



INTERNATIONAL PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

ISSN-0019-0365

VOL. XXI, NO. 2

Issue No. 82

JUNE, 1981

ARTICLES

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Yale Univ. | A Fifty-Year Retrospective in Philosophy | <i>John E. Smith</i> |
| Dartmouth Coll. | Martin Buber's Epistemology: A Critical Appraisal | <i>Steven T. Katz</i> |
| London | Pierre Bayle and Karl Marx: Some Reflections on a Curious Connection | <i>L. Baronovitch</i> |
| Formerly Araya-mehr Univ., Iran | Sadr al-Din Qunawi on the Oneness of Being | <i>William C. Chittick</i> |
| Syracuse Univ. | God and the World according to Advaita Vedanta: A Critical Assessment | <i>John B. White</i> |

CONTEMPORARY CURRENTS

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Trinity Evang. Div. School | The Logical Status of Religious Discourse in the Philosophy of D. Z. Phillips | <i>Stuart C. Hackett</i> |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|

FEATURE BOOK REVIEW

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|-----------------------|
| SUNY, Stony Brook | <i>You, I, and the Others</i> , by Paul Weiss | <i>Robert Neville</i> |
|-------------------|---|-----------------------|

BRIEFER BOOK REVIEWS



FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
NEW YORK

FACULTES UNIVERSITAIRES
NAMUR

Pierre Bayle and Karl Marx: Some Reflections on a Curious Connection

L. Baronovitch

PIERRE BAYLE and Karl Marx—one a would-be philosopher of science living in 17th and early 18th century France, the other a co-founder of scientific socialism and the father of modern communism. It seems inconceivable that there could be even the most tenuous connection between two men whose lives, thoughts and times differed so radically. In this paper, however, I will show that there *is* a link between them, in fact, a connection so interesting as to provide a most valuable insight into Marx's early intellectual development and the genesis of his historical materialism and new world outlook.

Pierre Bayle's name appears in only two of the studies that Marx wrote between 1838 and 1844, firstly in his Doctoral Dissertation which was completed in 1841 and secondly in *The Holy Family* written over three years later. What stands out in these two references is that the first is critical of Bayle to the point of hostility while the second is thoroughly enthusiastic. It is true that the subject matter differs in each case. In his Doctoral Dissertation, Marx examined the differences between the Democritean and Epicurean philosophies of nature,¹ and strongly condemned Bayle's interpretation of the Epicurean thesis of the declination or swerve of the atom as "superficial and disconnected." The section on French materialism in *The Holy Family*, however, finds Marx acclaiming the same Bayle for shattering metaphysics, preparing the reception of materialism in France and heralding atheistic society.² We shall see in this study that differences in material content notwithstanding, the turnaround in Marx's attitude to Bayle between 1841 and 1844 is comprehensive; in fact, the attitudes of the respective dates act as a litmus, reflecting the intellectual colour of the young Marx at opposite ends of a crucial period in the development of his early thought. The change in Marx's colour between 1841 and 1844, reflected through his changed attitude to Bayle, will clearly indicate that his philosophy and politics had undergone a radical alteration between the two dates.

From 1838 to the end of 1841, Marx wrote three exceedingly interesting pieces of philosophy which have only recently come to occupy the attention of scholars. The first two, the *Notebooks on Epicurean Philosophy*, which he produced as preparatory studies for his Doctoral Dissertation, and the dissertation itself are works which examine Greek materialist philosophy in a highly original and most challenging way.³ Toward the end of 1841, he appended two important notes on philosophy to his thesis one of which discussed the relationship of philosophy to the world with particular reference to the situation of Hegelian philosophy in Germany at that time.⁴ This involvement with Greek materialism and the history of philosophy in general began from the time when Marx became an active member of the Doctors' Club at Berlin University. As a student at Berlin, he had gained an introduction to this club through friends after a period of illness and convalescence during which time he became acquainted with Hegelian philosophy, surrendering to the charm of its melody after a certain amount of inner conflict.⁵ This club, or group of critically minded youthful adherents of Hegelian philosophy, numbered some university lecturers among its members and formed an intellectual focus for radical theological and political discussion in Berlin at that time. Chief among Marx's friends there were two of its leading personalities, Bruno Bauer and Karl Köppen. Bauer had lectured in theology at Berlin University since 1834 and as a student of the orthodox Hegelian, Marheinecke, he had stood on the right wing of the Hegelian movement. By 1837, however, his attitude to Hegel's thought had undergone a steady evolution so that by the time that Marx became an active Club member, Bauer was widely regarded as a leading spokesman of the Young or Left Hegelians. Köppen, on the other hand, taught history at a local school and, with Bauer, was particularly interested in the

¹ K. Marx, *Difference between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*, in K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works* Vol. I (Progress Publishers, Moscow 1975), pp. 25-73.

² K. Marx, F. Engels, *The Holy Family*; *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. IV, p. 127.

³ For the *Notebooks on Epicurean Philosophy*, see K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. I, pp 403-509.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-87. The editors of the *Collected Works* have included this in the notes and footnotes to the Dissertation as indicated by their own footnote 29 and have headed them: *IV. General Differences in Principle Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*. I am of the opinion, however, that Marx's comments on philosophy have no connection whatsoever with the text of his Dissertation but were appended to it by him after its completion early in 1841 and I have described them here and elsewhere (see L. Baronovitch, *Two Appendices to a Doctoral Dissertation*, in *Boston Philosophical Forum*, VIII, Nos. 2-4, 1978) as an Appended Note on Philosophy. The heading given by the editors is certainly misleading.

⁵ *K. Marx to Heinrich Marx, Nov. 10, 1837*; *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. I, pp 18-19.

history of religion and classical philosophy, especially the post-Aristotelian systems of thought that had given way to Christianity during the Roman era.

In his study of Frederick the Great, Köppen had argued that the stature of the King of Prussia as leader of the German Enlightenment originated in his expressing the post-Aristotelian systems of philosophy with their republican content and hostility to a narrow theology.⁶ Looking at this from a different angle, it seemed to Bauer that the Enlightenment and the systems of thought on which it rested had been subsumed within the Christian-German reaction and that the vitality of this later Greek spirit was contained within its intellectual expression, the Hegelian system, as a dormant force. These questions of the relationship of German philosophy and culture to history had a special and personal meaning for the Young Hegelians, for just as they believed that the downfall of Enlightenment, post-Aristotelian vitality paralleled its earlier disappearance into Roman Christianity, so they also believed that their intellectual relationship to Hegel and his system similarly paralleled the relationship of the post-Aristotelians to the ‘total’ philosophy of that earlier master, Aristotle.⁷ The seeming disappearance of the spirit of Hegelian thought at its highest stage of development, self-consciousness, into the oddly coincidental Christian State of Prussia led Bauer toward a critical re-assessment of the master’s theology and thought in general which he introduced into the Young Hegelian movement between 1838 and the time that Marx left Berlin in 1841. The essence of this re-evaluation involved his taking up of Hegel’s thesis of the ongoing development of mind and revitalising it by transforming the passive role of self-consciousness—the point where Mind ended in the *Phenomenology*—into an active weapon of philosophical criticism with the aid of dialectics.

The Young Hegelians, led by Bauer, viewed their rescue of self-consciousness from Hegel and its restoration as the driving force of a vital and critical philosophy as paralleling the revitalising of philosophy by the Epicureans, Stoics, and Sceptics after the complete and encompassing system of Aristotle. Nowhere are these themes better expressed than in the *Notebooks on Epicurean Philosophy* that Marx prepared for his Doctoral Dissertation and the two *Appendices on Philosophy* he added to his thesis some two years later. In fact, in the comparison he made of the post-Aristotelian, Epicurean materialism with the older Democritean atomistics, Marx argued at length in his dissertation that the active self-consciousness of Epicurus enabled him to overcome the contradictions within his system of thought when it was used as an instrument of philosophical criticism.⁸ On the face of it then, it seems as though this early period of Marx’s classical studies reflects essential lines of thought current in the Young Hegelian movement at this time.

MARX’S CRITICISM OF BAYLE: CONTENT AND MEANING

Marx’s first reference to Bayle appears at the beginning of the second part of his Doctoral Dissertation in the section entitled *The Declination of Atoms from a Straight Line*. The section examines the Epicurean thesis that atoms swerve from their straight line of motion in space, facilitating their combination and the birth of substance. From the start, Marx identifies Bayle’s understanding of this Epicurean thesis with that of Cicero. Both, he critically argues,

...foist upon Epicurus motives of which the one nullifies the other. Epicurus is supposed to have assumed a declination of the atoms in order to explain the repulsion on one occasion, and on another freedom. But if the atoms do *not* meet without declination, then declination as an explanation of freedom is superfluous; for the opposite of freedom begins, as we see in *Lucretius*,⁹ only with the deterministic and forced meeting of atoms. But if the atoms meet *without* declination, then this is superfluous for explaining repulsion. I maintain that this contradiction arises when the causes for the declination of the atom from the straight line are understood so superficially and disconnectedly as they are by Cicero and Bayle.¹⁰

However, nowhere in a quotation that Marx takes from Bayle’s study of Epicurus that appears shortly before this identification with Cicero does the vaguest hint of ‘repulsion’ in any form appear. Bayle is quite clear about Epicurus’ motives for declination: “Epicurus supposed that even in the midst of the void the atoms declined slightly from the straight line, and from this, he said, arose freedom.... He also used it [declination L.B.] to explain the meeting of atoms.”¹¹ According to the passage quoted by Marx, Bayle judges Epicurus to have a dual motive for his thesis of declination; he is not critical of it as an idea although Marx argues that his explanation of it is illogical. He prefers Lucretius’ application of declination “directly to consciousness” and argues in his dissertation that “declination is that something in the breast of the atom that can fight back and resist,” i.e. the free spirit of self-consciousness. This resistance, he suggests, stands opposed to the “materiality of the atom in

⁶ K. F. Köppen, *Friedrich der Grosse und seine Widersacher* (Leipzig, 1840).

⁷ See the *Introduction* in J. M. Gabaude, *Le jeune Marx et le matérialisme antique* (Toulouse, 1970).

⁸ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. I. pp 72-73.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48 (see p. 90, Note 7, for reference).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

terms of its motion along a straight line.” Its essence is repulsion, which, says Marx, becomes “*the first form of self-consciousness*.” Repulsion is thus made *the free spirit of self-consciousness*, free especially from physical laws and seen in terms of philosophical criticism, free to sing the Hegelian song, “All that exists deserves to perish.” It is self-consciousness as the antithesis of existence, the antithesis of a materiality of atoms merely moving in a straight line. It is, in fact, the theoretical self-consciousness applied to the problem of how atomic motion in itself creates substantial nature in the coming together of atoms. Marx clearly removed Epicurean declination from the domain of determinism out of which it was precisely to be lifted by Epicurus.¹² He therefore gave Epicurean atomism the driving force of Bauer’s critical self-consciousness as a *primum mobile*. This is confirmed in his description of Epicurean, Stoic, and Sceptic philosophy as being the “*philosophies of self-consciousness*” in a passage he deleted from the *Draft of a New Preface* to his dissertation written at the end of 1841.¹³

Marx’s final criticism of Bayle appears when he takes him to task for trying to spiritualize declination, reproaching Epicurus for having “thought out the concept of declination,” i.e. considering it only from the standpoint of its theoretical value rather than its importance as a determining principle in nature. Here, Marx criticizes what he regards as a tendency toward mechanism in Bayle’s thought, thus favouring a self-consciousness that facilitates theoretical free-wheeling over the arbitrary limitations imposed by scientific principles. In this he follows Epicurus, whose advice he quotes in his dissertation, “It would be better to follow the myth about the gods than to be a slave to the *heimarmene* [destiny L.B.] of the physicists. For the former leaves hope for mercy..... while the latter is inexorable necessity.”¹⁴ Much of Marx’s dissertation is impregnated with the Young Hegelian spirit of self-consciousness. Its very purpose, it seems, was to show that the Epicurean materialism differed from the earlier Democritean atomistics by virtue of the theoretical advances contained in the post-Aristotelian system. From the dissertation, it is obvious that the most important of these advances for Marx was a critical self-consciousness which not only allowed Epicurus to resolve the contradictions in his *materialist* philosophy but also enabled the development of philosophy to continue after the appearance of Aristotle’s all embracing system. As I have argued earlier, the same principle assisted the continued development of philosophy after Hegel. Epicurean declination is the physical reflection of this principle of the vitality of consciousness and Marx is clearly annoyed with Bayle for accusing Epicurus of having *invented* “the notion of declination” to explain the existence of substance. He interprets Bayle’s point of view as indicating a hostility toward speculative philosophy and an attempt to dissociate it from reason. His lack of forbearance with the French metaphysician, I maintain, highlights his intellectual proximity to Bruno Bauer at this time.

When Marx was putting together his researches for a Doctoral Dissertation in 1838, Feuerbach published a study on Bayle which examined the relationship between faith and scientific reason in his metaphysics.¹⁵ While it is not possible to ascertain whether Marx read this work at the time it was published, he would, I think, have fervently disagreed with the tenor of Feuerbach’s considerations on the “acute and learned sceptic.” Rawidowicz has suggested that Feuerbach’s study of Bayle was simply a disguise for a “gradually ripening naturalism,”¹⁶ a view Wartofsky tends to support: “It is clear that he [Feuerbach] is using Bayle’s views as the occasion to state his own more fully and explicitly.”¹⁷ Looked at broadly, Feuerbach’s study of Bayle reflects the conflict within his own thought at this time. Written in between his study of Leibniz, in which “he is already struggling with an empiricism and nominalism,”¹⁸ and his well-known break with Hegel in 1839,¹⁹ Feuerbach’s *Pierre Bayle* of 1838 is a work of a Hegelian in some philosophical crisis. It is essentially a supporting argument for Bayle’s broad critique of theology that illuminates his contribution to the emergence of a scientific rationalism released from heavenly chains. From praising Baconian “qualitative empiricism” in 1835, Feuerbach had moved steadily away from the speculative tradition of German philosophy toward an empiricism with a nascent humanism for its kernel. The study of Bayle indicates a growing antipathy toward a “rationalist idealism” and a growing over into a philosophical position which favoured the rationality of positive science based on an autonomous nature freed from divine necessity. Feuerbach’s movement from the empire of Hegelian speculation, however, was also seen to produce a certain contradictory quality in his thought at this time. In the Note on Philosophy that he appended to his dissertation early in 1841, Marx pointed out that the breakup of the Hegelian school of philosophy produced two philosophical tendencies, one of which, the school of *positive* philosophy, “holds fast...to the real,”

¹² Ibid., pp. 48-53.

¹³ Ibid., p. 106.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 42-43.

¹⁵ L. Feuerbach, *Pierre Bayle—Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Menschheit*, 1839, in Vol. IV of *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. W. Schuffenhauer (Berlin, 1967).

¹⁶ L. F. Rawidowicz, *Ludwig Feuerbachs Philosophie* (Berlin, 1931), p. 63.

¹⁷ M. W. Wartofsky, *Feuerbach* (Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 116.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 110.

¹⁹ L. Feuerbach, *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Philosophie*, in the *Hallische Jahrbücher*, Issue no. 208, 30 August, 1839.

but which nonetheless saw “the deficiency [of philosophy] as immanent to philosophy.”²⁰ The contradictory character of the positive philosophy commented on by Marx, I maintain, is suggestive of Feuerbach’s philosophical position between 1836 and 1840. On the one hand, he approached his critique of Hegel’s thought in 1839 from the standpoint of analyzing the deficiencies contained within it, an activity of “philosophical introspection,” Marx noted. On the other hand, his studies of the history of philosophy between 1835 and 1838 contained a critique of theology, aided by science and its rationale, that had the appearance of impelling him toward *reality* rather than containing him within an introspective, speculative philosophy. It is certainly very instructive to put alongside Marx’s comments the views that Feuerbach expressed in his study of Leibniz, written in 1837:

The study of the development of philosophy is the deciphering of its true sense...the essential object of this study is.....the sort of positive philosophical presentation which the study of the immanent development of a philosophy makes not merely possible but necessary.²¹

To my mind, the positive philosophy to which Marx refers in his appended note is the kind of *positivity* expressed by Feuerbach toward philosophy and developed by him between 1836 and 1843. In the Bayle study, Feuerbach was already coming to hold fast to the *real*, to nature, developing a preference for a materialistic empiricism over the concepts and principles emphasized by the other school of philosophy described by Marx as the “liberal school”. The most important of these principles, I maintain, was Bauer’s theory of self-consciousness, a radical development of Hegel’s philosophy which dominated the Young Hegelian movement and Marx’s own thought at a time when he was preparing his dissertation.²²

While Marx’s Doctoral Dissertation and its preparatory *Notebooks on Epicurean Philosophy* strongly reflect the influence of Bauer’s principle of self-consciousness between 1838 and 1841, Feuerbach’s work in this period clearly showed an abandonment of this precise kind of philosophy for new waters. The movement away from Hegelian idealism and speculative theorizing unhindered by reality, particularly favoured by the Young Hegelians, to the waters of real life, would have placed Feuerbach in an opposite corner to Marx, whose dissertation is full of Bauer’s principle of self-consciousness that allows the critical intellect to fly freely over the limiting conditions of life. This freedom, this declination or swerving of the atom was the secret key to Epicurean atomistics, according to Marx, who had argued in his dissertation that Epicurus had made self-consciousness the heart of his theory of substance in order that *philosophy* rather than empirical science might explain the material world. Marx not only praises Epicurus for precisely this reason but shows his support for a philosophy of self-consciousness by placing it on the highest pedestal at the beginning of his dissertation.²³ And when the smoke of analysis clears, Marx emerges in the garments of German idealism while Feuerbach has moved in an entirely different direction, one that would eventually take him to a farmhouse in the heart of the German countryside. The Marx of 1838 and the Feuerbach of the same year were entirely opposed intellectual entities, yet in 1844, Marx almost seemed to speak the other’s language and had developed, furthermore, a decided enthusiasm for Pierre Bayle. If Feuerbach’s gestation period of German idealism began in the early 1830’s, reached a climax in the Bayle work of 1838, and then departed for a humanistic materialism from 1839 to 1840, Marx’s gestation of the same kind of idealism *only began* in 1838 but reached a turning point in the second Note on Philosophy he appended to his dissertation late in 1841 *only three years later*. From here onwards, he departs toward historical materialism. The happy rediscovery of Bayle in 1844, I maintain, resulted precisely from the development of historical materialism during the period 1841 to 1844. It was no accident.

BAYLE REDISCOVERED

The point at which the development of historical materialism can be said to have begun would of necessity be an identifiable point of theoretical departure between Marx and German idealism in the shape of Bruno Bauer. Such a point exists, as I have indicated above, in the second Note on Philosophy that Marx appended to his dissertation in 1841 and described by him as a *Critique of Plutarch’s Polemic against the Theology of Epicurus*. Earlier on in the same year, he had expressed his support for the theoretical school of Bauer in a first appended Note on Philosophy, at the same time attacking the aims of the *positive school* of philosophy as contradictory and senseless. By the time he appended his second note, a fundamental change had occurred in his thought.

The activities of the Young Hegelian movement were by no means confined to theological or philosophical speculations. Under Bauer’s guidance, the movement had turned its attention to critical appraisal of the religion

²⁰ D. McLellan, *Karl Marx: Early Texts* (Oxford, 1971), p. 16. I have used McLellan here rather than *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. I, as he seemed to me to be more positive and in keeping with the general context, the purpose of which, I think, was Marx’s concern to examine the process by which philosophy developed. I have also adopted McLellan’s use of the word school rather than trend (as in *Collected Works*, Vol. I) to describe the various philosophical tendencies.

²¹ Wartofsky, op. cit., p. 90. See also footnote 4 above.

²² D. McLellan, *The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx* (Macmillan, 1970), pp. 59-63, 69-73.

²³ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 30.

and police state politics of Prussia. In consequence, the Young Hegelians experienced difficulty in obtaining and maintaining employment in teaching or lecturing careers, and Marx was no exception. Having failed to obtain a teaching position in the months after he had completed his Doctoral Dissertation, he turned to journalism for a source of income. It is a matter of great interest that his first article, written at the beginning of 1842, attacked the Prussian censorship instruction of December 1841 as reactionary. By forbidding attacks on the Christian religion, this censorship appeared to reject the moral imperative of philosophers who had sanctified the autonomy of human consciousness. The sharp turn toward the *real* conditions of Prussian society by Marx at this time is strongly bound in with an idea he had developed only months earlier in the second Note on Philosophy in which he examined the relationship of man to God.²⁴ After quoting Plutarch's attack on Epicurus, Marx turned to criticize Hegel's support for proofs of the existence of God, arguing that they were hollow tautologies. At the same time, he noted another argument, that such proofs "are *proofs of the existence of essential human self-consciousness*," adding the comment, "Which being is immediate when made the subject of thought? Self-consciousness."²⁵ I can in no way agree with Zvi Rosen's point of view that Marx demonstrated a preference for Bauer's view over Hegel on the question of these proofs.²⁶ This other argument, described by Marx as "the second alternative", does indeed belong to Bauer, but what Rosen fails to see is that this too is revealed by Marx as a tautology. The positions of both Hegel and Bauer are *equally condemned*. Furthermore, in a key section of the note that Rosen failed to notice, Marx criticized the notion of abstract possibility, opposing the idealist theory that *anything* could exist with the thesis that conditions prevailing in the real world place practical limitations on theoretical possibility in the shape of ideas and the imagination.

"Bring paper money into a country where this use of paper is unknown, and everyone will laugh at your subjective imagination. Come with your gods into a country where other gods are worshipped, and you will be shown to suffer from fantasies and abstractions. And justly so. He who would have brought a Wendic god to the ancient Greeks would have found the proof of this god's non-existence."²⁷

By opposing *real possibility*, real conditions, to abstract or formal possibility, Marx now sought to link thought to real existence and therefore direct the search for truth to the facts of reality. This being the case, it becomes logical to deny any intrinsic value to speculative philosophy beyond its function of being a purely mental activity.

At this juncture, two roads lay before Hegelian philosophy and Marx, each with a different ending. The first was speculative thought or mind as its own object, the second, the entry of mind into the world as *will*, as practical activity, such as the criticism of worldly conditions—those prevailing in the Prussia of 1840 for example. Along one road lay the critique of real conditions from the standpoint of philosophy. This was the aim of Bauer's *theoretical school* which Marx had supported in his first appended Note on Philosophy. Along the second road lay the critique of real conditions that had of necessity to take initial cognizance of the *character* of the real conditions. In other words, along the second road lay the critique of real conditions *that began from* the concrete standpoint of the conditions themselves rather than any critical theory about them. The path of the second appended note, I suggest, is the ground that underpins Marx's evolution from speculative Young Hegelianism to radical journalist. Marx's experiences as a journalist furthermore reinforced this important advance, for if any critical intellectual activity was to be effective, it had necessarily to face worldly conditions in order to become practical. Political goals could only be achieved through a social intercourse with the real conditions of Prussian political life.

The philosophical advance in Marx signified here is the suggestion that rational truth lies in *fact* and in the real world rather than in speculative mind or self-consciousness. No matter how valid Bauer's intellectual diagnosis and criticism of the "exterior world" might be as an activity of speculative mind, it increasingly stood out as worthless paper money to those who, like Marx, wanted to effect radical change and came to understand that the only currency recognised by the Prussian regime was military force. *Criticism*, however, was to remain Bauer's major contribution to the Young Hegelian movement even up to the time when the principles of historical materialism were first stated by Marx and Engels in their manuscripts of 1845 and 1846.²⁸ But if anything does stand out in this analysis of the emergence of historical materialism it is that the *theoretical* detachment from Bauer and German idealism began alongside the departure point of its progenitor from academic philosophy for a career in the choppy waters of political journalism.

From the early months of 1842 to the end of 1844, Marx had an extremely busy life. At the beginning of the period he traveled between Berlin, Trier, and Cologne with his friend Bruno Bauer, who had recently been dismissed from his lectureship now at Bonn University. While Bauer returned to Berlin to associate himself with

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 102-105.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 104.

²⁶ Zvi Rosen, *Bruno Bauer and Karl Marx* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977), p. 152.

²⁷ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 104.

²⁸ K. Marx, F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. V, Ch. 1: *Feuerbach: Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlooks*.

the violent clamour in the liberal press against the authorities, Marx made the acquaintance of influential radicals in Cologne, like the communist Moses Hess and the publisher Arnold Ruge. At the same time, he began working for the *Rheinische Zeitung*, becoming associated with its literary-political club of supporters, the Cologne Circle, whose members he quickly impressed. While in Cologne, he began attending the meetings of a group of radicals founded by Hess, where a wide range of social questions were discussed. Up to the time when the paper was banned in March 1843, Marx, by then its *de facto* editor, had written a number of articles attacking the Prussian Government, the flavour of which was a distinct personal indignation.²⁹ From March to August, he wrote a critique of Hegel's political philosophy, at the same time collaborating with Ruge and Hess to set up a radical political journal with an international character, the *Deutsche-französische Jahrbücher*. Being guaranteed a substantial co-editor's salary by Ruge, he married his beloved Jenny von Westphalen in June 1843. From June until the time he left Germany at the end of 1843 to follow Ruge and Hess to Paris, Marx wrote two articles for Ruge's journal that were to be a watershed in his life. In the first, a review of Bauer's attitude toward the Jews in Germany, he expressed a fundamental difference of opinion to his former closest colleague on an important social question of the time. In the second article, completed in Paris, he strongly attacked the "party of theory", gave qualified support to the "practical political party", and spoke about the need for a proletarian revolution in Germany. Shortly after the first edition of the journal appeared, the Prussian Government issued a warrant for his arrest, forcing him into permanent political exile.

In Paris during 1844, Marx experienced the conditions of bourgeois society for the first time, meeting two forces that were to direct him toward communism, the Paris proletariat and Frederick Engels. Soon after his arrival in Paris, Marx read Engels' article *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, which drew attention to the economic causes of social antagonism and class conflict. Strongly influenced by Engels' experiences in industrial Manchester and the major attack that Feuerbach had launched on Hegel's philosophy in 1842 and 1843, which struck right at the heart of the Hegelian metaphysics,³⁰ he wrote a series of manuscripts on political economy and philosophy in which he castigated the economics of bourgeois society and developed his own comprehensive *Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole*. He began these Paris manuscripts by praising Feuerbach's contribution to philosophy, "*Feuerbach* is the only one who has had a *serious, critical* attitude to the Hegelian dialectic and who has made genuine discoveries in this field. He is in fact the true conqueror of the old philosophy."³¹ His concluding manuscript, the critique of Hegel's dialectic, began with an outright condemnation of Bruno Bauer, whom he accused of failing to understand the real nature of his own intellectual relationship to Hegel's thought. Despite his philosophy of critical self-consciousness, Bauer, said Marx, "still remained wholly within the confines of Hegelian Logic" and his criticism had "a completely uncritical attitude to itself".³² This view was comprehensively developed by Marx into a full-blooded assault on Bauer's whole philosophy from the summer of 1844 and published in a book called *The Holy Family*, subtitled *A Critique of Critical Criticism: Against Bruno Bauer and Company*. The study analyzed the evolution of Bauer's intellectual development and relationship to Hegel's philosophy and at the same time was full of praise for Feuerbach, a fact that students of this period of Marx's life tend to forget. The study also marks the re-appearance of Pierre Bayle, whose contribution to the development of thought Marx now unhesitatingly commends. *The Holy Family* marks the antithesis of the earlier stage in Marx's thought where, as a Young Hegelian, he had exuded Bauer's philosophy of self-consciousness from almost every pore.

The historical evolution of Marx's thought between 1838 and 1844 is synonymous with the development of historical materialism. The phases of this evolution, from the Young Hegelian idealism of 1838 to 1841, through the revolutionary democratic journalism of 1842 and 1843, together with the critique of Hegel's political philosophy, ended with an all-round attack by Marx on the dialectical essence of Hegel's entire system and his former Young Hegelian comrade in arms, Bruno Bauer. Coupled with his now strong but not unqualified support for Feuerbach, Marx, at the end of 1844, attacked the position that he himself had supported from 1838 to 1841. Soon afterwards, he was also to place Feuerbach's contribution to his own intellectual development in critical context in a series of short philosophical propositions—*Theses on Feuerbach*—that ended with the uncompromising statement, "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point is to *change* it."³³

The beginning of this entire process, I have suggested, lay in the second Note on Philosophy that Marx appended to his Doctoral Dissertation at the end of 1841, which emphasized the limitations that reality placed on philosophical speculation and stressed the value of real over ideal conditions. Despite the fact that this position

²⁹ K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. I, pp. 109-379.

³⁰ L. Feuerbach, *Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie*, in *Sämtliche Werke* Vol. 2 (Stuttgart, 1960), II, pp. 222-44; and *Principles of the Philosophy of the Future*, trans. M. H. Vogel with an Introduction (Indianapolis, 1966).

³¹ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. M. Milligan (London, 1970), p. 172.

³² *Ibid.* For the quote immediately above, see p. 170.

³³ K. Marx, F. Engels, *The German Ideology: Theses on Feuerbach* (original version) p. 647. Lawrence & Wishart, London 1965.

clearly diverged from that of Bauer, its implications were not immediately understood or furthered by Marx. In March of 1842, however, he wrote to Ruge that the tone of Bauer's *Posaune* "and the irksome constraint of the Hegelian exposition" which, he says, "I conscientiously followed" "should now be replaced by a freer, and therefore more thorough exposition."³⁴ Support for the *Posaune* is *already* a thing of the past and although he expresses confidence for Bauer in his letter to Ruge of July,³⁵ by March 1843, he again criticized him from a theoretical standpoint in a further letter to Ruge, stating that his attitude to the Jewish question in Germany was "too abstract".³⁶ Rosen has said that, "No change occurred in the relations between Bauer and Marx during 1842"³⁷ and has advanced the view that Marx's penetrating study of Hegel's Philosophy of Right was facilitated by Bauer's transformative critique of religion rather than by Feuerbach's *Thesen* and *Grundsätze* of 1842 and 1843.³⁸ Marx's letters to Ruge clearly contradict these suggestions³⁹ and indicate that his attitude to Bauer in 1842 was more complex than writers have generally understood it to be. Above all else, this attitude was a state of change and the re-assessment of Bauer during that year was to take him along a separate road forever.

The period between Marx's support for Bauer's idealism in 1841 and his historical materialism of 1845 is marked by a fundamental re-evaluation of Hegelian philosophy and ongoing re-assessment of his intellectual relationship to it. His attitude to Bauer in 1841 and its reversal in 1844 has its mirror image in his attitude to Feuerbach at each end of these respective points in time and reflects the intellectual evolution of his thought from speculative philosophical criticism to an active involvement in worldly politics. At the same time as he had praised Bauer's party of theory in 1841, Marx had strongly criticized what appeared to him to be the *positive* philosophy of Feuerbach, whose "philosophical introspection" had made its first appearance in his study of Leibniz in 1836 to 1837 and was to be fully manifested in his critique of Hegel's thought in 1839. At the beginning of the period, Marx attacked the mechanicism and nascent positivism of Pierre Bayle, whose views, Wartofsky has suggested, Feuerbach used "to state his own". By 1844, all was different. Early in that year, Marx accused the theoretical party of being uncritical of itself while giving qualified support to the party of practical politics, which, he maintained, wanted to transcend philosophy but could not do so without actualizing it. In the late autumn, Bauer was further damned in *The Holy Family* and Feuerbach praised. Given the thesis that Marx's reversal of attitude to Bauer on the one hand and Feuerbach on the other reflects an intellectual overturning of his entire earlier position, one would expect to find a similar reversal in respect of his attitude to Bayle and this is indeed the case. In 1844, Marx praised Bayle for a materialism and determinism that he had earlier critically assessed in his Doctoral Dissertation in the shape of the Democritean atomistics, then defending Epicurean philosophy against the *vulgar* interpretation of it by Bayle. Now, he was no longer a philosopher of self-consciousness and freedom but a determined advocate of a new *spirit*, indeed, a *necessity*, communism, the atheist and materialist content of which he *discovered* in the thought of Bayle,

Pierre Bayle not only prepared the reception of materialism and of the philosophy of common sense in France by shattering metaphysics with his scepticism. He heralded the *atheistic society*... by proving that a society consisting only of atheists is *possible*, that an atheist *can* be a man worthy of respect.⁴⁰

Shortly before this, Marx clearly identified Bayle with Feuerbach,

Just as Feuerbach by combating speculative theology was driven further to combat *speculative philosophy*, precisely because he recognised in speculation the last prop of theology, because he had to force theology to retreat from pseudo science to *crude*, repulsive *faith*, so Bayle too was driven by religious doubt to doubt about the metaphysics which was the prop of that faith.

Thus it now transpires that the connection between Karl Marx and Pierre Bayle is not so much a mere curiosity as a matter of real importance in comprehending the external course of Marx's development and its inner intellectual movements. For Marx, Pierre Bayle heralded the atheistic society; for me he is also a herald of historical materialism.

³⁴ K. Marx to A. Ruge, March 20, 1842, in K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 385.

³⁵ K. Marx to A. Ruge, July 9, 1842; *ibid.*, p. 390.

³⁶ K. Marx to A. Ruge, March 13, 1843; *ibid.*, p. 400.

³⁷ Zvi Rosen, op. cit., p. 206. Rosen has said: "His cooperation with Bauer and the latter's clear influence on his anti-religious views, led Marx to write to Ruge on 20. 3. 1842 that in writing his section on the *Posaune* he had 'come into a certain conflict with Feuerbach, a conflict not in principle but in phrasing.'" This is quite erroneous, as Marx does not mention Feuerbach by name in his letter to Ruge or even hint at him. The *Posaune*, in fact, is his shared project with Bauer.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

³⁹ Rosen's analysis of Bauer's influence on Marx seriously fails to understand the changes taking place in Marx's intellectual development between the end of 1841 and the middle of 1843. This failure is best shown in Rosen's "amazement" that Marx should attack Bauer at the end of 1844 when the latter appeared to be his comrade in arms at the beginning of 1842. Great changes had, of course, taken place in Marx's philosophical outlook between these dates.

⁴⁰ K. Marx, F. Engels, *The Holy Family*, op. cit. p. 127.