

RIUS



MAD X

FOR BEGINNERS

AGNOSTICISM / (from the Greek, *agnostos* = unknown). Philosophical doctrine which maintains that human reason is limited and the true nature of things inaccessible to man. This doctrine holds that the world we observe and deal with is not an objective reality, but rather a product of the activity of our reason and sense organs. Agnosticism is disproved by experience and practice, now that science has cleared the way to the knowledge of things. There remains one difference: between what is already known and what is not yet known.

Agnostic philosophers include Hume, Kant, Comte, Spencer, Mach etc.

ANALYSIS and SYNTHESIS / 1) analysis (in Greek, 'decomposition'), dis-integration of an object or phenomenon into its simple component parts. 2) synthesis (in Greek, 'composition'), recombination of the parts of an object or phenomenon as a whole.

Metaphysics opposes analysis to synthesis. Dialectical materialism, instead, maintains the unity of these two procedures. "Without analysis there is no synthesis" (Engels). For example, when analysing the human body, anatomists study its organs separately; but to grasp the complete, deep significance and function of every organ, analysis is not enough. It is necessary to consider the organism as a whole: indeed, studying its parts, but as a synthesis.

ANIMISM / (from the Latin, *anima*: soul). The spiritualization of natural phenomena. The belief that behind every natural object there hides an invisible or 'mental' spirit-force. "This tendency to personification had as a consequence the creation of the gods." (Engels). Primitive animism was the basis of religion and later idealist thought.

ANTAGONISM / (from the Greek, *agon* = contest). An irreconcilable contradiction which is resolved by violence. As the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the working class is thus resolved by socialist revolution. Contradictions between the working class and peasantry have no antagonistic character.

ATHEISM / (from the Greek, 'without god') The scientific negation of religion. Atheism was born in ancient Greece with the materialist philosophers, Democritus and Epicurus, who denied the supernatural and

stated that the world is nothing other than matter composed of atoms.

ANTI-DUHRING / The abbreviated title of a work by Engels: "The Scientific Revolution of Eugene Duhring", a classic of Marxist literature. The work was aimed against the German philosopher, Duhring, who wished to refute Marxism by recourse to metaphysics. The ANTI-DUHRING is a masterly synthesis of Marx's forty years of struggle and study.

ATOM / The idea of the atom was first introduced to science by Democritus and Epicurus, more than 2,000 years ago. The physicist, Newton, and the philosophers, Holbach and Gassendi, worked on this theory.

BASE (or INFRA) and SUPERSTRUCTURE / The mode of production, i.e. the forces and relations of production which constitute the economic base - the foundation of society. Once the base (or infrastructure) is modified then the superstructure (including the political system, religion, philosophy, morality, art, science etc.) must also modify itself, at a more or less rapid rhythm. (see also ECONOMIC BASE)

CAPITAL / or 'Das Kapital', the principal work by Karl Marx. A detailed analysis of the laws governing the economic development of capitalism - but also an immense historical and philosophical treatise. In this work, the theory of historical materialism is fundamentally developed.

CATEGORIES / Notions which express the essential relations and laws of the real world. In dialectical materialism, these categories are: matter, motion, space, time, necessity, causality, quantity, substance, form, content, etc. In Historical Materialism, they are: the social-economic structure, forces of production, infra-and super-structure, ideology, etc.

These categories represent a generalization of the processes and phenomena of nature, independent of the consciousness of man.

CAUSALITY / One of the forms of general interdependence of phenomena in the objective world. In essence, cause and effect

"are only moments of interdependence and universal relation, of the connection of events; they are, above all, present in the chain of the development of matter." (Lenin) There can be no phenomena (events) without causes. All natural phenomena have natural and material causes. Cause and effect stand in reciprocal relation to each other. Between them exists an internal relation regulated by laws. Thus in the socialist system, the development of technology becomes a cause of the increasing well-being (effect) of workers.

CLASS STRUGGLE (see also **SOCIAL CLASSES**) / Struggle between exploited and exploiters. Demonstration that class interests are irreconcilable. The forms of class struggle are diverse: economic, political, ideological, theoretical. But all such kinds are subordinate to the *political* struggle. With the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, class struggle does not cease but takes on new forms.

COMMUNISM / The doctrine of Marx and Engels founded on the basis of the materialist conception of history. Communism is the stage following after socialism and when social classes cease to exist. Communism does not yet exist in any country. The Soviet Union, China and other socialist countries are still in the phase of socialism where class struggle has still not terminated.

CONDITIONS OF THE MATERIAL LIFE OF SOCIETY / The elements determining the conditions of material life in society are: 1) geographical situation and natural resources; 2) population density; 3) the mode of production by which it creates the material goods necessary to its existence.

The fundamental force which determines development of a society, and also its passage from one kind of social system to another, is material production — the development of the "productive power of the society".

DARWIN, CHARLES (1809-1882) / Celebrated English thinker, founder of the theory of evolution. "Darwin put an end to the belief that the animal and vegetable species bear no relation to one another, except by chance, and that they were

created by God, and hence immutable." (Lenin)

DETERMINISM and INDETERMINISM / *Determinism*: doctrine concerning the necessary relationship between events and phenomena and their accidental conditioning. For example, the anarchy of the capitalist mode of production fatally determines economic crisis; the development of class struggle inevitably determines a social revolution.

Idealists oppose to determinism, *indeterminism* — maintaining that the natural course of events in reality are not subject to laws but to independent, arbitrary change.

DIALECTIC / (from the Greek, 'debate' and 'converse') According to early Greek philosophers, the art of knowing truth by uncovering the contradictions in the reasonings of one's adversary. Later, dialectics (also sometimes in the form, 'dialectic') came to be transformed into a theory of development and universal relations. Dialectics considers all phenomena as being in movement, in process of perpetual change. It views the development of nature itself as a result of the struggle between contradictions within nature. Dialectics became a science when Marx and Engels liberated it from Hegelian idealism. It is a doctrine of development — a science of the universal laws governing the development of nature, human society and thought.

DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT / The period of transition from socialism to communism, during which the material conditions are created for socialist construction, the suppression of classes and the passage to a classless and stateless society.

DOGMA, DOGMATISM / Dogma is undemonstrated affirmation, accepted with blind faith. This is why Marx and Engels always said: "Our doctrine is not a dogma, but a guide to action." Unfortunately, dogmatic Marxists often ignore this crucial aspect of Marxism, and thereby rob it of its revolutionary, creative power.

DUALISM / (from the Latin, 'two') A philosophical tendency opposed to

'monism' (from the Greek, *monos* = one, unity). Dualism places not one but two different substances at the origin of existence. Thus DESCARTES sees man as being composed of two distinct substances: one, material — the body, the other spiritual — the soul. Marxism places matter-in-movement at the origin of all natural phenomena as primary cause. Consciousness is a secondary cause produced by matter.

ECLECTICISM / Mere mechanical link-ups of various currents, concepts and theories, without any pre-established principle. Eclectic thinkers attempt to reconcile materialism and idealism.

ECONOMIC BASE / The mode of production at the basis of any social system. The economic base (or infra-structure) determines the totality of the social super-structure: the state, political institutions, ideas and theories, etc. "The structures of every society can change rapidly only by revolutionizing the economic base." (Marx)

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE / Ordering of society into classes: the *relations* of production which correspond to the specific level determined by the development of the material forces of production.

EMPIRIO-CRITICISM / Reactionary, idealist current of philosophy which arose in Germany and Austria during the second half of the 19th century. Its initiators were Avenarius and Mach. They affirmed that "elements of the world" i.e. "elements of experience" stood at the basis of all phenomena. Each thing is a "combination of elements". By the term 'elements', they meant the fact that sensation is at the basis of phenomena; but in such a way as to identify 'element' with sense-impression.

EPICURUS / (342-270 B.C.) Greek materialist philosopher, teacher and follower of Democritus.

EVOLUTION and REVOLUTION / Quantitative changes, of an unperceived, slow and interrupted kind come about through evolution. Qualitative changes, on the contrary, happen all at once, by leaps, in a revolutionary manner. Development implies both, necessarily. Evolution prepares

the way for revolution. But opportunism replaces revolutionary struggle by reform.

EXISTENCE Philosophic term designating subjective reality, in matter.

EXISTENCE and SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS / From the viewpoint of dialectical materialism, existence is primary while consciousness, as a simple reflection of matter, of nature, of human thought, is secondary. Social existence — i.e. the mode of producing material goods, objects, food, clothing etc. — is the primary element which determines social consciousness and the spiritual, intellectual life of society (its culture). Marx extended materialism into the areas of social phenomena by discovering that social existence and the mode of production determine social consciousness.

EXPERIMENT / By experiment is currently understood the 'practical experience' of the procedures verifying knowledge by direct observation of phenomena — either in the laboratory or in objective reality.

Philosophy explains *experiment* either in materialist or idealist form. For dialectical materialism, experience presupposes the presence of an objective, material world which exists independently of human consciousness. But for idealism, experience does not involve material objects or even phenomena; rather, it is concerned with our past impressions. It can therefore consider religious 'sentiment' alone as *experimental* proof enough of the existence of God.

FATALISM / (from the Latin, 'fate') Idealist notion which holds that historical development is pre-determined by some unknown force, by 'destiny'. Fatalism denies the *creative* function of people, history and political struggle, and considers humanity a plaything in the hands of God or fate, unable to influence things through ACTION.

FETISHISM / To deify or 'fetishize' objects means to give them occult, supernatural forces foreign to human nature. In primitive times, the fetish was an object of awe; later becoming a good or bad luck charm. In capitalism, the fetishism of money, property and commodities is the magic of capitalist ownership.

FEUERBACH, LUDWIG (1804-72) / One of the major German materialists who proclaimed and defended atheism and influenced the founders of Marxism. Feuerbach, however, remains idealist in his concept of social phenomena. Neglecting the material basis of society, he distinguished the successive stages of human development according to the different forms of religious consciousness. Feuerbach did not grasp the importance of practical revolutionary action, or the dialectical interaction between man and nature and the transformation of humanity in the process of production.

FIDEISM / (from the Latin, *fides*: 'faith') Doctrine (especially in Latin countries) which replaces understanding by faith and stresses the determining role it plays. Lenin sees idealist philosophy as a "more or less weakened or diluted fideism", so to speak, a clericalism. (see IDEALISM)

FORCES OF PRODUCTION / Instruments or tools with which material goods are produced; also *persons* who use these productive tools and manufacture material goods, thanks to experience and work-training. Productive forces (machines, tools, raw materials etc.) and human labour-power must be present as the indispensable elements of work. Social life depends upon productive forces which it can command and the modes of production employed. Hence the importance of the *social planning* of these forces, which will only bear fruit with socialism.

FORM and CONTENT / In nature, society or thought, everything has its content and form. Agrarian reform, for instance, may be the content; but its form may vary according to the modes of application.

FORMAL LOGIC / Theory concerning the laws of human thought which separates nature from the enquiry into those laws. Formal logic does not preoccupy itself with material truth (i.e. the faithful reflection and conception of natural phenomena), but with 'formal' truth. Hence its name. Herein lies the basis of metaphysical method. Dialectics (i.e. natural logic) is the contrary of formal logic since it considers that the content of thought, the principles and laws of logic, must correspond to materiality,

nature and its regulative laws. Formal logic affirms that all objects and concepts are equal to themselves (i.e. the concept of *formal* identity: that A=A). Dialectical materialism shows that every object *is* and *is not* self-identical because it is caught up in a process of development.

FREEDOM and NECESSITY / Metaphysicians often contrast freedom to necessity. Some affirm that will is absolutely free, i.e. unconditional. Others hold that free will does not exist, but only absolute necessity. Either freedom or necessity... From the Marxist viewpoint, these positions are unscientific, because freedom does not merely consist of imaginary independence vis-à-vis the laws of nature, but of knowledge of these laws and the possibility of applying them positively in practical action. "Freedom", Engels says, "consists of a domination over self and external nature; a domination based on the knowledge of the necessities of nature. Consequently... freedom is *conscious necessity*. Without an understanding of necessity, real liberty is unattainable."

HEGEL, GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH / (1770-1831) German philosopher, idealist dialectician. Nature, according to Hegel, does not develop across time, but varies eternally only in space. The most valuable part of idealist Hegelian philosophy is the dialectical method it employs — that ideas develop from dialectical contradictions; that transformations from quantity to quality have their origin in this development; that truth is concrete; that the developmental process of human society is realized by its submission to laws and not by chance or, under the pressure of outsized personalities. Yet, Hegel was pusillanimous and inconsistent: he bowed before the Prussian feudal monarchy, and minimized the extremes of his dialectical positions out of fear and self-interest. "My... dialectical method," Marx said, "is not only distinct from Hegelian method at bottom, but is absolutely opposed to it." For Hegel, thought creates reality. The opposite for Marx — ideas are nothing more than matter absorbed and transformed by human thought.

HUMANISM / Cultural current, developed from the 14th to the 16th centuries.

Conception of social reality proper to the then new-born bourgeoisie which struggled to liberate human personality and science from bondage to religious feudalism. Petrarch, Boccaccio, Erasmus, Machiavelli etc., were some representatives of bourgeois humanism. Humanism cannot survive under a capitalist regime because it is opposed to the exploitation of man by man, the very essence of capitalism. Only the real liberation of humanity can bring about genuine humanism.

HUME, DAVID / (1711-1776) English bourgeois philosopher, historian and economist. As an agnostic, he reckoned insoluble the problem of the existence or non-existence of objective reality. He affirmed that we cannot know what things are in themselves and whether they exist or not. Denying the material basis of things and causality, Hume concluded that what alone exists is a flux of psychological perception in human consciousness, and that science leads only to the simple description of this current, with little possibility either of understanding or of conceiving its laws.

IDEALISM / Philosophy which considers reality as an incarnation of a 'universal idea' or of a 'consciousness'. Idealism is closely linked with religion and leads more or less openly to the idea of God.

IDEOLOGY / Combination of ideas, assumptions, notions of determined concepts, representations. Politics, science, morality, art and religion are *forms* of ideology. All ideologies are reflections of social existence. In class-based society, ideology expresses and defends the interests of the classes in struggle. In bourgeois society, struggle develops between bourgeois and socialist ideologies. There is no intermediate term, since, as Lenin affirms, humanity has not elaborated a 'third' ideology.

INDUCTION (and DEDUCTION) / *Induction*: method of reasoning which consists of passing from the particular to the general, from facts to generalizations. *Deduction*: method which consists of passing from the general to the particular, from generalized propositions to particular conclusions.

INSTRUMENTS (or TOOLS) OF PRODUCTION / Principle elements of productive forces (e.g. machinery) employed by humanity to act upon nature and transform it into material goods. Marx says that economic epochs differ from each other not so much in what they produce but *how* they do so. How labour produces. The means of production are not simply measures of human labour-power but also the indication of the *relations* by means of which work takes place.

KANT, IMMANUEL / (1724-1804) Founder of classical German idealism. He attempted to reconcile materialism and idealism. "When Kant admits that a certain 'thing-in-itself', outside us, must correspond to our representation of it, then he is a materialist. When he declares it impossible to know this 'thing-in-itself', he becomes an idealist." (Lenin) As Kant himself declares, the central problem of his theory of knowledge is to define the limits of the laws of reason, while still retaining a place for God beyond such limits. In his doctrine of ethics, Kant believes it 'necessary' to recognize the existence of God and the soul's immortality, so as to maintain a basis for morality.

MARXISM-LENINISM / Theory of the proletarian liberation movement. Theory and practice of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Theory of the construction of communist society.

MATTER (or MATERIAL) By its nature, the world is material. The variety of phenomena in nature corresponds to the distinct forms of *matter in motion*. Lenin wrote that matter is a philosophical category to designate objective reality which presents itself to humanity through human perception. Matter is copied, 'photographed' or reflected through human sensations while retaining an existence proper to itself and independent of them.

MATERIALISM / One of the two main tendencies in philosophy which gives a specific reply to the fundamental problem of the relation between thought and existence. Materialism recognizes matter as the primary element, and consciousness (or thought) secondary. It relies on science — particularly the physical sciences. Dialectical

materialism recuperates the entire materialist tradition preceding it and re-elaborates everything of value in it. (see below)

MATERIALISM (DIALECTICAL) /

Philosophical doctrine formulated by Marx and Engels, so called because of its *dialectical* manner of confronting, studying and understanding natural phenomena; and *materialist* by its manner of interpreting phenomena and drawing up its theory. Dialectical materialism is the only scientific interpretation of the world; and it is opposed to idealism which offers an interpretation based on religion.

MATERIALISM (HISTORICAL) / Marxist doctrine of the development of human society. Historical materialism sees in the development of material goods necessary to human existence the primary force which determines all social life (and which conditions the transition from one kind of social order to another).

The growth of human power over nature finds its expression in the development of the productive forces of society. The transmutation of economic-social forces throughout history (primitive communal, slave, feudal and capital states) is, above all, a change from certain kinds of productive *modes* and *relations* towards other more progressive ones. Such change is the necessary effect, the cause of which are the laws to which social productive forces everywhere submit.

Discovery of the real basis of life and social development (material production) allows one to see for the first time the importance of the creative spirit of the masses. Great men were not the ones *alone* to make history, but the workers, the real prime movers of the production process, those who accomplished the material tasks necessary for social subsistence.

MATERIALISM (MECHANISTIC) / Early form of materialism which sought to explain all natural phenomena by mechanical laws. It considers motion not as *change* in general but as the mechanical displacement of bodies in space due to external influences — the mere collision of two entities. Mechanistic materialism denies the spontaneous movement of bodies, their qualitative change, the development by

leaps, the passage from inferior to superior.

METAPHYSICS / (from the Greek, *ta meta ta physika*: those works of Aristotle after his 'Physics') Metaphysical method affirms that things and their mental reflections (i.e. concepts) are essentially discrete, unchanging, petrified, given once for all, and can thus be investigated separately, independently one from the other. Metaphysics posits in principle that nature is at rest, immobile, unchanging and unmoving. It considers the process of development uniquely on a quantitative and not qualitative level. Politically, the stance is one that denies class struggle and tries to show that the transition from capitalism to socialism can be realized without violent rupture, by peaceful fusion of capitalism with socialism.

METHODOLOGY / Doctrine of method: combination of procedures, techniques of enquiry applicable to all sciences.

MONISM / (from the Greek, *monos*: one) Philosophical doctrine which, contrary to dualism, recognizes as the cause of all existence only a single principle or origin. Materialists, for instance, consider *matter* as the unique cause of all phenomena; and the idealist-monist, spirit or god or mind.

MORALITY, MORALS / Norms of social life, human behaviour, one of the forms of social consciousness. Materialists hold that morality changes with each change of social order. There exists a morality typical of the slave state; another in the feudal state, the bourgeois, and the communist. The ruling class imposes 'its' morality and puts it into practice in accord with its historical class interests.

NEGATION OF NEGATION / The law of the negation of negation is fundamental to dialectics. Every phenomenon, because internally contradictory, contains in itself its own proper negation (for its own opposite). Thus, within it unfolds the conflict between what *was* and what *is becoming* — between old and new. Negation of the past state is not, however, a pure or vain negation, a simple annulment of everything which has been (as metaphysics thinks.) "Negation, in dialectics, does not signify merely saying No, or simply saying

something does not exist, or destroying it in some manner." (Engels) Dialectics demands "demonstration of the relation between the negative and the positive: so as to encounter the positive in the negative." (Lenin) Communism, thus, declares that everything positive has been created by humanity — even what was obtained under the yoke of capitalism. This is the positive in the negative. Communist society, in its turn, is the negation of the exploitative class regime — i.e. the negation of the negation.

OBJECTIVE / Opposite of subjective: what exists outside human consciousness, independently, but which human thought genuinely reflects.

PANTHEISM / (from the Greek, *pan*: all, and *theos*: god) Philosophical doctrine according to which divinity, as a spiritual and impersonal first principle, is found throughout nature — so that everything is divine.

PLATO / (427-347 B.C.) Greek philosopher, ideologist of the slave-owning aristocracy; founder of objective idealism which maintains that there exists besides the universe of perceptible things *another* world — the one of Ideas. So, above and beyond the trees one actually sees (which derive from various essences), Plato affirms there exists *the* unique Idea one has of 'trees', which is always identical, eternal — and this is the case for all of nature. According to Plato, things are only the shadows of Ideas. Ideas are eternal; things transitory. Not perception, but reason and its concepts give one true knowledge of the essence of things in reality.

PHILOSOPHY / (from the Greek, *philos*: love, friend, and *sophia*: science or wisdom) In dialectical materialism, the science of the most general laws of nature, human society and thought. The fundamental problem of philosophy is that of the relation between existence and thought. To find the answer, all philosophical tendencies divide up into two camps — materialist and idealist.

PHILOSOPHY, THE CLASSICAL. GERMAN / Of the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries. Kant, its founder, was succeeded by Fichte and Schelling. Hegel's system represents the culminating phase of

this philosophical movement. Classical German philosophy reflects the influences of European revolutionary movements. But such influences were deflected by the retrogressive socio-economic conditions of the epoch. This philosophy did contribute something fundamental — the renewal of dialectics as the theory of development. Taken up by Marx, it served as the basis for dialectical materialism. Engels has brilliantly analysed this philosophy in his work, "Ludwig Feuerbach And The End Of Classical German Philosophy."

POSITIVISM / One of the most widespread of the idealist currents within modern bourgeois philosophy. Positivism, according to its founders, is based not upon abstract deductions but on 'positive', real facts. August Comte, its creator, believed that the human mind must renounce any effort to know the very essence of things and content itself with the truth derived from observation and experiment. But this is only an "up to date" agnosticism.

PROPERTY / Private property appeared long after the origins of humanity. In the primitive communal state, ownership of the means of production was held in common. In the slave state, the 'boss' was the owner of human means of production — and hence the origin of private property. Under socialism, the means of production belong to the community, not to particular individuals — hence *socialist* property.

RATIONALISM / Theory which tends to recognize reason as the unique source of true knowledge; contrary to *empiricism* which makes perception this source of knowledge. Descartes and Leibnitz were outstanding representatives of rationalism.

RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION / Reciprocal relations established between people in the process of producing material goods. Persons can produce goods, not only individually, but together by uniting and practising communal action. History determines five main types of such relations: 1) In the primitive communal state, ownership of the instruments of production and products was held in common. With the passage from stone tools to metal, the tribes turned to agriculture and commerce and began to accumulate

commodities. This led to the birth of private property, and monopolizing of accumulated wealth by a minority, and the rise of classes — the owners and the slaves. 2) In the slave epoch, free labour was replaced by slave exploitation: land was parcelled out to his serfs who worked for him partly freely, partly by payment in kind. 4) With the rise of the bourgeois or pre-capitalist society, a minority capitalist class seizes the means of production and exploits a wage-earning class. 5) The socialist state restores common ownership of the means of production, gives the product back to the producer, and eliminates ruling class exploitation.

RELIGION / Combination of beliefs and cult-practices which subordinates human life to a divine super-order. It appears in history as a form of oppression of the people by the ruling class. Marxism sees in religion the exploitation of human ignorance and credulity.

REVISIONISM / Hostile counter-current to Marxism which seeks to 'correct' the philosophical foundations of dialectical materialism. Today, for instance, China and the USSR accuse each other of 'revisionism' in their modes of applying socialism.

SCHOLASTICISM / (from Latin, *schola*, school; and Greek *skhole*, leisure) Gathered under this name are the various schools of philosophy current in the Middle Ages. But each one was linked strictly to religious dogma, all equally "servants of theology", all overlooked nature. Such dogmatism lends its name, 'scholastic', to all reasoning foreign to reality, all groundless philosophies, certain political discussions, etc. The main scholastics (or school-men) were Thomas Aquinas, Anselm of Canterbury, Duns Scotus, William of Occam, etc.

SOCIALISM / Economy, social and political doctrine which expresses the struggle for the equal distribution of wealth by eliminating private property and the exploitative ruling class. In practice, such a distribution of wealth is achieved by *social* ownership of the means of production, exchange and diffusion.

SOCIALISM (UTOPIAN) / Non-scientific socialism based on imaginary or optimistic

theories. Upheld by certain French and English utopian-socialists of the 19th century.

SOCIOLOGY / Science of society; as founded by Comte and Herbert Spencer, it takes no account of class struggle. Marx succeeded in raising sociology to a science by demonstrating that the development of society is not solely determined by *ideas* but by the *relations* of production. Thus he showed the course of ideas obeys the course of things. Marx also made clear that the problem of scientific research into society consists of the explanation of those particular historical laws which regulate the origin, existence, development and decline of any given social organism, and its transformation into another, superior one.

SOPHISM, SOPHISTRY / Incorrect reasoning presented in such a way as to appear correct, or persuasive, and thus which leads others into error. Sophistry is the application in discussion of such erroneous conclusions. The characteristic method of sophistry is: "To start from external resemblances between facts, apart from their relation to events." (Lenin) By relying on apparent resemblances, sophists seek to apply the properties of one set of phenomena to others completely different.

SPINOZA, BARUCH / (1632-77) Jewish-Dutch philosopher, denied the existence of God as creator of nature. Considered that God was nature itself. By thus calling nature God, he explained that nature was its own cause. He continued the rationalism of Descartes, although his system was monist — a system in which thought originates in nature.

STATE / Political organization of the economically dominant class, having as its aim the defence of the existing economic order (*status quo*) — but also the annihilation of the resistance put up against it by other classes. "The state is a machine to maintain the domination of one class over another." (Lenin)

TIME AND SPACE / These represent the objective form of the existence of matter. Time and space are inseparable from matter, and vice-versa. Dialectical materialism teaches that nothing exists in the world

outside of or beyond matter in motion, and that matter cannot move except in space and time. Opposing itself to materialism, idealism believes time and space to be products of human thought and it separates these categories from matter.

THEOLOGY / Pseudo-science which seeks to give foundation to religion by borrowing from philosophical argumentation.

THESIS, ANTITHESIS, SYNTHESIS / (from the Greek: affirmation, negation, union) Every process of development, according to Hegel passes through these three stages: thesis, anti-thesis, syn-thesis. Each stage refutes the one before, and the last re-unites in itself the dominant features of the first two — hence its name,

'synthesis'. This is the 'surface' aspect of dialectics.

UNITY AND CONFLICT BETWEEN CONTRARIES / Opposing metaphysics, dialectics posits on principle that internal contradictions belong properly to all objects and natural phenomena, and within them everything is continually in motion, ever-changing. Each thing represents in itself the unity of contraries. Everything has a past and a future, a development and a decline, a positive and a negative aspect. This is why movement from a lower to a higher state is achieved by the struggle between opposite tendencies. Within the capitalist mode of production, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are at once related and opposed through struggle.

