrepresentation of that of the past. At the same time the present is a parodistic presaging, an anticipation in grotesque form, a foreshadowing as mere shadow without body of what is ahead — it is a shadow cast by the light of the future revolution. The relation of the future to the present is like that in theology of heaven to its diabolic parody in hell. Yet Marx insists at every opportunity that without going through this hell history could never attain its heaven. The revolution "does its work methodically. By December 2, 1851, it had completed one half of its preparatory work. It is now completing the other half" (Ibid., p. 104). And so he insists that ". . . the overthrow of the parliamentary republic contains within itself the germ of the triumph of the proletarian revolution" (Ibid., p. 103). Society has been put through its revolutionary schooling by "an abbreviated because revolutionary method, for the studies and experiences which, in a regular, so to speak, textbook course of development would have had to procede the February Revolution" (Ibid., p. 13). So the real revolution can console itself that "time has not passed by unused" (Ibid.).

If the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte is history as farce, then the Eighteenth Brumaire of Karl Marx is dialectic as farce. The psychological motive for it is obvious – to contain the unpalatable events of the present and all its parasites and monsters by inserting them between the more acceptable past and the longed-for future. What better revenge on the present and its main malefactor, the hated Louis Bonaparte, than to show that despite himself he is really working for the future, and so actually collaborating as an unknowing agent with the progressive forces of history at the behest of Marx. Thus Marx's grid of misrepresentation might be seen in Freudian terms as an elaborate grid of defence against the evident failure of his revolutionary hopes.

But to see it in Freudian terms is in no way to diminish the importance of this, the wittiest and most brilliant piece of political writing in the nineteenth century, or in any way to deny it its essential truth – despite itself, even its scientific truth. The grid of misrepresentation that Marx elaborated might be taken as the necessary step towards another, more realistic representation. Like Louis Bonaparte, Karl Marx might actually have been working towards another truth than the one he sought to represent. But this truth derives not from the dialectic of history, as Marx believed, but from the representation of politics. What is political representation and how does it relate to the other senses of representation?[4]

II. *Political Representation*

Modern political action is invariably representative. In modern politics the actor is a delegate representing others. In so far as he also acts out a symbolic role, he is doubly representative, acting out before those whom he represents his part on the political stage. And if this part is a persona or character which he impersonates and with whom they identify, then he represents them back to themselves so that they see themselves reflected as in a political mirror. Subjects have always seen themselves in their rulers even when the latter do not represent them in any democratic sense. The mirror effect of politics is, however, only the beginning of representation, which can also take non-reflective forms far removed from any simple sense of agency, impersonation, and standing-in-for (lieutenant in French and Stellvertreter in German both capture this sense).

Marx is fully alive to all these intricacies of representation. He knows that Louis Bonaparte impersonates his great Uncle, that he has "the public

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[4] It is worth noting that in German at least three words, each with its own distinctive connotations, bear the burden of the English word: Repräsentation, Vorstellung and Darstellung. Besides, there are many other cognate words, just as in English, of which the most important is Stellvertreter.

gaze fixed on himself as Napoleon's substitute" (Ibid., p. 116). He also knows that he represents symbolically the "idées napoléoniennes", the spirit of Bonapartism, especially to the peasants who as a class "cannot represent themselves, they must be represented" (Ibid., p. 106). He knows, furthermore, that by due democratic process and universal suffrage, Louis Bonaparte is the elected President of France representing in law the state and the nation: "While each separate representative of the people represents only this or that party, this or that town, this or that bridgehead. . . *he* is the elect of the nation and the act of his election is the trump that the sovereign people plays once every four years" (Ibid., p. 25). He thus becomes the "President, with all the attributes of royal power, with authority to appoint and dismiss his ministers independently of the National Assembly, with all the resources of the executive power in his hands . . . he has the whole of the armed forces behind him. . . initiative and direction are reserved to him in all treaties with foreign countries" (Ibid., p. 24). Marx knows fully well the representative power of such a presidency, and this power holds good even today for the occupant of the Elysée as well as the White House.

And yet despite all this knowledge concerning representation, Marx repeatedly asks himself the question "who does Louis Bonaparte represent?", and he is unable to answer it even to his own satisfaction. He is unable to answer it in so far as he gives too many answers which contradict each other and seemingly cancel each other out. In posing this question Marx is, of course, using a quite different sense of representation from any which we have so far invoked. Marx is interested in political representation as class representation, or the representation of class interests — material ones in the first place but also political and ideal ones. This interest was itself quite unique to Marx for he alone had devised a new concept of representation, that of class representation, an achievement of great scientific and historical importance with which Marx's name will forever be associated. It is a scientific concept of representation because it involves a socio-scientific analysis of the relation between classes and the political system that goes beyond choice or reflection. It is true that the representation of interests was already known in political thought before Marx. In her comprehensive book on representation Hannah Pitkin devotes a chapter to Burke's conception of the representation of unattached interests, but the consequences of this are oligarchic and the conception is the opposite of that of Marx, whom Pitkin does not consider(1967, chapter 8).

It is in his own new sense of representation that Marx keeps asking what class Louis Bonaparte represents and continually coming up with different answers. First of all, as chief of the lumpenproletariat he represents this: "the society of disorder, prostitution and theft" (Ibid., p. 64). But obviously a mere representative of the lumpenproletariat could not win supreme power over all the other classes in France, so at the crucial stage of the coup d'état Marx has to show that he represents the bourgeoisie,

the divided but nevertheless most poweful class. This sets up an interesting complication for Marx in that the bourgeoisie, in letting itself be represented by Louis Bonaparte, has to sanction his actions against its own official political and literary representatives, the party of Order and the press. Marx can triumphantly solve this paradox by invoking his own special concept of representation and using it as a counter to the more superficial "bourgeois" concepts of representation, that is, parliamentary representation and the representation of opinions, ideas and interests in the press. The bourgeoisie turns against both: "In its falling out with its parliamentary representatives the bourgeoisie displayed its wrath against its own literary representatives, its own press" (Ibid., p. 90). Behind the backs of its official representatives, the bourgeoisie opts for Bonaparte for it senses that he represents its real economic interests, the private interest of business as usual and law and order — "declaring Bonaparte to be the 'guardian of order' " (Ibid., p. 91). For the bourgeoisie, "the struggle to maintain its public interests, its own class interests, its political power, only troubled and upset it, as it was a disturbance of private business" (Ibid., p. 89). So it "sacrificed its general class interests, that is, its political interests, to the narrowest and most sordid private interests, and demanded a similar sacrifice from its Representatives" (Ibid., p. 91).

However for Marx it is not enough to have shown that Louis Bonaparte represents the lumpenproletariat and the bourgeoisie, he must also show that "Bonaparte represents . . . the most numerous class of French society, the small-holding [Parzellen] peasants" (Ibid., p. 105). Marx goes on to argue that he represents them in a most peculiar way. Since they have no class unity or political consciousness, "they are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interest in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented" (Ibid., p. 106). Bonapartism is the symbolic form of this type of representation whereby "their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them" (Ibid.). The "empire sentiments [Imperialismus] of the peasant class" constitute a "peasant religion" (Ibid., p. 108). Representation here assumes a pre-parliamentary, pre-bourgeois, and in effect a pre-rational political form.

When in a summative passage, Marx finally comes to give a conclusive answer to his own question he speaks of Bonaparte as representing every class. "He looks on himself as the representative of the middle class" and safeguards "bourgeois order" (Ibid., p. 112). He also "looks on himself as the chief of the Society of December 10, as the representative of the lumpenproletariat" (Ibid., p. 113). Furthermore, "Bonaparte looks on himself, at the same time, as the representative of the peasants and of the people in general, who wants to make the lower classes of the people happy within the frame of bourgeois society" (Ibid.). But it is not merely Bonaparte who looks on himself in this way; Marx, as has been shown, does so, too. It is Marx who speaks of him — albeit ironically — as "like

a second Massaniello (who) had enchanted the *dames des halles*, the fish-wives' (Ibid., p. 98) – as, namely, a man of the common people. His election to the presidency, according to Marx, "met with great approval in the army . . . , among the big bourgeoisie . . . , among the proletarians and the petty bourgeois, who hailed him as a scourge for Cavaignac" (Ibid., p. 28). So by Marx's own admission, it seems that even his favorite class is not immune to the blandishments of Louis Bonaparte, the workers as well as the petty bourgeoisie succumbed, though both were officially represented by the Montagne, the social-democratic party formed through "a coalition between petty-bourgeois and workers" (Ibid., p. 39). And even the Montagne sides with Bonaparte in rejecting the decisive bill for setting up a parliamentary army to save parliament (see Ibid., p. 97).

Thus, according to Marx's account, Louis Bonaparte represents all classes. Yet he chides him with wanting "to appear as the patriarchal benefactor of all classes" (Ibid., p. 114); and he rightly points out that "he cannot give to one class without taking from another" (ibid.). Hence it follows that he cannot really represent all classes in Marx's sense of representation. But this is a difficulty not of Louis Bonaparte's making but of Karl Marx's. For it is only in Marx's sense of representation that Louis Bonaparte cannot represent all classes; in another sense of representation there might be no difficulty about this at all. And as Marx's account does show, there must be a sense in which he does represent just about all classes of French society. Yet for Marx this is a contradiction which he can only get rid of by projecting it onto Louis Bonaparte: "This contradictory task of the man explains the contradictions of his government, the confused groping about which seeks now to win, now to humiliate first one class and then another and arrays all of them uniformly against him" (Ibid., p. 113) – the last phrase being a piece of wishful thinking on Marx's part for which he provides no evidence. The confusion Marx speaks of is not in the political situation but in his own mind. But it is not to be wondered at, considering how historically unprecedented was this situation.

Marx is confused because he has great difficulty in accounting for the peculiar form of government instituted by Louis Bonaparte and the State that he has brought to birth. What one cannot comprehend and refuses to accept one calls monstrous – Marx refers to this as a "monster" state, explaining its origins as follows:

> No Circe, by means of black magic, has distorted that work of art, the bourgeois republic, into a monstrous shape. . . It only required a bayonet thrust for the bubble to burst and the monster to spring forth before our eyes (Ibid., p. 102).

This monster state is conceived in the bourgeois republic, the parliamentary state; brought to an untimely birth by a bayonet thrust, it is ripped from the womb of time by what can only be a Caesarian cut. For Marx it is that political impossibility, a "république cosaque" (Ibid.). Marx refuses to

believe that a Caesar alone, with or without cossacks, could have brought such a state to birth. For him it must have a class origin, must represent the interests of a class. As he insists, "the state power is not suspended in mid air" (Ibid., p. 105); as mere superstructure it must have a material base on which to rest.

To try to solve these problems and resolve the confusions we must turn to a later author who has sometimes been called derisively "the bourgeois Marx", Max Weber. In his political writings Weber deals with almost exactly the same issues of the new State, of representation and of Caesarism, that Marx had broached. His ideas explicitly and implicitly refer back to Marx's for he picks up most of Marx's key thoughts, turns them around and so turns them against Marx's intentions. He also gathers up the historical account of European politics where Marx leaves off and brings it forward till the Russian Revolution and the end of World War I, as well as foreshadowing its future course. He begins with "Bismarcks's legacy", that of the Fortinbras to Marx's Hamlet, the new Caesar of European politics after the Franco-Prussian war and the Paris commune. He ends by foreseeing the failure of the Spartacists' coup, named after Marx's favourite hero; this involved many of Weber's friends and disciples, who sought to bring about the long awaited proletarian revolution in Western Europe after the sucess of the Russian one. As a consequence of this failure he foresaw the backlash from the Right which within a few years would lead to the Munich putsch by Hitler and Ludendorff, of whom he had earlier said, "if he should again mingle in politics, one will have to fight him remorselessly" (Gerth and Mills (eds.) 1957, p. 42).

Like Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*, Weber's political writings also first appeared as newspaper articles, especially the series of articles published in the Frankfurter Zeitung during the summer of 1918, entitled *Parliament and Government in a Reconstructed Germany*, with the Marx-sounding subtitle: "A contribution to the political critique of officialdom and party politics"(Weber 1978c, Appendix II). To this series, in spirit, also belongs the greatest of his political works, the speech "Politics as a Vocation" (1978a), delivered in Munich late in 1918. These writings surround political events in Germany which parallel almost exactly the start of the 1848 Revolution in France. The bourgeois constitutional monarchy was overthrown when Wilhelm II, like Louis-Philippe, fled abroad. This was followed by the failed proletarian uprising of the Spartacists, echoing the June Insurrection. From that point on, emulating the 1848 Revolution, the German revolution went into reverse: the bourgeois Weimar republic was set up, dominated at first by the Social Democrats, the Montagne of Germany, but then successively giving way to parties ever further to the Right, with the conservative parties, the new equivalents of the party of Order, eventually coming to power. By the logic of the historical parallel, the inevitable outcome was the Eighteenth Brumaire of Adolf Hitler in 1933. German Marxists might have felt that they were witnessing another repetition of

the play of history, this time neither as tragedy nor farce but as expressionist grotesque, agonizingly stretched out over 15 rather than 3 years. The Communists' attitude to Hitler almost suggests that they took Marx's work as their set text and read him as another gangster and buffoon, an avatar of Louis Bonaparte. This is how Brecht portrays him in the play *Arturo Ui*. Hence, Marx's misrepresentation of Louis Bonaparte had disastrous consequence for them and led to the crushing defeat of the German Communist Party, from which it still has not recovered in West Germany. Weber's writings provide us with an alternative reading of these events, so that with a dash of poetic licence one might call them the "Eighteenth Brumaire" of Max Weber.

If we compare this Eighteenth Brumaire of Max Weber with the Eighteenth Brumaire of Karl Marx then it becomes immediately apparent that what for Marx is a parasitic monster state, a "république cosaque", is for Weber nothing but the now familiar features of the modern bureaucratic state. "In a modern state the actual ruler is necessarily and unavoidably the bureaucracy. . . ", (Weber 1978b, p. 1393) he declares. He goes on to explain why this must be so and why "the 'progress' towards the bureaucratic state . . . is nowadays very closely related to modern capitalist developments". Marx knows all this, too: he speaks of "this executive power with its enormous bureaucratic and military organization, with its vast and ingenious state machinery, with a host of officials numbering half a million, besides an army of another half million, this appalling parasitic body, which enmeshes the body of French society . . . " (Marx 1977, p. 104). Then in a passage of amazing virtuosity he provides the historical explanation for its rise and growth from "the days of the absolute monarchy, with the decay of the feudal system, which it helped to hasten" (Ibid.). He adapts two economic categories: expropriation of ownership and division of labour, applying them to politics with startling results to produce the explanatory ideas of expropriation of power and division of powers.

> The seigneurial privileges of the landowners and towns became transformed into so many attributes of the state power, the feudal dignitaries into paid officials and the motley pattern of conflicting plenary powers into the regulated plan of a state authority whose work is divided and centralized as in a factory. The first French Revolution, with its task of breaking all separate, local, territorial, urban and provincial powers in order to create the civil unity of the nation, was bound to develop what the absolute monarchy had begun: centralization, but at the same time the extent, the attributes and the number of agents of governmental power. Napoleon completed this state machinery. The legitimist monarchy and the July monarchy added nothing but a greater division of labour, growing in the same measure as the division of labour within bourgeois society created new groups of interests and, therefore, new material for state administration" (Marx 1977, p. 104).

Weber repeats these ideas almost verbatim, which is another reason

why his writing might be considered another "edition of the Eighteenth Brumaire" (Ibid., p. 10).

> Sociologically speaking, the modern state is an "enterprize" (Betrieb) just like a factory . . . The "separation" of the worker from the material means of production, destruction, administration, academic research, and finance in general is the common basis of the modern state, in its political, cultural and military sphere, and of the private capitalist economy. (Weber 1978b, p. 1394).

Elsewhere he speaks explicitly of "this process of political expropriation" (1978a, p. 83), "the expropriation of the autonomous and private bearers of executive power. . . " (Ibid., p. 82) by means of which the modern state arises. This is a state where as a matter of definition" – this is essential for the concept of state – the 'separation' of the administrative staff, of the administrative officials and workers, from the material means of administrative organization is completed" (Ibid., p. 82). Yet even though the words are nearly the same, there is a world of difference in spirit and intent between Marx's and Weber's Eighteenth Brumaires.

Like Weber, Marx is also preoccupied with the central issue of bureaucracy. But he determinedly places bureaucracy on a basis of class representation.

> But under the absolute monarchy, during the first Revolution, under Napoleon, bureaucracy was only the means of preparing the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Under the Restoration, under Louis Philippe, under the parliamentary republic, it was the instrument of the ruling class (Marx 1977, p. 105).

Then it strikes him with quite a shock that "only under the second Bonaparte does the state seem to have made itself completely independent" (Ibid., p. 105), and "that alongside the actual classes of society he is forced to create an artificial caste, for which the maintenance of his regime becomes a bread-and-butter question" (Ibid., p. 111), for "an enormous bureaucracy . . . is the 'idée napoléonienne' which is most congenial of all to the second Bonaparte (Ibid., p. 110). The state as independent of civil society, "an executive authority which has made itself an independent power" (Ibid., p. 112); the bureaucracy as a caste separate from all classes; a society which "seems to have escaped the despotism of a class only to fall beneath the despotism of an individual" (Ibid., p. 103); a lumpenproletarian Caesar in total control of the state power who represents all classes and none for "all classes equally impotent and equally mute fall on their knees before the rifle butt" (Ibid.) – all these are sheer monstrosities for Marx, monstrous conclusions to which he is forced against his will. He asks almost in desperation how it is possible that "as against civil society, the state machine has consolidated its position so thoroughly that the chief of the Society of December 10 suffices for its head" (Ibid., p. 105)? Never-

theless, Marx feels there must be a key to this monstrous riddle – "and yet the state power is not suspended in mid air, Bonaparte represents a class" (Ibid.), he asseverates.

It is at this point that he reaches for his most far-fetched answer, one which almost totally misleads him: "Bonaparte represents a class, and the most numerous class of French society at that, the small-holding [Parzellen] peasants" (ibid.). If Bonaparte represents the peasants then "by its very nature, small-holding property forms a suitable basis for an all-powerful and innumerable bureaucracy" (Ibid., p. 110) – an odd conclusion if applied to the present, to the Soviet Union or any other highly bureaucratized society. But Marx perseveres with it and devotes considerable ingenuity to demonstrating why this should be so; at the same time proving in passing some keen insights into bureaucratic rule, but mistakenly ascribing them to the peasantry (see Ibid., p. 110) – insights which Weber also develops, freed from any illusory attachments to peasant society. Marx tries to place the whole onus of a modern bureaucratized state, of which France was one of the first exemplars, on to the shoulders of the peasants. The large but backward peasant class is used to account for all the features in Bonapartist rule that to Marx seem reactionary, but to us very advanced indeed. It therefore seems to him "that the state only returned to its oldest form, the shamelessly simple domination of sabre and cowl" (ibid., p. 13). This is an idea that he will later try to develop to account for the centralized states of oriental despotism, by referring to a similarly parcellized peasantry of the so-called asiatic mode of production. It might have some relevance there, but it is grotesque when applied to mid-nineteenth century France.

Weber has no such difficulties in accounting for the modern bureaucratized state, the independence of this state from class representation and the need for Caesarist figures to head its executive apparatus. And this is so, paradoxically, because he is able to offer a more "Marxist" explanation and relate it to the parallel development of capitalism. Expropriation and division of labour take place not only in economics but in politics as well, the two processes mutually supporting each other. The one is not more basic than the other; there is no base-superstructure relation between them, for they are in effect parts of the one, large-scale process that Weber calls rationalization. Marx had in his own way also seen this, yet somehow he still was too simplistically a "Marxist" even though he denied being one. Weber accounts for the growing independence of the state from class representation, showing that the triumph of Marx's socialism would finally consolidate the state's autonomy by "expropriating the expropriators" – the process of political expropriation being concluded by economic expropriation. The state machine would then be fully perfected. Marx states that "all revolutions perfected this machine instead of smashing it" (Ibid., p. 105). Weber echoes this in agreement and adds that a proletarian revolution will do the same.

> We shall not be deceived about this verbiage; the materialist interpretation of history is no cab to be taken at will; it does not stop short of the promoters of revolutions . . . He who wants to establish absolute justice on earth by force requires a following, a human 'machine'. He must hold out the necessary internal and external premiums, heavenly or wordly reward, to this 'machine' or else the machine will not function. (Weber 1978a, p. 125).

Weber proceeds to demonstrate that for a bureaucratized state Caesars are necessary and sometimes inevitable, for these are the new prototypes of the charismatic ruler. A bureaucratic apparatus needs such a figure because it requires an unambiguous source of authoritative decision-making and command. Similarly, a party machine must have a head as leader to appeal to the masses for "the creation of such machines signifies the advent of prebiscitarian democracy" (Ibid., p. 103). Thus, bureaucracy and democracy, which otherwise also support each other, both tend towards Caesarism:

> Active mass democratization . . . means a shift towards the Caesarist mode of selection. Indeed every democracy tends in this direction. After all, the specifically Caesarist technique is the prebiscite. It is not an ordinary vote or election, but a profession of faith in the calling of him who demands these acclamations. The Caesarist leader rises either in military fashion, as a military dictator like Napoleon I, who had his position affirmed through a plebiscite; or he rises in the bourgeois fashion: through plebiscitary affirmation, acquiesced in by the army, of a claim to power on the part of a non-military politician, such as Napoleon III. (Weber 1978b, pp. 1451-52).

In this passage it almost seems as if Weber were rewriting Marx's Eighteenth Brumaire inside his own — another re-presentation, a mouse-trap within a mouse-trap -- for what a picture of Louis Bonaparte this presents! We see the relation between Uncle and Nephew from a quite different perspective. And above all, it introduces still another concept of representation.

Caesarism in general is a matter of "plebiscitary" representation:

> Viewed technically, as an organized form of authority, the efficiency of Caesarism, which often grows out of democracy, rests in general upon the position of the Caesar as a free trustee of the masses (of the army or of the citizenry), who is unfettered by tradition. The Caesar is thus the unrestrained master of a body of highly qualified military officers and officials whom he selects freely and personally . . . (Weber 1957, p. 202).

Modern Caesarism is an adaptation of this form of authority in so far as the officials are largely bureaucrats who are not freely selected or removed. To Louis Bonaparte, and not to his greater Uncle goes the credit of having devised "bourgeois" Caesarism or rule by means of bureaucracy and mass democratic plebiscitary acclamation. Crapulinski is thus the progenitor of a

form of modern representation relied on by "great" rulers ever since; their names are generally well known and need not be enumerated for fear of inserting a catalogue of ships in the midst of this political epic.

The struggle between Louis Bonaparte and the bourgeois republic, between what Marx calls the executive and legislative powers – and of which he makes heavy weather, interpreting the victory of the former over the latter as a necessary step towards the proletarian "social republic" – can also now be seen in a new light. It is no more than the usual tension and struggle between Caesarist mass democracy and parliamentary representative democracy, which Weber identifies when he remarks that the plebiscitary "avenues are as antagonistic to the parliamentary principle as they are to the legitimism of the hereditary monarchy" (Weber 1978b, p. 1452). Such an antagonism need not resolve itself by force through an Eighteenth Brumaire, it can be constitutionally regulated to provide the necessary tensions and checks and balances of a complex democratic rule. Something like it is written into the U.S. Constitution and similarly institutionalized in many other countries, for in all such cases power sways between a Caesarist Presidential figure and the representative assemblies; periodically tilting to the one side or the other; to the leader, as in the U.S. at the time of the "imperial" Presidency from Eisenhower till Nixon, or temporarily to the assembly, as after Watergate.

It is clear that Marx has seriously misrepresented Louis Bonaparte, the state which he ruled and the representative nature of this rule. And yet, as we have seen, there is little or nothing that Weber knows about this that Marx does not. Marx is as far-seeing and accurate in his portrayal of Louis Bonaparte's rule as Weber could have been. What then is the difference between the two representations? A crucial clue to the difference is that Marx accompanies many of his most perceptive insights with the word "seems":

> Under the second Bonaparte does the state *seem* to have made itself completely independent . . . (Marx 1977, p. 105).

All this for Marx is mere appearance to which he refuses to grant any reality. And where he is forced to acknowledge it as real he calls it contradictory, confused, monstrous or parasitic:

> . . . the state enmeshes, controls, regulates, superintends and tutors civil society . . . through the most extraordinary centralization this parasitic body acquires a ubiquity, an omniscience, a capacity for accelerated mobility and an elasticity which finds a counterpart only in the helpless dependence, in the loose shapelessness of the actual body politic . . . (Ibid., pp. 50-51)
>
> . . . this appalling parasitic body which enmeshes the body of French society . . (p. 104).

And always and ever he comes back to his crux. "And yet, the state power is not suspended in mid air" (Ibid., p. 105)

Weber by contrast accepts all these appearances, monsters and parasites as the actual reality. The state, for him, is not suspended in mid air because it has no class foundations, any more than the world is suspended in mid air; he need not rest it on the turtle of class and then on the elephant of the mode of production. Politics is a relatively autonomous sphere, turning on its own axis, parallel to the economic sphere but not necessarily deriving its motion from it. On the contrary, sometimes it is possible for politics to determine the economy. As Marx himself documents, the creation of a parcellized peasant base is the work of Napoleon and the Revolution (Ibid., pp. 108-9). Political power functions in the same way as economic power: the state expropriates power and divides it into powers just as the capitalist expropriates the means of production and carries out division of labour. For Weber these are the basic "laws" of a new science of political sociology.

Marx could not accept these appearances as reality because his own science stood in the way. His theory of historical materialism told him that politics can only be ideological superstructure, not basic material reality. He could only misrepresent what he actually saw as journalist and historian, that is as artist, by presenting it as if it were mere ghostly appearances, monsters and parasites. His science forced him to misrepresent his own representations as mere literature.

But the art which Marx treats as mere spirit and illusion — as "the entire literature" (Ibid., p. 15), as a "distorted work of art" (Ibid., p. 102), as "the old spirit world" (Ibid., p. 19) — is often truer than the science which he takes as real. And often where Marx believes he is giving a real scientific representation, what he represents is true, but only as art not as science. As his account of the state showed, that which in terms of his science is misrepresentation is true in terms of his art. Something similar holds for his depiction of the conditions of life and the mentality of the French parcellized small-holding peasantry (Ibid., pp. 105-6). This is hardly an historically specific example of scientific class analysis — Marx certainly did no field work on peasants; nevertheless it is a true picture. It is true because it is a typological portrayal, a character study of a representative case which applies almost universally to all small-holding peasant farmers whenever and wherever they are to be found, to the yokels of Attica whom Aristophanes brings on stage, as well as to the fabled yeomen of England. (Thomas 1981, pp. 114-15) Once again, Marx's representation is true as art rather than as science: portrayal of the representative-typical is an artistic mode.

But what is art in Marx, or mere art for Marx, can become science in Weber. The very same representations are transformed from art to science by being reconceived as real and placed in the context of a different explanatory framework. Thus artistic representations are theorized as scientific ones. The bureaucratic state for Weber is no illusory monster or parasite, but the fundamental political condition of all moderns societies, whose

organizational reality is everywhere bureaucracy. It is defined as a strict and exact concept: "a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" (Weber 1978a, p. 78); and its forms of authority, modes of organization, structures of leadership are represented with rational exactitude and theoretical explanatory force. Marx himself might have devised something similar if he had managed to develop and complete his long planned account of the state. In a sense, Weber did this for him – but also against him.

None of this implies that Weber's work is superior to Marx's. It would be foolish to try to adjudicate the claim of science as opposed to art in historical study. What is of interest in this regard is to note how art and science relate to each other, that what is artistic in one context can become scientific in another, and vice-versa, namely, that the representations of art and science are convertible into each other. Our artistic, intellectual and scientific history is a continuing chain of such transformations and substitutions. Each is historically specific, for just how a given artistic idea will convert itself into a scientific one, or how a scientific theory will become the source of new art forms can never be expressed in the form of a rule or a general law. The relation is even more complex where an art that takes itself as science becomes a new kind of science.

Such in this instance is the relation between Marx and Weber; for Weber's science would not have been possible without the art which Marx refused to recognize as art. Weber could not have begun his "Marxist" theoretical elaboration of the state without Marx's journalistic perceptions, which in places Weber might almost be said to repeat. In the sphere of history and politics the relation between science and art is particularly intimate; no firm dividing line can be drawn between the art of politics and political science, or between the art and science of the historian. This conjunction of art and science will now be further elucidated by considering Marx's representation of representation.

III. *Representation of representation*

In the preface to the third German edition of the *Eighteenth Brumaire* Engels praises the representational realism of Marx's account on two quite different grounds:

> And the picture was drawn with such a master hand that every fresh disclosure since made has only provided fresh proof of how faithfully it reflected reality (Engels 1977, p. 8).
> In addition, however, there was still another circumstance. It was precisely Marx who had just discovered the great law of motion of history, the law according to which all historical struggles, whether they proceed in the political, religious, philosophical or some other ideological domain, are in fact only the more or less clear expression of struggles of social

> classes. . . . This law, which has the same significance for history as the law of the transformation of energy has for natural science — this law gave him here, too, the key to an understanding of the history of the Second French Republic (Ibid., p. 9).

These representations of representation seem opposed but are actually the same. The first is artistic and expresses the representational principle of realistic reflections and verisimilitude characteristic of much "bourgeois" art in the nineteenth century, and which was later reinvoked in the doctrine of Soviet social realism as expounded by Zhdanov. The second, by contrast, relies on a representational principle that takes the "laws" of history as representing reality in the same way as the laws of the natural sciences. Again, this principle was taken up in the doctrine of scientific historical materialism as expounded by Plekhanov, Lenin and Stalin. Engels never asks himself how the artistic principle of representation relates to the scientific one except by assuming that they are both in some undefined sense realistic, both refer to the one given reality, in this case the history of the Second French Republic.

We might, however, ask whether either of these are principles Marx himself acknowledges; and, furthermore, whether the representational mode of his work is actually based on them. In order to answer these questions we must first explore Marx's own conception of representation, his representation of representation, and then place it in relation to other theories of representation.

Marx's theory of representation (Vorstellung) is, of course, in the first place his theory of ideology. And at its furthest extension this also includes his theory of scientific representation (Darstellung). Althusser defines an ideology as "a system (with its own logic and rigour) of representations (images, myths, ideas or concepts, depending on the case) endowed with an historical existence and role within a given society" (Althusser 1969, p. 231). At the same time, like Marx, he seeks to distinguish sharply ideology from science: "an ideology, as a system of representations, is distinguished from science in that in it the practico-social function is more important than the theoretical function (function as knowledge)" (Ibid.). With this he also tries to separate rigorously art from science and denounces suggestions ". . . that art could merge with knowledge . . . " (Ibid., p. 237)[5]. For Althusser, as for Marx, ideology is misrepresentation, only science is true representation. But is it possible to reserve science as a privileged source of repre-

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[5] For an opposed sense of ideology see Volosinov (1973, p. 9): ". . . the foundations of a Marxist theory of ideologies (are) the bases for the study of scientific knowledge, literature, religion, ethics, and so forth . . . " Volosinov, too, sees ideology as a matter of representation: "Everything ideological possesses meaning: it represents depicts, or stands for something lying outside itself".

sentations? Does Marx in fact do this in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*? What are the relations that he establishes there between political, literary and scientific representation?

The political and literary representatives of a class are scarcely to be distinguished; they are merely "its speaking and writing section, its politicians and its literati, its platform and press"(Marx 1977, p. 91). Thus, when it turns against its Representatives, the bourgeoisie turns against both equally, "in its falling out with its parliamentary representatives the bourgeoisie displayed its wrath against its literary representatives, its own press" (Ibid., p. 90). "This extra-parliamentary bourgeoisie had already rebelled against the purely parliamentary and literary struggle for the rule of its own class and betrayed the leaders of this struggle" (Ibid., p. 91). These leaders believe that they represent the bourgeois class because they act and speak for it "on the republic stage, in their grand performances of state, as a great parliamentary party" (Ibid., p. 38). They believe themselves to be "representatives of the bourgeois world-order" (Ibid.) because they faithfully express and reflect it. However, the extra-parliamentary bourgeoisie reject these public expressions and reflections of their "general class interests, that is, its political interest" (Ibid., p. 91), in favour of Bonaparte who represents their "narrowest and most sordid private interest" (Ibid.). The principle of bourgeois representation as expression and reflection is in this situation merely ideological, and gives way before Marx's principle of realistic representation according to the underlying material realities.

Real representation is thus neither simply expressive nor reflective. The "relation between the political and literary representatives of a class and the class they represent" (Ibid., p. 41) is not that they speak directly and openly the opinions, demands and interests of their class. Thus "one must not form the narrow-minded notion that the petty-bourgeoisie, on principle, wishes to enforce an egoistic class interest" (Ibid., p. 40). "Just as little must one imagine that its democratic representatives are indeed all shopkeepers or enthusiastic champions of shopkeepers" (Ibid.). Rather what makes the Montagne, the social-democratic party, and its democratic republican ideals representative of the petty-bourgeoisie is "epitomised in the fact that democratic-republican institutions are demanded as a means, not of doing away with the two extremes, capital and wage labour, but of weakening their antagonism and transforming it into harmony" (Ibid.). What makes democratic republicans in their thoughts and ideas "representatives of the petty-bourgeoisie is the fact that in their minds they do not go beyond the limits which the latter do not get beyond in life, that they are consequently driven, theoretically, to the same problems and solutions to which the material interest and social position drive the latter pratically" (Ibid., p. 41).

In general, then, the relation between the representations comprizing an ideology and the class which this ideology represents is not that of expression or reflection, but a structural relation: the same problems and

solutions repeat themselves in the theoretical as in the practical medium; and at the same time there is a causal connection between these different levels which Marx does not fully spell out. This structural relation Marx sees as analogous to the artistic one of form and content where the forms can differ while the content remains the same, though only within the strict limits prescribed by the content. In the case of the social-democrats, "this content is the transformation of society in a democratic way, but a transformation within the bounds of the petty-bourgeoisie" (Ibid., p. 40). Both the content and its limits are latent, hidden from those invoking the forms; thus at the time of the Great Revolution the bourgeoisie found in the Roman republic "the ideals and art forms, the self-deceptions that they needed in order to conceal from themselves the bourgeois limitations of the content of their struggles" (Ibid., p. 11). Marx puts the general relation between ideological representations and the class they represent as follows:

> Upon the different forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence, rises an entire superstructure of distinct and peculiarly formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and views of life. The entire class creates and forms them out of its material foundations and out of the corresponding social relations (Ibid., p. 37).

Neither in ideology nor for ideas in general is representation a simple matter of realistic reflection. And this applies to art as well. An aesthetic theory of representation cannot be based on the "bourgeois" criteria of reflective realism, of holding a mirror up to nature. As we have already seen, Marx does not attempt to paint a realistic portrait of Louis Bonaparte as an individual, or try to give an exact likeness, warts and all; his realism is of a different kind since what he is intent on depicting is the real nature of Louis Bonaparte's role in the 1848 Revolution in the context of a comprehensive historical interpretation. The artistic principles of representation he utilizes for this purpose are the formal structures comprizing what we previously referred to as his grid of representation. In order to achieve this new kind of historical realism he is even prepared to exaggerate, distort and quite consciously to misrepresent from the point of view of exact reflective likeness. In so far, then, as Marx's work is art it, too, does not represent by "faithfully reflecting reality", as Engels believed.

In so far as Marx's work is science, Engels' account also misrepresents its representational character. Engels assumes that there are laws of history which are exactly the same as the "law of motion" or "the law of the transformation of energy"; that these "laws" are verified – in the way he thinks natural scientific laws are – by being put "to the test on these historical events (such that) even after thirty-three years we must still say that it has stood the test brilliantly" (Ibid., p. 9). So implicit in his view is the assumption that a law is true if it corresponds to events or facts: a representative theory of truth which in this case takes the form of a simple

reflective empiricism which makes historic events representative instances of the laws of history.

None of this bears any relation to the way Marx actually deploys his scientific theories, which only by a misnomer can be called laws. His one attempt in this text at providing a law-like economic explanation of the Eighteenth Brumaire proceeds through a brief description of the "stagnation in trade" which produced the "apparent crisis of 1851" (Ibid., p. 93). But this "apparent crisis" could only bring about its political effect by the way it affected the minds of the bourgeoisie: "now picture to yourself the French bourgeois, how in the throes of this business panic his trade-crazy brain is tortured, set in a whirl and stunned by rumours of coups d'état . . . " (Ibid., p. 94). This shows clearly that economic conditions do not operate as autonomous "laws" or "objective" determinations; they have to be mediated through consciousness before they can have a political effect; and the effect they have depends on the filtering and interpreting mechanisms of the minds through which they pass. And, in general, as we have seen, consciousness or ideology is no simple reflection of material realities. So much, then, for Engels' idea that Marx is putting to the test his "great law of motion of history" (Ibid., p. 9) as if it were a natural scientific law.

Reflective empiricism — and allied to it the representative theory of truth — have been decisively rejected since Marx's time both for the natural and social sciences, and recently also for Marxist science itself. In his early methodological studies Weber began the critique of "laws of history" in the crude Marxist sense. He argued that even if such laws were available, they would only be of limited utility in the causal explanation of unique historical events:

> Where the individuality of a phenomenon is concerned, the question of causality is not a question of laws but of concrete causal relationships; it is not a question of the subsumption of the event under some general rubric as a representative case but of its imputation as a consequence of some constellation (Weber 1949, pp. 78-9).

And in fact there are no laws of history in the sense of the natural sciences; there are at best "adequate causal relationships expressed in rules and with the application of the category of "objetive possibility" (Ibid., p. 80). Furthermore, even in the natural sciences laws are no longer regarded as simple reflections of empirical reality, but as ways of representing (usually mathematically) classes of abstracted phenomena specified in accordance with rules of exclusion and boundary stipulations which are subject to social definition and not simply given. Laws are much more like constructions than discoveries. Finally, in Marxist scholarship itself, Althusser has proponded a constructionist or productive approach to Marx's science, and he accompanies this with a rigorous critique of reflective empiricism. He argues that even "the identification of the economic is achieved by the construction

of its concept", that "the economic is not directly and clearly visible . . ." (Althusser and Balibar 1972, p. 178). However, in other respects Althusser is still wedded to Engels' scientism, including his failure to distinguish representation in the natural and social sciences[6].

In the *Eighteenth Brumaire* Marx's mode of representing political history is, therefore, far removed from Engels' description of it as a "faithful reflection of reality" and an application to "an understanding of the Second French Republic" of his newly discovered "law of motion of history" (Marx 1977, pp. 8-9). However, it is doubtful whether Marx's own explicit conception of social realism, even at its most sophisticated, would be adequate to the actual representational mode of this work. For that evinces a remarkable interaction of art and science in which, despite Marx's own intention, the literature is more representationally real than is his science of real representation. His science falters on the question "who does Louis Bonaparte really represent?", but his art gives the right answer. Nevertheless, to say this is not to discount the science in favour of the literature; for though in this case science leads to misrepresentation, this is not so in the case of the "Eighteenth Brumaire" of Max Weber which we invoked as a scientific corrective to the Eighteenth Brumaire of Karl Marx. In Weber it is the literature which is far less representationally real.

The Eighteenth Brumaire of Karl Marx is structured on the representational principle of the mock dialectic, representing the present as the parody of an absent past and anticipating fulfilment of a soon to be present future. This principle is clearly a literary one. It applies at once to history itself, which is drama and "literature", and to the writing of history, which is also dramatic literature. The Eighteenth Brumaire of Karl Marx represents in the same way as the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte; both are re-presentations as parody or satire. And if the one is the "second edition of the Eighteenth Brumaire" (Ibid., p. 10), the other is the third edition. Marx is fully aware that he and Louis Bonaparte are rival "authors" of history. The only advantage he gives himself over Louis Bonaparte is strictly analogous to the superiority he grants Louis Bonaparte over the bourgeoisie:

> At the moment when the bourgeoisie itself played the most complete comedy, but in the most serious manner in the world, without infringing on any of the pedantic conditions of French dramatic etiquette, and was itself half deceived, half convinced of the solemnity of its own performance of state, the adventurer, who took the comedy as plain comedy, was bound to win. Only when he has eliminated his solemn opponent, when he himself now takes his imperial role seriously and under the Napoleonic mask imagines he is the real Napoleon, does he become the victim of his own conception of the world, the serious buffoon who no longer takes world history for a comedy but his comedy for world history (Ibid., pp. 63-4).

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[6] Althusser and Balibar (1972, pp. 150-5), where he acepts Engels' analogy of Marx's "discovery" of surplus-value to Lavoisier's discovery of oxygen.

Marx, of course, thinks he knows the comedy of world history because he imagines he knows its outcome, the happy end to the tragedy of revolution. But that alone is not what makes him superior to Louis Bonaparte, rather it lies in the fact that Louis Bonaparte has come to identify himself with his "imperial role", just as the bourgeoisie was "convinced of the solemnity of its own performance of state"; he has forgotten what he knew when he outwitted the bourgeoisie – the literary side of history. Marx who is sufficiently self-conscious to know that history is also literature is thus a more " original author" than the "original author of the history of the Society of December 10" (Ibid., p. 64).

But why is it that history is literature and also science? And this question applies equally to politics as well. Implicitly Marx provides an answer to it when in his 1869 preface he contrasts his own *Eighteenth Brumaire* with Victor Hugo's *Napoleon le Petit* and Proudhon's *Coup d'Etat:*

> Victor Hugo confines himself to bitter and witty invective against the responsible publisher of the coup d'état. The event itself appears in his work like a bolt from the blue. He sees in it only the violent act of a single individual . . . Proudhon, for his part, seeks to represent the coup d'état as the result of an antecedent historical development. Unnoticeably, however, his historical construction of the coup d'état becomes a historical apologia for its hero. Thus he falls into the error of our so-called objective historians. I, on the contrary, demonstrate how the class-struggle in France created circumstances and relationships that made it possible for a grotesque mediocrity to play a hero's part (Ibid., p. 6).

Victor Hugo's representation of history is pure literature for he sees history as made largely by a single individual, who, presumably with the help of others, freely creates surprising historical events. Proudhon represents history as pure science for the sees it as the inevitable causal outcome of objective antecedent conditions. Only Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* can adequately relate literature to science in history by showing how the objective "circumstance and relations" make it possible for an individual to create a great part for himself and for a certain kind of historical drama to take place. On this view, it is as if science represents the social stage and causal scenic backdrop on which literature can then depict the parts played and actions performed. A similar relation is suggested by his celebrated statement: "men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past" (Ibid., p. 10).

This suggests that the part of science in history belongs to the circumscribing and limiting conditions, and the part of literature belongs to the free and creative acts. Literature is the realm of freedom and science that of determinism. We can recognize in this a basically romantic dichotomy of free men making history under the restricting and inhibiting "tradition

of all the dead generations" (Ibid., p. 10). All that we have so far shown about the role of science and art in the work of Marx suggests that this is mistaken. For art, such as the metaphor of drama, entered into the representation of the most determining economic realities; and science, such as the theory of class and state, was essential for the representation of the free acts of elective choice in politics. The distinction between science and art lies not so much in the object being represented – a separate realm of freedom as opposed to one of determinism – but solely in the mode of representation itself. Science and art are in the first place two sets of practices and techniques of representation: the one utilizing exact concepts, theories and methods of causal explanation, the other employing conventions of portrayal, metaphor, rhetoric and drawing patterns of meaning and significance so as to elicit an understanding of the sense of things. Either set of methods can be used to achieve a realistic representation. It would seem, therefore, that the real reason that Victor Hugo and Proudhon misrepresent is not because the one is literature and the other science but because Hugo's literature is overly individualistic in its Romantic scorn and Proudhon's science is totally deterministic in its historical Idealism.

As is usual in great historical and political writing, Marx in *The Eighteenth Brumaire* attempts a method of representation that is neither wholly literary nor scientific, but a mixed mode incorporating both. Such a compound discourse permits at once a vivid dramatic rendering and a theoretical explanation of the very same events. It creates an intricate and multifaceted texture of representation as the writer tacks from the one viewpoint to the other, from artistic close-ups to distant scientific long-shot perspectives, or, vice-versa, from an exact empirical investigation of details to an over-all conception of meaningful process. It also results in interesting cross-rhythms when the two modes are contrapuntally set one against the other. The clashes and dissonances this sets up can be even more illuminating than the well-harmonized agreements. The critic's task is precisely to detect those passages where dissonances occur which the author cannot resolve and of which he must perforce remain unconscious. These show the limits of a writer's discourse, where his mode of representation must break down. And it is into such breaks that another discouse inserts itself and a new mode of representation is fashioned, as we have shown by reference to Marx and Weber.

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