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Issues of Pan-Africanism and Building the Socialist Mode of Production

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EDITORIAL

PAN-AFRICANISM NEVER DIES!

Due to practical engagements this year in the spirit of executing *The Odometa Report & Project* our attention was focused away from theoretical tasks though there were brief moments of theoretical encounters.

In those practical engagements we had to undertake *fund-raising* in support of the Project. That was where we had two separate experiences worthy of note for their historical significance.

In the first instance, The Socialist Society for Transition in African Transformation in our Era (THE SSTATE) was struggling in its fund-raising efforts when Service, Education, Economic Development, Science, Inc. came to its unexpected assistance with seed money grant.

This was through the instrumentality of the All-Africa People's Revolutionary Party (A-APRP). That saved THE SSTATE a period of almost a year as projected for commencing the execution of *The Odometa Report & Project*. The extant vibrant spirit of Pan-Africanism struck us in the face.

In the second instance, if anybody should think that that spirit had died then they should be alerted that in continental circles it also stays alive in the gesture shown by most of the leadership of the defunct United Front of the June Four Movement and the People's Revolutionary League of Ghana (UF) who sounded the same note of solidarity with THE SSTATE.

The Pan-African intelligentsia could not be left out in this virtual stampede in aid of a group of fellow Pan-Africanists engaged within the framework of Revolutionary Pan-Africanism. *The spirit is Pan-African co-operation, not competition!*

Thanks, Comrades!

We Remain Focused, Determined and Bold! Forward Ever!

Onward to the African Socialist Revolution!

THE SSTATE ODOMETA PERMACULTURE-BASED HELICULTURE IN CONSTRUCTION



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As revolutionaries, we don't have the right to say we are tired of explaining. We must never stop explaining. We know that when the people understand, they cannot help but follow us.

Thomas Sankara

Research and Experiments

THE ODOMETA REPORT AND PROJECT

EXECUTION

By

Lang T. K. A. Nubuor

Acknowledgements

The Spirit of Pan-Africanism thankfully still hovers across the African continent and its Diaspora. Forces of the Diaspora in our days, just like those in the days of Dr. W.E.B. DuBois and Marcus Garvey, continue to play their *catalytic* role in the transformation of Africa for total freedom from voracious externalities.

For, while The Socialist Society for Transition in African Transformation in our Era (THE SSTATE) was struggling in the year in its quest for funding to execute the 2020 commencement of The Odometa Project as outlined in *The Odometa Report & Project* it received an unexpected support from Service, Education, Economic Development, Science (S.E.E.D.S.), Inc. with a 'micro-enterprise seed money grant'. It shortened the time of commencement by almost a year.

That seed money grant catapulted THE SSTATE into immediate action to begin building its very first sub-project, THE SSTATE ODOMETA PERMACULTURE-BASED HELICULTURE, a component of The Odometa Project dealing in snail farming. We are grateful to S.E.E.D.S. for this service to the African homeland – an act in continuation and development of the tradition of Diasporian participation in development processes on the African continent.

The S.E.E.D.S. grant apart, it needs be stated, intellectuals, academicians and activists on the continent and abroad also made contributions which indicated to us that there was and is support for The Odometa Project among the African intelligentsia. That was a great encouragement providing sustenance for this Pan-African initiative outside the formal structures of governance in Africa. In this respect, we are grateful to such intellectuals, academicians and activists.

They are acknowledged here as Prof. Adams Bodomo of the University of Vienna, Dr. Chris Bukari Atim of the African Health Economics and Policy Association, Dr. Dede Amanor-Wilks of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), Ambassador Napoleon Abdulai, Kwasi Adu and Eric Bortey of the defunct United Front of the June Four Movement and the People's Revolutionary League of Ghana (UF) and Zaya Yeebo of UF and *Public Agenda* newspaper.

Barzini Gyekye Tanoh of the Third World Network - Africa (TWN-A) is in this group apart from which are retired professionals like Col. JM Opai-Tetteh (Rtd.) and W.O. Samuel Narh Carboo (Rtd.) of the Ghana Armed Forces. We need to mention Edward Jerrad Nartey Nubuor whose financial contributions and active movement of personnel of THE SSTATE facilitated such movements and at a point saved the life of yours truly. Robert Quaye of Robert Quaye & Associates surprised us indeed with his unexpected handsome contribution!

Two persons have been purposefully left for special mention. They are Albie Walls of the All-Africa People's Revolutionary Party (A-APRP) and yours truly's colleague Beatrice Dedo Mate-Kole. Albie Walls was selflessly instrumental in connecting THE SSTATE with S.E.E.D.S. Inc. in an atmosphere where there is a very unfortunate *competition* rather than *co-operation* among progressive organisations on the African continent within The Left. Great thanks, Albie!

Dedo, without you nothing would have started at Odometa. We are grateful.

And to the mass of the landless peasants of Odometa we say that your near-fanatical *embrace* of The Odometa Project and voluntary offer of *concrete support* for the build-up of the first component of that Project, THE SSTATE ODOMETA PERMACULTURE-BASED HELICULTURE, encourage and sustain us. THE SSTATE will not forget this and shall not fail you! Continue to teach us so we can better understand Odometa's specific dynamics in Africa's interest.

May the Spirit of Revolutionary Pan-Africanism – that Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah inherits, lives with, sustains and equips with a set ideological and philosophical system – forever live and guide us always under its *gbeyecious* designation ... Marxism-Nkrumaism! For Africa and its Diaspora we live to triumph over the forces for which the perpetuation of Africa's enslavement is mistakenly and unfortunately considered the condition for their survival.

Africa Awakes In Solidarity!

Foreword

'The indefatigable promoter of the need for Nkrumaist reforms in Africa. Hail his efforts!' is how a Facebook commentator describes us and hails our efforts in Africa. Whatever value is placed on those words it appears curious that Nkrumaism should be associated with *reforms* rather than *revolution* in Africa.

Within the framework of that curiosity the question arises as to how Marxist-Nkrumaist philosophy conceives *reform* and *revolution*. This has implications for a conception of *The Odometa Report and Project* as well as its execution. In this respect, the basic text of that philosophy is employed here to clarify matters. We are talking about *Consciencism*.

At page 72 of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's valuable book *Consciencism – Philosophy and Ideology for De-colonisation*, it is stated that 'The essence of reform is to combine a *continuity of fundamental principle*, with a tactical change in the manner of expression of the fundamental principle. Reform is not a change in the thought, but one in its manner of expression, not a change in what is said but one in idiom.' (*All italics added here*) Gbeyecious!

To illustrate this, Dr. Nkrumah talks about the *refinement* of the fundamental principle of *exploitation* by capitalism, that is, *without its abolition* in these terms: 'Capitalism is a development by refinement from feudalism, just as feudalism is a development by refinement from slavery ... In capitalism, feudalism suffers, or rather enjoys *reform*, and the fundamental principle of feudalism merely strikes *new levels of subtlety*.' (*All italics added here*)

More, he explains that 'In slavery, it is thought that *exploitation*, the alienation of the fruits of the labour of others, requires a certain degree of political and forcible *subjection*. In feudalism, it is thought that a *lesser degree of the same kind of subjection* is adequate to the *same purpose*. In capitalism, it is thought that a *still lesser degree* is adequate.' (*All italics added here*) Thus, verily, the *fundamental principle of exploitation* is *retained* in such processes of reform.

In this regard, Dr. Nkrumah strikes a difference between *socialism* and *all the other socio-economic systems* – slavery, feudalism and capitalism – on the grounds that 'Whereas capitalism is a development by refinement from slavery and feudalism, *socialism does not contain the fundamental ingredient of capitalism, the principle of exploitation*.' He adds that 'Socialism stands for the *negation* of that very principle ...' where *negation* suggests *abolition*.

By recalling these from the fingers of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah we are dead anxious to point out that reform (not *revision*) *within* Nkrumaism, on the basis of its own tenets, is nothing but a *refinement* of its *fundamental principle of non-*

exploitation of the labour of others. Hence, while the State Farm concept of the early days of Nkrumaism sees its *labour force* as *unexploited salaried workers* the current concept *within* it conceives it as *worker-owners* to the same effect.

This is what is veritably understood as *revolutionary reform* insofar as there is *no* negation of the *principle of non-exploitation* but its *refinement* for its *enhancement* against exploitation of man by man. As a *salaried* labour force, workers were not *seen* as *direct owners* of the means of production which ownership was the sole prerogative of the State – clearly *on their behalf*. In its reform, ownership in the means of production *formally* resides with *both THE SSTATE* (in perpetuity) and the *Labour Force* (*during an individual's* lifetime).

And to clear any possible confusion, the *principle of non-exploitation* is a *revolutionary* (not a *reformist*) conception that seeks to *abolish* exploitation through an essentially peaceful construction of new but non-exploitative relations of production and through the working people's direct ownership of the various means of production. Not being pacifist in its conception such commitment to peaceful construction does not deprive THE SSTATE of its right to *defend* its *constructs* with proportionate, corresponding or superior force.

Certainly, we are Nkrumaist reformists (developers) seeking the *continued development* of Marxism-Nkrumaism in its *essential* philosophy, science and development efforts without the slightest attempt at compromising its *fundamental principle of non-exploitation* but in retention of it. A conception of 'Nkrumaist reforms' to suggest an *out-of-system* compromise with capitalism in the operation of forces of Revolutionary Pan-Africanism must definitely be respected as a figment in the decrepit imagination of the worst of *revisionists*.

We are, fundamentally, surely nothing but *revolutionaries* in the spirit and socialist pursuit of Revolutionary Pan-Africanism under the revolutionary banner of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's thought system – Marxism-Nkrumaism.

We Remain Focused, Determined and Bold!

Forward Ever!

Onward to the African Socialist Revolution!

December 24 2019

1

Last year, 2018, we undertook a research study at Odometa to uncover the development dynamics of living conditions in that peasant community. Being opposed to the unethical practice of *imposing* new systems of social change on people in their communities or societies we sought to understand those dynamics in their specificity as the basis of such change. We observed in the operative dynamics therein an adherence to a *deformed principle of equality*.

On the face of it the operative principle of equality appeared fair to both the landed and landless peasantry. In essence, however, we found that the very burden of development rested uncomfortably on the shoulders of the landless peasantry in the interest of the landed peasantry. To this effect, the landless peasantry merely reproduced their miserable lives in perpetuity over the decades if not the centuries. Thus, *that principle of equality* arrested our focus.

In concert with the landless peasants, therefore, we explored a redefinition of the on-going operative principle of equality that freed the landed peasantry of any burden in terms of either expense of labour or finance and hence placing the entire burden of these on the landless peasants. In our interaction, we found that those peasants were amenable to an Enterprise or Organisation relieving them of those burdens for an equal share of the harvest.

In its most recent reflections over such an outcome, The Socialist Society for Transition in African Transformation in our Era (THE SSTATE) concluded that its half of the harvest should allocate 50% (i.e. 25% of the entire harvest) to the landless peasants' social welfare in terms of provision of accommodation in accord with modern standards and for the maintenance as well as expansion of the means of production. The remaining 25% goes into administrative use.

Communication of this latest outcome from THE SSTATE's reflections to the landless peasants, this yet as individuals, drew from them such statements of approval like 'Then we would get more than the landlords!' This set the tone for the landless peasants' personal *voluntary* participation in the construction of the first set of twenty hutches for snail farming (Snailery or Heliculture), a component of The Odometa Project – carrying wood and fetching water free!

2

Odometa is not an area where land is sold. Land *mortgage* (locally known as *awaba*) *in lieu* of a loan payment is, however, one of the means for land acquisition; that is, apart from *hiring* over a three-year period or a multiple of three-year periods. Early this year, THE SSTATE acquired stretches of land therein by mortgage over a thirty-year period for The Odometa Project.

In its interactions with individual landless peasants, THE SSTATE assures them of ownership of plots over the said period which could be renegotiated for perpetual use by the terms of the mortgage. A peasant's acquisition of a plot lasts for a whole lifetime. The main conditions for such an acquisition are, one, registration as a member of THE SSTATE, two, abiding by its rules and regulations, and, three, defending such properties of THE SSTATE.

The conditions are the same for those working in the Snailery and Piggery as well as cottage industries like the projected Gari Factory. The terms of harvest and/or products-share are also the same. For pragmatic purposes, however, all these are subject to amendment at a sitting or sittings of the Odometa Branch of THE SSTATE in accordance with the fundamental principle of non-exploitation. Any tendency towards creating an aberration to it is resisted.

3

Within the framework and understanding of the above, we set out to build THE SSTATE ODOMETA PERMACULTURE-BASED HELICULTURE on November 16 this year, a few days over a week after receiving a seed grant from S.E.E.D.S. Inc. That grant served as a *catalyst* that expedited the commencement of the build-up process that had previously been scheduled for October 2020 and thus saved THE SSTATE almost a year in the time for project execution.

At the commencement of the build-up process 800 cement blocks were purchased at a commercially-run Block Factory near Oterkporlu at a distance from Odometa. The choice of purchasing blocks from that factory instead of manufacturing them ourselves was based on the two factors of incurring lost through pilfering and the insignificant margin between self-manufactured and factory-manufactured blocks. The latter proved to be more convenient.

Our estimate of 800 cement blocks proved accurate even while there was a remainder of 33 blocks left after the block works. But we were mistaken in our estimate of the bags of cement required. We ended it all with extra purchases of 25 bags of cement. This would increase to 35 bags after 10 more bags are purchased for cement works in plastering the inside and outside of the entire structure. A truck-load of white sand is also to be purchased for the purpose.

These extra expenses aborted our expectation of completing work at a goal.

For the carpentry aspect of the structure we hired the services of a chain-saw operator who won planks of fresh wood from a forested section of the land at a cost. The transportation of the planks was by head-loads *freely* undertaken by a peasant who works as a caretaker of the oil palm plantations on some two portions of the land. By the estimates of the carpenter the lot would be quite sufficient for the required wood work to be done.

In anticipation of roofing the Snailery and constructing covers for the hutches we bought aluminium sheets, galvanised pipes, lengths of chicken wire, a roll of mosquito net, hinges and staples as well as wire gauze. We are left with part of carpentry workmanship charges to set the carpenter at work although he has already erected the pipes which would hold the roofing in place. Such work in carpentry is to be completed before the cement plastering works.

4

So far, a total of GHC7995 has been spent on the Snailery. It is noteworthy that apart from the fact that some donations were made in trickles before the S.E.E.D.S. seed grant was made a few more of such donations was made in the process of construction. And yet we could not complete the snail edifice. We expect the remainder of funds to come from sales after our mango harvest in January, 2020 from the LAMMP (our mango plantation) and more donations.

It is necessary for the records to note that an amount that was invested in an experiment in maize farming in anticipation of the commencement of The Odometa Project in 2020 was lost to the 2019 heavy rains when the incessant downpours prevented vehicular access to the experimental farm where what would have been a huge harvest got rotten in the main. As it turned out to be, therefore, only a bag of maize was rescued, representing 4.8% of investment.

We are happy to observe, all the same, that the high *quality* of the rescued maize indicates that all is not lost. In 2020, we hope to recover the loss.

An unexpected expenditure had to be made in electrical wiring of the house to avert being by-passed in the current extension of electricity to homesteads in the Odometa community. Availability of electricity is bound to facilitate the development of power-driven industry in the area.

5

There is more work to be done even after the completion of the Snailery in terms of *training* the landless peasants in the handling of snails. Already in this respect, the recruited or potential handlers have started learning a few things about snail rearing from seasoned practitioners; that is, before the formal training begins. That initiative, by itself, reflects the *enthusiasm* generated by prospects emanating from the entire Programme of which the Snailery is part.

It is true that the impressive structure of the Snailery attracted people from the other homesteads and villages. That could well be a factor of the generated enthusiasm. More importantly, however, is the adopted change in *production relations* that makes the landless peasant the main beneficiary of production. Interestingly, possible investors on the homesteads told us that they would like to know more about the project as it functioned for their adoption of it.

On the part of THE SSTATE, apart from its focus on changing the *production relations*, it finds *mobilisation value* in the reorganizational effort in production in the decided direction of social transformation; which value derives from the condition that involved peasants become its *members* in the first instance. As an advocate of the concept of Alternative Development such an endeavour places it in a position of working with the people *independently* of the State.

This *independent existence* from the existing neo-colonial State boosts THE SSTATE's genuine existence as a non-governmental organisation. Such is very important as a safeguard against engagement in the intra-systemic politicking among neo-colonial political parties across the African continent. The implied independence from the said political parties is thus clear. It frees THE SSTATE from being tied to the apron strings of the irregular fortunes of those parties.

FROM A WHATSAPP PLATFORM

October 29 – November 5 2019

LANG T. K. A. NUBUOR INTERACTS WITH KWEKU DADZIE AND JASON DEVINE ON DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM AS A MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

Jason Devine writes

1. *On the "Philosophy" of "Dialectical Materialism"*
2. *"Dialectical Materialism", Ideology, and Revisionism*



Isaac Kweku Dadzie:

This piece was written by a Canadian Marxist who discusses the view that Marx didn't originate dialectical materialism - a concept he didn't use, but rather it was Feurbach. Feurbach discovered dialectics in materialism and pointed the error of Hegel. But the tag on Marx was done by Lenin - a mistake. What this Canadian attributes to Marx, which he describes as 'novel' was his application of dialectical materialism to 'human history', 'material history of man'.

Kweku: *nobel

Kweku: Isaac Dadzie left a reason for downloading *On the "Philosophy" of "Dialectical Materialism"*: I am part of a Marxist Study Group in Ghana. And this sparked my interest. Love to read it.

Kweku: Reading the paper by Jason Devine, *On the 'Philosophy' of 'Dialectical Materialism'*, I make my own conclusion that Marx didn't describe his dialectical method as 'dialectical materialism', rather was Joseph Dietzgen, but Marx was the first to make or apply such method of dialectics in material phenomenon, thus in human history and development. Feuerbach only mentioned and recognised that insight of the incorrectness of Hegel's dialectical idealism but didn't manifest dialectical method in historical phenomenon. Marx may neither have given it a name nor a label but certainly was the first to apply such analysis derived from Hegel, later Feuerbach, to material history of society.

Both Marx and Engels didn't describe their ideas as a philosophy nor ideology but described it as a science of understanding human society. The fact that Marx didn't label his type of applied dialectical method, does not deny him of holding the title as the first to apply that method in material history, therefore we can say he is the originator of 'historical materialism based on dialectics', a term or label which can substitute both dialectical and historical materialism.

Jason Devine: Hello Isaac, Thank you for writing me! I hope you enjoyed my essay and I [hope] that you will read, or have read its follow up viz. "'Dialectical Materialism," Ideology, and Revisionism."

I must point out that Hegel did apply the dialectic to historical phenomena, as we can see, for example, in his Phenomenology of Spirit and his Philosophy of History and this was later applied by the Young Hegelian August Cieszkowski in his Prolegomena to a Historiosophy.

That being said they applied, as you correctly note an idealist dialectic, and not a dialectic based on a materialist perspective à la Marx. Only he had a full mastery of empirical data, and the latter perspective. So I would qualify your statement that Marx was the first to apply a materialist dialectic, with a concrete evidentiary basis, to the study of history.

I am not opposed to your phrasing of "'historical materialism based on dialectics'," but I find it a bit unwieldy. I prefer either historical materialism, as it is the term Engels himself coined or, as you can see in my essay "Dialectical logic in Plato's 'Parmenides', Hegel's 'Logic' and Marx's 'Critique of Political Economy'," simply Marx's dialectical method of logic.

Kweku: ... content is known, the matter which constitutes stars, planets, trees – and us. The rest, 95 percent, is unknown dark matter and dark energy. This is a mystery and a challenge to modern physics.

The 2019 Nobel Prize in Physics has been awarded with one half to James Peebles “for theoretical discoveries in physical cosmology” and the other half jointly to Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz “for the discovery of an exoplanet orbiting a solar-type star.”

Kweku: Jason, it was wonderful reading "Dialectical Materialism," Ideology, and Revisionism." It was so enjoyable. The paper has corrected a fundamental misrepresentation I had since 2008 when I was introduced to Marxism by two distinguish professors here in Ghana. Many of their literature contained the notion that there is dialectical materialism which exist as a philosophy and ideology. I am so enthused to learn further on your arguments with references, following the former paper, that Marxism is not a philosophy and an ideology - something that Bernstein forced unto history.

In fact it was worthy also to learn that Dietzgen fabricated the term 'dialectical materialism' which revealed also his weakness in the grasp of dialectical method as a science. I will be very glad to share your materials to colleagues and interested comrades here in Ghana. Looking up to future correspondence and work.

Jason Devine: Hi Isaac,

I am very happy to hear that you have read and enjoyed the essay. But, I am even happier knowing that you agree with its argument. I am not surprised that you have seen extensive argumentation claiming that dialectical materialism is a philosophy. Unfortunately, it is indeed the common myth globally in both academic and left-wing circles. It is what I have dedicated my writing to clarifying.

I think your point that Dietzgen's fabrication of the term "revealed also his weakness in the grasp of dialectical method as a science," is absolutely correct. He was a great fighter for socialism, but his theoretical lacking is undeniable.

It is great that you will share my work with others, and for that I want to thank you.

I also look forward to "future correspondence and work" comrade.

Talk soon.

Kweku: OK.

Lang Nubuor: Kweku, may I have a copy each of Dietzgen's and Jason's papers. Thanks for sharing.

Kweku: Thanks

Kweku: I don't have Dietzgen's work, "Excursion of a Socialist into Epistemology" but I will ask Jason for a copy.

Lang: Does it mean that you never read Dietzgen's paper but read Jason's presentation of that paper? Thanks.

Kweku: Yes please.

Lang: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/dietzgen/1887/epistemology.htm>

Kweku: Thank you. I will download to read.

Lang: Ok. Never again go to TOWN with somebody's VERSION of an ORIGINAL piece UNLESS you have read that ORIGINAL.

Just as Jason correctly instructs that one must read Marx BEFORE reading Dietzgen so must you read Dietzgen BEFORE reading Jason. It isn't wrong to know about Dietzgen **while** reading Jason. But at such mention, even if you have finished reading Jason, you need to go to Dietzgen to read him in the original before considering Jason's understanding of him however powerful that understanding might have impressed you. Right.

Kweku: That is true. I concur. Thanks anyway for sending me the link. I have therefore begun reading Dietzgen.

Lang: Kweku, I have just had the time to read Jason's 'Dialectical Materialism, Ideology and Revisionism'.

It seems to me to have a basic flaw in its understanding of 'ideology' as used in 'The German Ideology'.

This seems to me to make him fail to appreciate ideology as a 'system of values' reflecting socio-economic interests and as a 'set of false ideas' non-reflective of objective situations and processes; which set is what Marx and Engels seem to me to be combating in *The German Ideology*.

His attack on 'dialectical materialism' as alien to Marx and Engels appears strange to me.

The first section of the Introduction to *Anti-Dühring* states in part that '... modern materialism is essentially dialectical...'

In Preface II of the same, Engels also states that 'Marx and I were pretty well the only people to salvage conscious dialectics from German idealist philosophy for the materialist conception of nature and history.'

Part of that paragraph also talks of 'a conception of nature which is dialectical and *at the same time* materialist.'

From all these, without even going to Engels' *Dialectics of Nature*, it seems to me that 'modern materialism' can appropriately be rendered as 'dialectical materialism' for its being 'essentially dialectical' even if neither Marx nor Engels directly applies the term.

This is in spite of the fact that Engels at times includes in 'modern materialism' non-dialectical versions of it such as English materialism.

In fact, Jason himself refers to the 'materialist conception of history' *alternatively* as 'historical materialism' which is what Engels also does.

Just in the same way it seems to me that 'dialectical materialism' serves as an appropriate alternative to 'modern materialism'.

The question as to whether 'dialectical materialism' or 'materialist dialectics' is a philosophy or a method requires larger space than we have here.

One thing is certain, however. Engels uses the phrase 'dialectical method' or 'method of dialectics' often and does not refer to it as 'a system'.

Given the various parts that constitute materialist dialectics it seems appropriate that we define 'system' and 'method' as well as determine whether they relate in the thinking process necessarily and how they apply to the thought of Marx and Engels.

In this framework, we might have to consider what Marx and Engels consider as 'philosophy' which they attack in others but seem to operate in.

This is like the issue of 'ideology' with its bifurcated meaning.

Kweku, it seems I need to break here since it appears I'm going beyond the limits of my current period of relaxation to ease my stress level.

Goodnight.

Kweku: Great. Good night.

Kweku: Thank you. It is very good that you've read Jason's essay and most importantly to make an opinion related to it. I have read and understood what you've explained but while I hope to share this to Jason I want to complete my own understanding of Marx's position on ideology and philosophy by restudying the German Ideology. My wish is that this doesn't obliterate the essential point that dialectical method or "system" is a science when applied in materialism. Thanks very much for the evening. Goodnight for the mean time hoping to advance Marxism and bring clarity to things.

Lang: That's the spirit! Do your **own** study and draw your **own** conclusions.

Yes, the dialectical method is scientific. But as such there are still dimensions of it that are yet to be firmly resolved **in** philosophy.

Its philosophical **origins** should not, then, be overlooked if its history is to be well appreciated and unresolved issues are to be addressed adequately; that is, **in** philosophy.

It is **not yet** all over for philosophy as a discipline for the handling of issues of metaphysics.

Finally, kindly note that the previous message has only been a sort of **spur of the moment reaction to you** and is not meant to be shared or circulated for now.

Any reaction for circulation would be a more involved script that would include citations from several areas of the works of Marx and Engels to firmly make the case.

It has so far been merely conversational to call your attention to possible areas of clarification and development.

Happy reflections!

Good morning.

Kweku: That is too late. Last evening I dropped the previous short message, in a quote, privately to only Jason and further requesting for his WhatsApp number to engage him on a proper platform for advance dialogue. But that doesn't spoil the beef if there will be a full script that will be meant for the actual public. No need for worry. I will wait for the full script which we may consider appropriate for the public. Good morning.



Kweku Dadzie: This is a CV of Jason.

Kweku Dadzie: Jason, the recent message contains a short text responds from Nubuor. He wrote this at the spur of the moment privately to me. He would like that it is kept private and not shared whiles we wait for him to develop a full script as a proper responds to your essay. I will be very glad if this is respected.

Thank you Comrade.

Jason Devine: Hi Isaac,

It is very good to hear from you! I will certainly keep the response from comrade Nubuor private and respect his request in this regard.

I would gladly give you a WhatsApp number but unfortunately I do not have one as I do not use it. I only use Signal. I'm very sorry comrade.

Thank you very much for sharing with me the initial reaction from comrade Nubuor. Please give him my thanks as well.

I appreciate what he has written, but if he has only seen my second essay and not the first, then he is unfortunately missing the bulk of the argumentation for my position. Indeed I engage precisely with the German Ideology there.

I want to note that the question is not and cannot be limited to whether or not a textual basis exists for using the term "dialectical materialism." For, as the comrade rightly states, ideology is a "system of values." Ergo, we must ask what "system of values' reflecting socio-economic interests" are at play in utilizing that term. That is what my second essay touches upon and so it is odd that the comrade in no way engages with what is the very crux of that work, and which flows from the definition he proffers and which I do not disagree with.

To be more specific, the question of the ideological function of the deployment of the term "dialectical materialism" is not broached. Nor for the matter is the point I made on the first page addressed, viz. "I have not seen any compelling argument, let alone any single explicit argument, for why the phrase "dialectical materialism" is absolutely necessary for Marxists. In fact its use is largely based on sheer tradition." Is using this term today helpful? I don't think so, but I do not see any answer to this burning theoretical and pedagogical question from the comrade.

Comrade Nubuor offers a number of well-known formulations from Engels in which the latter rightfully comments that his and Marx's understanding of materialism is dialectical. Yet the comrade's argument here seems to lie on the purely verbal similarity of terms deployed. I must argue though that just because Engels used the words "dialectical" and "materialism" in the same sentence is not an argument for melding them together. If we are arguing for simply a textual basis the fact that Marx and Engels did not use that term is more of an argument for not using it, because, in that case, we are not reading into what they wrote, not forcing our conceptions on them.

More importantly, it is 2019 and "dialectical materialism" carries the ideological baggage of the philosophical history of the USSR (not to mention other schools in Marxism). To say the latter term should be used today because their constituent parts seem to go together is ahistorical in that it ignores the different meanings it has accrued over the last 130 years. I am sure you'll agree that any analysis of ideas which is materialist should aim to include a historical analysis of its development and function. Is the tradition useful? I do not think so. Rather I would quote Marx and say here that "The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living," viz. the ideological tradition of "dialectical materialism" weighs like nightmare on the brains of living Marxists.

I have done more work in this regard with a book I have written on the development of dialectical materialism. It is a study of the roots of Soviet diamat in the dialectical materialism of Plekhanov. Unfortunately I still have been unable to find a publisher.

However, I do very well appreciate that the comrade's comments are just an initial reaction in the form of short notes. But, as Hegel said, the truth is the whole, or the truth is concrete, and so I think that both my first and second essays need to be placed alongside each other, otherwise they might lend

themselves to a one-sided, i.e. undialectical reading. Indeed, it is in the first essay that I argue more specifically regarding the question of philosophy and its connection to ideology.

Talk soon comrade.

Jason: "I have a B.A. Honours and an M.A., both in History, and a B.Ed. all from the University of Calgary.

I was a member of the Communist Party of Canada for 16 years until I resigned in 2016. I am a founder of Calgary Anti-Fascist Action and am currently active in Calgary Anti-Racist Action.

When not teaching, or spending time with my family, or organising, I am busy studying Marxism and philosophy."

Lang: Rough Draft Notes In Reference To Jason Devine's Position On Dialectical Materialism As A Marxist Philosophy

A **philosophical system** comprises various ideas held *together* by a defined **world outlook/world view/worldview** that serves as their essence and often used interchangeably with the *philosophical system*.

In this regard, all the major departments of Philosophy, that is, Logic, Metaphysics, Ethics, Epistemology and Methodology, share the same essence within the *specified philosophical system*.

Furthermore, a philosophical system has its base either in **philosophical materialism** or **philosophical idealism**.

Philosophical dualism draws into its being both philosophical materialism and philosophical idealism; as such it is easily or quickly disposed of by materialists and idealists alike.

In the history of Philosophy, the overthrow of idealism by materialism through the latter's compatibility with science does not dismiss Philosophy out of existence.

For, the referenced departments of Philosophy continue to explore and address unsettled issues of the universe in terms of **nature** and **society**.

Where Philosophy settles any one of such issues in its departments that issue drops from the realm of Philosophy into the realm of Science.

In these respects, Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engels' assertion of the overthrow of philosophy, spelt with a small 'p', only represents an assertion of the over-

throw of *philosophical idealism* and not Philosophy as a whole or as a discipline and spelt with a capital 'P'.

In the history of philosophical materialism, its dialectical definition today emerges as its *most developed state*.

This definition renders what Engels calls *modern materialism* and as what other Marxists call *dialectical materialism*.

Dialectical materialism is that Marxist **world outlook** that addresses not only *society* in its dynamics and manifestations but *also* the universe with respect to *nature* in its dynamics and manifestations.

As a **world outlook**, it is a materialist *philosophy* that remains subject to critical inquiry and development.

Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's contribution of the concept of *_categorial conversion_* to Marxist philosophy is a case in point of the *critical inquiry and development of Marxist philosophy*.

The founding of the **dialectical method** alone *within* the philosophy of Dialectical Materialism or Marxist Thought in Philosophy does *not* render the latter as a science since it remains the realm for the resolution of issues about *nature* and *society*.

And it is not only the **dialectical method** that Dialectical Materialism/Marxist Philosophical Thought has made available to Science but also the **critical method**.

In Marxist *scientific* practice, the **critical method** is rarely referred to. In its composition and application, it comprises the concepts of *alienation, reification and inversion (ARI)* in procedural application.

To, therefore, project the *dialectical method* as the *only* method of Marxism which method is then understood as the entire representation of Marxist scientific thought is certainly an inadequacy or understatement and, therefore, mistaken.

In this respect, the equation of the dialectical method with *Historical Materialism* is unfortunate since the **critical method** is *also* applied in its scientific determinations in historiography to overthrow idealist distortions of history.

Even more specifically, historical materialism addresses and is focused on *human society* in the study of the social sciences and humanities but not *physical nature*.

The latter is studied by the physical sciences where the dialectical and critical methods are also applied.

To equate the dialectical method with historical materialism **only** is, therefore, to deny Marxist thought in the realm of the physical sciences - a mistaken attitude.

That is, the *materialist conception of history (historical materialism)* is **not** applicable in the *physical sciences*.

It is from Marxist philosophy that Marxist science, in respect of nature and society, is fed with its concepts and methods which are thereafter scrutinised as scientific concepts and methods.

And Marxist philosophy is not equivalent to *Marxist Ideology* which is fed with the concepts and determinations of the Ethics of Marxist philosophy/Dialectical Materialism.

In Marxism, philosophy serves ideology as a *system of values* which is analysed and formalised by that philosophy.

All these are very well explained in one way or the other in Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's *Consciencism* in its application of Marxist thought in general within the framework of Marxism-Nkrumaism.

Lang T. K. A. Nubuor
October 23 2019

Lang: In the spirit of not stressing myself due to my recent sickness, which has drastically abated, I could not read what Comrade Jason calls his first essay.

I was, therefore, awaiting next year after some concrete tasks had been accomplished on our projected integrated farm before returning to theoretical endeavours.

You know, as part of my New Year resolution, I made it a point to dedicate this year mostly to practical tasks and very less to light theoretical comments.

I still insist on sticking by that schedule.

In that light, I would not want to address Jason now. I think he deserves full-scale attention as a comrade in the spirit of collective self-criticism to clarify for ourselves issues raised in his essays.

Permit me to just observe here that I see no great difference between his two essays although the first, which I just finished reading, is more elaborate and explicit.

I respect his efforts as a trained historian in a field that appears to be the domain of philosopher-historians one of whom I happen to be by training and praxis.

His type seem rare to me at this time of world revolutionary engagements.

I wish I could find time to address his essays even before the break of the New Year and have all three published in the *Journal of Marxism-Nkrumaism*.

He should not be surprised, however, in case that actually materialises in De-

cember.



Kindly extend my kindest regards to him by way of a copy of this note.

Good morning.

NB: I should also like to have his WhatsApp number.

Jason: Hi Isaac,

I apologise for the late reply comrade! I have recently been able to work again (substitute teaching) and have been working every day this last week mostly in elementary school. Needless to say I have been exhausted. Little children have such energy!

Thank you for forwarding the messages form comrade Nubuor. I will read them carefully and respond as soon as possible.

How are you? I hope all is well.

Talk soon,

Jason

Jason: Hi Isaac,

I hope this email find you well comrade. I have finally found time to read the comrade's notes. The following is a short response:

Marx critically appropriated Hegel's dialectic for the development of science, as opposed to philosophy. For Marx and Engels, the latter was dead and sublated by the former. As they wrote in the German Ideology: "We know only a single science, the science of history." Thus it is no surprise that in 1858 Marx wrote to Lassalle the following regarding Hegel's dialectic: "This dialectic is, to be sure, the ultimate word in philosophy and hence there is all the more need to divest it of the mystical aura given it by Hegel."

It must be noted that he did not say idealist philosophy or the philosophy of idealism, but used the term "philosophy" utterly unqualified viz. philosophy in general. If Hegel's dialectic is the "ultimate," the last word, then philosophy is exhausted as vehicle for human cognition.

This point was brought out by Engels even more explicitly in his *Anti-Dühring*:

"The Hegelian system was the last and consummate form of philosophy, in so far as the latter is presented as a special science superior to every other. All philosophy collapsed with this system."

Again, it must be noted that there is no mention of idealist philosophy specifically, but rather Engels explicitly stated that "All philosophy collapsed with this system." Similar citations can be adduced.

The question is, then, were Marx and Engels right, or were they wrong?

If they were right then there is no Marxist philosophy, just Marx's dialectical method. If they are wrong, then the question must be answered as to how both men, both these giants of human thought, were so wrong for most of their adult lives as to the nature of the actual project they were engaged in.

How did they not perceive that for over 40 years they were actually forging a philosophy? I find such a thought not only fantastic, but I also stress that I have never seen it proven anywhere. Most certainly not in the work of Plekhanov, where the idea originates, nor in the work of the Soviet Diamatchiki, who following A. Deborin argued that Marxist philosophy provides the methodology for the sciences.

Instead all I have seen is the mere assertion that Marxism is a philosophy and/or an appeal to some higher authority (such as Lenin) who also merely asserted it is a philosophy. Yet an assertion is not an argument, but rather a claim. An argument requires proven premises, a logical structure, and an empirical basis.

There is no textual basis in the writings of Marx and Engels to prove they created a new philosophy. What there is a textual basis for is that their position was that philosophy is an ideology and unscientific.

Thus a basis for proving that Marxism is a philosophy must be sought elsewhere, viz. beyond Marx and Engels. But then that would make a mockery of the idea that they founded a philosophy and be an implicit admission that diamat was founded by other thinkers, not them.

Talk soon comrade,

Jason

Lang: Jason has a strategic misunderstanding of the text in Marx and Engels. He is grossly mistaken.

What could Engels have meant by 'philosophy in the narrow sense' in his *Anti-Dühring*? Or the 'idealist conception of history' at the same source?

Which is "philosophy in the broad sense"? That is philosophy spelt with capital 'P' or as a *discipline*. In the narrow sense the reference is to 'philosophical system' *within* Philosophy.

In fact, it would be interesting what Jason would tell us about Engels stating at that source that 'idealism was driven from its last refuge, the conception of history; now a materialist treatment of history was advanced, and the way found to explain man's consciousness by his being, instead of, as heretofore, his consciousness.'

Does he not understand the reference to 'idealism' there as a reference to 'idealist philosophy' which is what it is?

In case my health improves early enough I'll develop the Rough Draft before the end of this year.

Kindly send his contact address to me.
Thanks a lot.

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