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ROBINSON CRUSOE AND THE SECRET OF PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION

BY STEPHEN HYMER

Every living being is a sort of imperialist, seeking to transform as much as possible of the environment into itself and its seed.

—Bertrand Russell

Note on Primitive Accumulation

The word *primitive* is here used in the sense of "belonging to the first age, period, or stage," i.e., of being "original rather than derivative," and not in the sense of "simple, rude, or rough." Marx's original term was "ursprüngliche akkumulation," and as Paul Sweezy suggests, it would have been better translated as "original" or "primary" accumulation. But it is too late to change current usage, and the word *primitive* should be interpreted in a technical sense, as in mathematics, where a *primitive* line or figure is a line or figure "from which some construction or reckoning begins." In economics primitive accumulation refers to the period from which capitalist accumulation springs. It was not simple, though it was rude and rough.

The solitary and isolated figure of Robinson Crusoe is often taken as a starting point by economists, especially in their analysis of international trade. He is pictured as a rugged individual—diligent, intelligent, and above all frugal—who mas-

Stephen Hymer is Professor of Economics at the New School for Social Research. He writes, "I would like to thank Heidi Cochran, Harry Magdoff, and Frank Roosevelt for their help. I have not seen the Buñuel movie of Robinson Crusoe but have been influenced by a second-hand account of it."

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Vol. 23, No. 4, September 1971



NOTES TOWARDS A PLURALIST COMMONWEALTH

Gar Alperovitz

It is perhaps time--as Galbraith's loose assertion that the "Democratic Party must henceforth use the word socialism" should warn--that Americans interested in fundamental change begin to define much more precisely what they want.**

Where begin a dialogue on long-term program? Historically, a major radical starting point has been socialism--conceived as social ownership of the means of production primarily through nationalization. Although the ideal of socialism involves the more encompassing values of justice, equality, cooperation, democracy, and freedom, in practice it has often resulted in a dreary, authoritarian political-economy. Could the basic structural concept of common ownership of society's resources for the benefit of all ever be achieved, institutionally, in ways which fostered and sustained--rather than eroded and destroyed--a cooperative, democratic society?

My primary concern in these "Notes" on an alternative program is with economic and social issues. There must obviously also be discussion of political institutions capable of preserving (and extending) positive elements which, though badly corroded, still inhere in aspects of the Western democratic traditions of freedom...The central question at this point, however, is the structural organization of the economy. Achieve a valid solution, and various political alternatives may be possible (though by no means inevitable); without it, the power thrust of the economic institutions is likely to bypass whatever more narrowly political forms are created. . . .

State-Socialism

Some of the critical issues may be posed by reviewing the now familiar critique of state-socialism:

One major problem is that the concentration of both economic and political power in a centralized state produces what might be called an "economic-political complex," an institutional configuration not very appealing at a time when there is increasing awareness of, and concern over, the dangers of bureaucratic government...The Soviet and East European experience attest to as much, and the dreary history of British

*This essay is excerpted from my forthcoming A Long Revolution.
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**Galbraith, John Kenneth, Who Needs the Democrats (Signet, 1970), p. 67.

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POLITICAL ECONOMICS, Vol. 4, No. 2, Summer 1972



WOMEN IN THE WAR ECONOMY--WORLD WAR II

J. E. Trey

The definition of the "proper role" for women in capitalist society began with an economic relation, and the social definition of that role grew to support and protect the economic relation. When the economic relation is disrupted and women find their way into the outside of the home work force, the social definition of woman's role contributes to the exploitation of her labor-power. The use of female labor in the war economy during World War II makes an excellent case study of the manipulation of the female work force and the relationship between the primary economic oppression of women and the social-psychological manifestations of that oppression.

The extent and nature of women's participation in the labor force during the war years changed greatly, but that change lasted only for the duration of the war. After the war most of the women lost their jobs and ended up back in the home. The great change in the actual role that women played in their society did not significantly affect the collective consciousness of women concerning the position traditionally given them; nor did it change society's attitude about the proper place for its women.

Women were manipulated as a group into a completely new role which required a completely new conception of themselves, yet they never changed their consciousness to fit that new role. The ideology of our society concerning woman and her position has not changed since the depression. Woman's primary duty was to be a wife and mother; her place was in the home. Even when it became necessary to recruit 4,000,000 new women into the labor force this feeling did not change. Women were never allowed to develop a consciousness as "worker"; even in the factory they were still "woman". The role of housewife was never challenged. Rather, another duty was added to that role. Working in the war industries became an extension of being a housewife and mother. This conception made it easy for women to be pushed out of the labor force and returned to being housewife/mother as her complete role.

Bringing women into the labor force temporarily during World War II was not an isolated incident in the history of American women. World War I proved that women could be effectively used as a reserve labor force in time of national emergency without a permanent effect on the desired composition of the labor force.

Before the first world war women in most countries held a medieval position; they had no political voice and no well-rooted place in industry. Women in the United States had not yet won the right to vote. The pressures of war production and the need to replace male industrial workers who had become soldiers necessitated the introduction of many women into the work force and a corresponding change in attitude about the capabilities of women as workers: "Thousands, ultimately millions of women emerged from 'forgotten woman' status, and began to assume a whole new range of responsibilities. In large measure they kept the wheels of industry turning, the business offices manned, the population at home fed and clothed."¹ Women were needed for nursing and other services directly related to the war and also to fill civilian spots usually held by men.

For most women, however, this improvement was short-lived. "Some gains undoubtedly persisted. But comparing the wartime experience of women with their

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POLITICAL ECONOMICS, Vol. IV, No. 3, July 1972



SOCIOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT AND
UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

ANDRE GUNDER FRANK

INTRODUCTION

This essay*examines the sociology of development currently being produced in the developed countries, especially the United States, for export to and use in the underdeveloped countries. On critical examination, this new sociology of development is found to be empirically invalid when confronted with reality, theoretically inadequate in terms of its own classical social scientific standards, and policy wise ineffective for pursuing its supposed intentions of promoting the development of the underdeveloped countries. Furthermore, the inadequacy grows along with the development of the society which produces it. Like the underdeveloped society to which it is applied, this sociology is becoming increasingly underdeveloped.

To permit a careful and detailed evaluation of this sociology of development, I shall examine the theoretical modes or trends represented by particular writings of selected social scientists. Nonetheless, my critique extends to the whole of this sociology of development. To avoid arbitrary selection, it is convenient to permit representatives of this sociology of development themselves to select the major modes and most of the authors to be examined here. Accordingly, they are given the first word.

Manning Nash, until recently editor of *EDCC*, has said,¹

* I am indebted, both for substantive and editorial help in the preparation of this study, to Nancy Howell Lee, Philip Wagner, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Alonso Aguilar, Said Shah, and especially to Marta Fuentes Frank, David Aberle, and Barton Parks and other editors of *Catalyst*. I have full responsibility, however for the critique and critical tone of this essay, especially as concerns the theses associated with the Research Center in Economic Development and Cultural Change and its Journal, hereinafter referred to as *EDCC*, of which I am a former staff member and contributor. I have, perhaps mistakenly, not followed the good advice of some of the above named to try here to accompany my critique with a constructive alternative. But I have attempted to advance such an alternative in "The Development of Underdevelopment," *Monthly Review*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (September 1966), and in *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967).

1. Manning Nash, "Introduction, Approaches to the Study of Economic Growth"



WOMEN IN THE SOVIET ECONOMY

Marilyn Power Goldberg

Women in the United States are developing an understanding of the ways we are oppressed and exploited in this society. Many of us have come to believe that much of the basis of our oppression is economic, and that basic changes in our economic system would be necessary to end that oppression. But we are also aware that the basis of the oppression of women is not merely structural, that institutional change in itself is not sufficient to affect our liberation. The attitudes and values of a society, the ways the society thinks about women, must also change. If these attitudes do not change, not only will institutional change not be sufficient, but many of the attempted institutional changes will not be successful, will not be complete. Two attitudes in particular must change: the attitude that work for men is more important than for women; and that there is work that is inherently "women's work". Until society is willing to give women jobs even if they are competing with men for them, and until housework and child care responsibilities are taken equally by men and women, women will continue to hold a secondary position, both economically and in society as a whole.

A useful perspective on the problem can be obtained by looking at the ways other countries have dealt with the question of the position of women. Socialist societies in particular are interesting, as equality for women is a tenant of Marxist ideology, and as socialism holds a hope for a society without exploitation, in which women could be liberated.

This paper, then, looks at the economic position of women in the Soviet Union, as a socialist country which from the beginning called for complete equality for women. Since this is a very large subject, I will limit my discussion in a number of ways. First, I will talk only briefly about the historical development of the economic position of women, concentrating on the present and my projections for the future. Second, I will discuss the question without looking at regional differences; my figures will refer to the country as a whole. And third, I will concentrate on women in the professions.

Since the professions are the most desirable, pleasant, and best-paying occupations, the proportion and distribution of women within them may be an indicator of the society's willingness to afford women an equal economic role. However, there is danger of exaggerating the equality of the economic position of women by using the professions as an indicator. To be a professional is to be privileged, and we must remember that women in the intelligensia have historically held a more equal position in Russian society than other women. Bearing these difficulties in mind, I feel that there is still much to learn about the economic position of women in the Soviet Union by concentrating on the professions, both because the data is quite clear for this group, and because the tendencies in the professions do turn out to be significant and reflective of the experience of women of all economic levels.

This paper will be divided into four sections. The first part will examine the ideological background of the Soviet position on women. Marxian ideology has a good deal to say about the position of women under capitalism, both in the economy as a whole and in the family. Whether in fact ideology plays an important role in determining the position of women in the Soviet Union will remain to be seen. Most of this section of the paper will be devoted to examining Lenin's views on women, as his views would relate more specifically to the Soviet

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POLITICAL ECONOMICS, Vol. IV, No. 3, July 1972



Getting Nowhere:

Programmed Class Stagnation

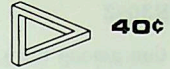
Samuel Bowles

Education has long been the chosen instrument of American social reformers. Whatever the ills that beset our society, education is thought to be the cure. Most Americans share the faith—voiced by Horace Mann over a century ago—that education is the “great equalizer.” With access to public schools, the children of every class and condition have an equal chance to develop their talents and

make a success of themselves. It is our public system of education—so the conventional wisdom goes—that guarantees an open society where any citizen can rise from the lowliest background to high social position according to his ability and efforts.

The record of educational history in the United States and scrutiny of the present state of our colleges and schools

Reprinted from SOCIETY (formerly TRANS-ACTION),
Vol. 9, No. 8, June 1972

*Maoist Economic Development*

THE NEW MAN IN THE NEW CHINA

JOHN W. GURLEY

While capitalist and Maoist processes of economic development have several elements in common, the differences between the two approaches are nevertheless many and profound. It is certainly not evident that one approach or the other is always superior, either in means or ends. What is evident, however, is that most studies by American economists of Chinese economic development are based on the assumption of capitalist superiority, and so China has been dealt with as though it were simply an underdeveloped United States — an economy that “should” develop along capitalist lines and that “should” forget all that foolishness about Marxism, Mao’s thought, great leaps, and cultural revolutions, and get on with the job of investing its savings efficiently. This unthinking acceptance by American economists of the view that there is no development like capitalist development has resulted in studies of China that lack insight.

The practice of capitalism has not, of course, met the ideal specification for it as theorized by Adam Smith. In general, the theory holds that an economy can develop most rapidly if every person, whether as entrepreneur, worker, or consumer, is able to pursue his own self-interest in competitive markets without undue interference from government. Progress is best promoted, not by government, but by

entrepreneurs owning the material means of production, whose activities, guided by the profit motive, reflect consumers’ demands for various goods and services. Labor productivity is enhanced by material incentives and the division of labor (specialization); economic progress is made within an environment of law and order, harmony of interests, and stability. It is by these means that economic development, according to the theory, can best be attained, and its attainment can best be measured by the national output.

In practice, many markets have been more monopolistic than competitive, government has interfered in numerous and extensive ways in competitive market processes in pursuit of greater equity in income distribution, higher employment of labor, and better allocation of economic resources. Capitalism of the individualist, competitive type has to some extent given way in most parts of the industrial capitalist world to a state welfare capitalism, in which government plays a larger role and private entrepreneurs and consumers somewhat smaller ones than envisaged by Adam Smith and his disciples. Despite these departures from the ideal model of capitalism, however, it is fair to say that the main driving force of the capitalist system remains private entrepreneurs who own the means of production, and that competi-

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THE ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN

Marilyn Power Goldberg

There are many ways in which capitalism endeavors to keep the pressures on it from becoming too great. One of the most important is by creating divisions in the work force, in order to keep wages low and otherwise limit the power of labor. It does this by creating a labor hierarchy, through differences in working conditions and through perpetuating reinforcing ideology, so that skilled workers will feel superior to unskilled, white to black, and male to female. At the same time capitalism repeatedly tells all workers that they have never before had it so good, that they are better off than workers (blacks, women) have ever been before. The division of the labor force is of further importance to capitalism because it allows certain groups, namely minorities and women, to be super-exploited, used as a marginal work force in order to smooth over cycles in the economy, and to perform vital but menial and poorly paid jobs. Ideology is very important in perpetuating these super-exploited groups, as it affects not only society's assumptions about them, but also their expectations about themselves.

Capitalism did not invent the nuclear family, or the concept that the role of women is to mind the home and the children. These institutions go back thousands of years, to the origins of private property, when man the hunter began to acquire land and desired heirs to pass it on to. But capitalism actively promotes the isolated family unit and the woman's role in it, through such propaganda devices as the glorification of motherhood, in order to facilitate its economic exploitation both of men and women.

Socialization to be Secondary

Women are taught from the time they are children to play a serving role, to be docile and submissive, get what they want by being coy instead of aggressive. They are socialized to expect that they will spend their lives as housewives and mothers--for toys they are given the tools of their trade:

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THE REVIEW OF RADICAL POLITICAL ECONOMICS

Vol. II, No. 1, Spring 1970