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MARX AND FREUD:
BROTHERS IN OVERDETERMINATION

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Can Marx inform Freud? Can Freud inform Marx? Can the political-economic world of Marx inform the sexual-emotional world of Freud? How do the two intersect? These are questions that plague Marxists, Freudians and Feminists or, at least, some of them. It is the contention of this paper that the epistemological breakthroughs of Marx and Freud reinforce each other. The Marx of Althusser, Wolff and Resnick and the Freud of Lacan share the concept of overdetermination. They both reject absolutist notions and embrace dialectical thinking. Both Marx and Freud reject final or absolute truths or cures. Both reject the notion that people can directly receive the real world and express it unchanged in their symbol systems of language and mathematics.

Freud and Marx are often viewed as competing essentialisms, with Marx reducing society to one essence, class relations, and Freud reducing personal dynamics to another essence--sexuality. I argue that neither Freud nor Marx is an essentialist. Each focused on a denied aspect of life because it was denied, not because it is the essential truth of life. In any case the brotherhood of Marx and Freud is found less in the formal content of their writings than in their methodology and their epistemology. Althusser referred to Marx and Freud as two "unexpected" "illegitimate" children of the nineteenth century.¹ They are both illegitimate because they are the offspring of a different

epistemology from that of their parents, the thinkers of the eighteenth hundreds. The following quotations are a case in point. The first is a quotation from Lacan urging us to look for the dialectical methodology in Freud's work. If one substitutes the word Marx for Freud, the quotation could easily be a quotation from Althusser teaching us to read Marx dialectically.

In order to rediscover the effect of Freud's (read Marx's) word, it is not to its terms that we shall have recourse but to the principles that govern it. These principles are none other than the dialectic.²

The second quotation of Engel's describing Marx's epistemology could easily be a quotation from Lacan describing Freud's epistemology.

One leaves alone 'absolute truth' which is unattainable...instead one pursues attainable relative truths along the paths of the positive sciences.³

Within a shared epistemology Marx and Freud each created his own discourse. Both created a discourse on an unrecognized aspect of life. Marx created a discourse on the class process and Freud created a discourse on the unconscious process. Each saw terrible suffering for which his discourse created a vehicle of liberation. Each had the tremendous task of creating a new discourse, a new recognition, and a new way of thinking with which to perceive his new discourse. Both were trapped in the language of the past, like children trapped in the old age of their parents who give them the tools with which to understand the world.⁴

Both Freud and Marx were forced to make a compromise between the useless unintelligibility of creating a whole new language and the pitfalls of using the old language which tied them back into the conceptual framework from which they were breaking. Being comprehensible in the familiar language of the past allowed both Marxism and Psychoanalysis to regress to their respective childhoods of sexual determinism and humanism-economism. Freud once remarked "I wonder whether people accept psychoanalysis in order to preserve it or destroy it?" The very attempt to understand the new sciences of Marxism and psychoanalysis involve their being assimilated into former conceptual frameworks. The politics and lure of acceptability further stunt their growth as new sciences.

The slips into essentialism in the work of both Marx and Freud indicate that they both sometimes repressed the enormity of their own discoveries and slipped back into their respective old ages of sexual determinism and economic determinism. It is a terribly lonely ordeal to discover that you think within an epistemology radically different from all of those around you, that you are your own parents and alone.

Lacan and Althusser, Wolff and Resnick are trying to discover what was epistemologically revolutionary in Freud and Marx and return them to their youth, their newness. They are removing from Marxism and Psychoanalysis their religious character. They are protesting what Lacan protests when he writes:

A technique is being handed on in a cheerless manner reticent in its opacity, a manner which shies at any attempt to let in the fresh air of criticism. It has in fact assumed the die of a formalism pushed to ceremonial lengths, and so much so that one might very well wonder whether it is not to be tagged with the same similarity to obsessional neurosis that Freud so convincingly defined in the observance, if not in the genesis of religious rites.⁵

Objective measures, judgments as to what in life is "most" important, what is "correct", judgments as to who is "healthy" who is "cured," call to a final proof, a final confirming authority, a God figure. Both Marx and Freud rejected religion. Marx rejected it as an opiate numbing the masses to their power and responsibility for their lives. Freud rejected religion as an obsessional ritual warding off our loneliness and self-responsibility. Marx and Freud differentiated themselves from most of their followers by refusing to replace the God they rejected with other absolutes like the "cure", the "proof" of the bio-psychological instincts, or the "real" world proved empirically or rationally.

Marxian theory refuses to entertain the illusion that the 'realism' of one or another theory, its 'proofs' for its supposed 'correspondence' to the 'real', determine its truth also for other theories--in that sense its absolute truth. 'All that palaver about the necessity of proving the concept of value comes from complete ignorance both of the subject dealt with and of scientific method.'⁶

Marx and Freud share a revolutionary break with essentialism and therefore with religion and its retinue of final authorities, proofs, final understandings, and final cures. Their break is a break with religious morality and the concepts of final right and wrong, good and evil.

One begins Marxian analysis with the class process not because that's the morally correct place to start or the empirically proven right place to start. A Marxist begins with the class process because s/he has a goal of creating a classless society. S/he begins with class because the class nature of society has to be understood in order to be changed.

A Freudian begins psychoanalysis with the unconscious process not because it has been proven to be the "right" place to start. Not even because it has been finally proven to exist, but because the unconscious is a useful concept. It helps to explain and relate such disparate phenomena as the selectivity of memory, the content of dreams, reasons for peoples' choice of mate, and each person's unique way of speaking a language. The unconscious process is the entry point of psychoanalysis because the assumption of an unconscious as a reality helps clients to create an understanding of themselves and change themselves. Its final truth as a provable entity is irrelevant to psychoanalysis. The notion of an absolutely verified, "correct" discourse is as foreign to Marxism as it is to psychoanalysis.

A central concept in the epistemology of both Althusserian Marxism and Lacanian psychoanalysis is the concept of overdetermination. That concept was first used by Freud and then integrated into the Marxian discourse by Lukacs and Althusser. Freud used the term to explain that the dreams or symptoms of a client cannot be reduced to a signal of a single content but like a language they must be understood on many different levels of meaning. The words in a sentence in any language are meaningful on several levels: in relation to the context of the sentence, the specific language that is spoken, and the particular personal speaking style of the speaker. The symptoms and dreams of a client are similarly meaningful in relation to the context of the person's immediate behavior; the social, cultural, and economic milieu in which the person exists; and the context of a person's personal and social history. Just as words are related to each other in the context of a sentence, the parts of a dream or symptom are related to each other in the context of each person's multi-dimensional life. Just as one word defines its meaning through the use of the other words in a language, a dream or a symptom defines itself through its use in relationship to the rest of a client's life. Each dream symptom or behavior is overdetermined by the rest of a client's life like each word is overdetermined by the rest of the language.⁷

Wolff and Resnick use the term overdetermination in the way that Freud and Lacan use it, but they apply it to social processes and in particular to the class process.⁸ They go beyond Althusser's more limited definition of the term.⁹ Just as a dream or symptom cannot be understood as a discrete single event but only in relation to the content of a person's life system, and just as a word cannot be understood outside of the context provided by the other words that constitute that system, the class process cannot be understood outside of the other social processes that constitute a social system. Any dream has simultaneous and contradictory meanings based on all the contradictory strands of meaning that constitute that dream. Words in a language have contradictory meanings based on all the contradictory strands of meaning that constitute a language. Similarly, a social process has contradictory meanings because of all the contradictory constituents of any social process. Wolff and Resnick develop this concept to posit that every social process is a unique intersection of all the other social processes.¹⁰

It is not surprising that Marx and Freud who share overdetermination also share other concepts that develop from the assumption of overdetermination. One of these concepts is the decentering of the subject. Marx's road to the decentered subject is his understanding of the class process, and Freud's road to the decentered subject is his understanding of the unconscious process. The definition of the "class process" in this paper is "that process in which unpaid surplus labor is pumped out of direct producers."¹¹

Since that class process is overdetermined, it has no one center that is its essence.

The process of extracting surplus labor is an intersection of such other processes as the social pressure requiring people to work, people's personal psychology which allows them to tolerate their working conditions, and the economic organization of society that requires most people to work to make a living. A person's application for a job is not an act of the individual free will of an independent subject freely choosing a job. Rather it is the act of a subject who is an object of an infinity of forces moving through him and deciding him to apply for a job. The subject both decides to make the decision and is decided by the overdetermined forces deciding him or her. The subject is not the center, the key motivating force. S/he is motivated by overdetermined forces. S/he is "decentered." That same process of being decided as well as deciding overdetermines all of peoples' behavior, including their behavior in making history. To quote Althusser, in the Marxian discourse "History is a process, a process without a subject."¹²

Individual human subjects are not the center of history, but neither are such subjects of study as economics or class structures. All such subjects within this discourse are separated into overdetermined processes that have no essence or center. Class is the entry point and not the center of the Marxist discourse.

In a parallel fashion the unconscious is the entry point and not the center of psychoanalysis. In another parallel fashion

Freud has discovered for us...that the human subject is decentered, constituted by a structure which has no center either, except in¹³ the imaginary misrecognition of the 'ego.'

For Freud and Lacan the human subject is decentered. People have no central core, no essence, but are overdetermined. Each person, each subject is the unique site of all the overdetermined forces all the processes that overdetermine her/him. Within the psychoanalytic discourse each subject is like a unique tapestry in which the overdetermined processes are like threads. Each thread woven together in combination with the others makes the unique tapestry. There is no center, no thread that is more important than the others.

The center that is usually attributed to subjects i.e. people is their conscious thought. "I think therefore I am." Freud and Lacan point to the unconscious as a language that parallels the language of conscious thought and derails and decenters it. (The unconscious is a complexity that will be grossly oversimplified here for the purpose of brevity.) The unconscious is a language, a complex interdependent system of signals and meanings. As we develop a conscious system of language so we develop at the same time an unconscious language. Life's experiences inscribe themselves upon us in two simultaneous registers, one conscious another unconscious. The unconscious language is inscribed in our particular style of speech, our choice of words, our bodies,

our posture, our places of least resistance to illness, our special sensualities as well as our nervous tics, and hysterical symptoms. The unconscious language reveals itself in dreams, in fantasies, in the particularity and selectivity of our memory both of childhood and in the present. The unconscious reveals itself in each person's unique speech, in each of our heroic legends about our own lives and the myths of each of our families. It is a place that conscious thought has erased, like a picture erased, leaving a smudged but blank sheet of paper, or a drawing erased and replaced by another picture with a different look.^{14*} It is a language of which we are unaware but a language that informs everything we do. Lacan replaces the Cartesian "I think therefore I am" with his own maxim: "I think where I am not, therefore I am where I do not think."¹⁵ The very concept of an unconscious is most surely a concept of the decentered subject.

Both Freud and Marx acknowledge that the process of thinking is unable to capture the real world. Thoughts about the real are not to be confused with the real. In the words of Engels

The two of them, the concept of a thing and its reality, run side by side like two asymptotes, always approaching each other yet always missing. This difference between the two is the very difference which prevents the concept from being directly and immediately reality and reality from being immediately its own concept. Because a concept has the essential nature of that concept and cannot therefore prima facie directly coincide with reality, from which it must first be abstracted, it is something more than a fiction, unless you are going to declare all the results of thought fictions.¹⁶

*The work of Lacan lapses into essentialism when he constitutes the unconscious as a repository of a higher truth.

For Lacan the attempts to capture the real thorough knowledge are likened to a child's behavior at what he calls "the mirror stage."¹⁷ At around six months of age the child looks at herself in the mirror and realizes with jubilation that she has captured herself, right there in her reflection. She doesn't realize that she has captured a two dimensional and backwards reflection of a self that has changed by its very act of self recognition. Thought is like the reflection in the mirror it can never capture the real. Therefore as subjects we are always decentered because our thoughts and knowledges of what we are and do can never capture us. What we think cannot tell us what we are.

Conscious thought is expressed in language. Language is an arbitrary system of signs. The sounds we make when we talk or the marks we make when we write do not directly relate to the meanings we are trying to convey through spoken or written language. The word for a lead writing utensil is a pencil but the word pencil has nothing to do with the object, the pencil. Our knowledges of everything are forced from our sensations and perceptions through arbitrary language. The very process of forcing human experience into arbitrary signs or symbols changes that experience and decenters it. In Freud's words "The order of the symbol can no longer be conceived as constituted by man but rather as constituting him."¹⁸ In my words the symbol and the person constitute each other.

If human knowledge is knowledge of the symbolic world we have created in response to the real, then our knowledges, our sciences, are sciences of the symbolic mediation of the world as we perceive it. They are not direct immediate reflections of the real world. Both Freud and Marx tried to reclassify sciences as the sciences of subjectivity, sciences of human symbolism, rather than as objective knowledges of the real world. In Lacan's words "our physics is simply a mental fabrication whose instrument is the mathematical symbol. Experimental science is not so much defined by the quantity to which it is in fact applied as by the measurement which it introduces into the real."¹⁹ Lacan likens empirical science's proofs of the truth of their findings to people who invent a clock on the basis of their concept of time and then cite the existence of the clock's measurement of time as objective proof of their time concept. In Althusser's words, "In the movement which causes the spontaneous perceptions and images to become the concept of the real object, each form does indeed relate to the real object but without becoming confused with it."²⁰ Althusserian Marxism and Lacanian psychoanalysis both specifically differentiate themselves from other knowledges by their affirmation that knowledge exists within the symbolic realm which can never capture concrete reality.

Marxism and psychoanalysis are both sciences of liberation. They each create a new discourse, a new symbolic arrangement of

the world like a new mirror in which people can see themselves differently and act differently on the basis of their changed images. Human beings have no way of defining themselves or anything else except by seeing themselves reflected in the reactions of other people to them or seeing themselves reflected in the mirrors of knowledge around them. Each person's knowledge is an integration of the reflections of the different mirrors to which s/he has been exposed. It is sometimes argued that a person's senses also tell her what she knows. Within the epistemology of this paper all perceptions include interpretation because human beings cannot directly receive the real world. They perceive it through their own mediating and therefore distorting perceptual and thought processes.

Marx held up the symbolic mirror of class in which a worker could recognize himself as an exploited member of class society, join a movement to change that society, reclaim his surplus, and in the process change his own recognition of himself. In the Marxian discourse, "phase one, the person who works at the level of production in our society considers himself to rank amongst the proletariat; phase two in the name of belonging to it he joins in a general strike."²¹ Freud held up the symbolic mirror of the unconscious in which a person could recognize herself as a speaker of an unconscious language and participate in a psychotherapeutic relationship to give words to that unconscious language and change her/himself in the process. In the psychoanalytic discourse phase one, a client enters psychotherapy; phase

two s/he "recognizes" herself through hearing her own language as recognized by the therapist.²² Both Marx and Freud create a discourse through which people break their chains, those chains they can break.

The discourses of Marx and Freud are liberators in their epistemology as well as in their content. The concept of over-determination renders ridiculous the quest for total control or command of anything and thereby liberates people from the tormenting and impossible quest for total control over knowledge, themselves, or anyone else.

The liberation sought by Freud and Marx are different aspects of the same liberation: liberation from the relationships and the discourse of the master and the slave outlined in Hegel's Dialectic of Lordship and Bondage.²³ Marxism stresses a discourse of liberation from Master-Slave economic relationships and psychoanalysis is a discourse of liberation from Master-Slave emotional relationships.

Marx, Althusser and Lacan were powerfully influenced by Hegel. Althusser and Lacan were students together in a Hegel seminar taught by Kojève in which Kojève presented the dialectics of Lordship and Bondage with a Marxian interpretation. It is Kojève's Hegel who so clearly influenced Althusser and Lacan. In this interpretation, "Human history is the history of the dialectic of Master and Slave."²⁴ Any relationship including that of Master and Slave is a mutuality, an inter-relationship between all parties involved. There is no such thing as a linear or one way relationship. In human interactions "action from one side only

would be useless because what is to happen can only be brought about by means of both."²⁵ As stated above a basic premise of the dialectic of Lordship and Bondage is a mutuality, an inter-relationship between active participants. This is very different from a discourse stating that Master-Slave relationships are linear relationships in which an active victimizer acts upon a passive slave who is not equally a participant in the relationship.

Another basic premise of the dialectic of Lordship and Bondage is that there cannot be self-consciousness, ideas or definitions of the self without recognition by others. People develop their ideas of who they are and what life is about by seeing themselves in the mirrors of other peoples' recognition of them and other peoples' reactions to them. The first object of each person is to exist and therefore to be recognized as a person.

In Master Slave relationships two people participate but only one is recognized. For example in a typical employer employee relationship the employees are recognized only as labor power to be purchased at a cost kept to its minimum. They are not recognized as full persons with multiple human dimensions. The products of their labor are not recognized as theirs but as the employer's. The employees usually consider that the boss is a full person with multiple dimensions. Both the workers and the employer are working towards the enrichment of the employer.

Master Slave emotional relationships can exist anywhere, between parents and children, husbands and wives, or friends. In Master Slave emotional relationships the needs and personal existence of the one partner, the Master, are recognized and addressed by both partners, while the needs of the other partner, the Slave, are not recognized but remain unacknowledged.²⁶

Marx created a discourse on class and the vision of a classless society toward which to move. He created a vision of a society in which all people are "recognized."

Freud created a discourse on the unconscious and the vision of an environment in which people can be recognized and accepted as human with all of their normal, wild incestuous wishes, their sexual drives and emotional needs.

Freud and Marx both create discourses of a liberation which is the recognition of all people as full multidimensional and overdetermined human beings. This full recognition requires the end of Master-Slave economic relationships in which people are reduced to labor power.

Liberation also requires the end of Master-Slave emotional and sexual relationships in which one partner serves the other without being him or herself recognized or served. Full liberation also involves an end to the denial of the existence of a constantly unspoken self, an unconscious self with a language of wishes, needs and meanings. The unconscious language can never be fully captured in conscious thought, but the acknowledge-

ment of the existence of another register of meanings in life is a liberation. It is a liberation from the doomed battle of total mind, body and behavior control of oneself or others. The process of psychoanalysis is a process of liberation. A person in psychoanalysis hears her/his voice speaking and recognizes the validity of him/herself in the words s/he speaks. Psychoanalysis involves a self-recognition which creates the demand for recognition from others and precludes emotional Slave relationships.²⁸

Both Marx and Freud are liberators in giving us a discourse with no absolutes, no gods, no necessary Masters and no Slaves. By pointing out the circularity of all relationships they show people that we are active participants in our own oppression and can be active participants in our liberation as well. Of course, both the Marxian and Freudian discourses reject social morality plays with linear roles as victims and victimizers, good third world people and bad first world people, victimizing males and victimized females etc. Both the Marxian and the Freudian discourses liberate us from the above categories.

Where and how do these two discourses of liberation intersect? Can Marx inform Freud? Can Freud inform Marx? Within the theory of overdetermination the class process is an overdeterminant of the unconscious process and the unconscious process is an overdeterminant of the class process. Marxian theory could benefit tremendously from a study of the unconscious meanings of class and the manipulation of unconscious drives that perpetuate or

could undermine a particular class process. Such a study created within the epistemological framework of overdeterminist Marxism could explore the impact of the unconscious on the class process and avoid the economic determinism of Reich or the humanism of Fromm, and Marcuse. By the same token Freudian theory can benefit enormously from a study of the impact of class on the unconscious process.

Lacan weaves references to class among his poetic and diverse allusions but unfortunately he has never directly addressed the subject. Althusser in his essay on Freud and Lacan²⁹ addresses Freud and Lacan as his epistemological brothers without explicitly addressing the unconscious process as an overdeterminant of the class process. That task is one for us.

ENDNOTES

1. L. Althusser, "Freud and Lacan", p. 181, Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays, New Left Books, London, 1971.
2. J. Lacan, "The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis," p. 55, The Language of the Self, Delta, NY, 1968.
3. Engels as cited by S. Resnick and R. Wolff in "Marxist Epistemology: The Critique of Economic Determinism", p. 47, Social Text, Fall 1982.
4. This process is captured in the poem, "At Each Mile" by Jacques Prevert, p.7, Paroles, City Lights Editions, San Francisco, 1959.
5. J. Lacan, "The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis", p. 5, The Language of the Self.
6. Marx to Kugelmann 11 July 1868 cited in S. Resnick and R. Wolff, "Marxist Epistemology" p. 47, Social Text, Fall, 1982.
7. For a scholarly summary of Freud's use of the term, "over-determination", see J. Laplanche and J. B. Pontalis, The Language of Psycho-Analysis, p. 292-293, W. W. Norton & Co., 1973.
8. S. Resnick and R. Wolff "Classes in Marxian Theory," p. 1-18, URPE, Winter 1982.
9. L. Althusser, Glossary p. 252-253 in For Marx, Vintage, NY, 1969.
10. See S. Resnick and R. Wolff, "Classes in Marxian Theory," p. 2, URPE, Winter 1982.
11. Karl Marx, Capital Vol. 3, p. 791, International Pub., NY, 1967.
12. L. Althusser, "Reply to John Lewis" p. 51, Essays in Self-Criticism, New Left Books, London, 1976. This idea is also developed in L. Althusser's "Politics and History," Lenin and Philosophy, New Left Books, London, 1971.
13. L. Althusser, "Freud and Lacan", p. 201, Lenin and Philosophy. It is important to note that the great equalizing center, the 'ego' to which American ego psychologists and analysts refer is dismissed by Lacan as a capitalist invention masking the contradictory and overdetermined nature of the ego and positing an image of the 'true self' discovered in adjustment to social conditions. The ego for Lacan is a reflection in an

overdetermined hall of different mirrors each constantly changing and each a distortion. This corresponds to Marx's rejection of the notion of a settled human nature or the view of society as without constant contradiction and struggle. For Lacan's discussion of the ego see J. Lacan, "The Mirror Stage" p. 1-8, Ecrits, W.W. Norton, NY, 1977 and A. Lemaire, Jacques Lacan, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1977.

14. In Lacan's words, 'The unconscious is that chapter of my history which is marked by a blank or occupied by a falsehood; it is the censored chapter. But the Truth can be found again; it is most often already written down elsewhere. That is to say: in monuments: this is my body-that is to say, the hysterical nucleus of the neurosis where the hysterical symptom reveals the structure of a language and is deciphered like an inscription which, once recovered, can without serious loss be destroyed.
- in archival documents also: these are my childhood memories, just as impenetrable as are such documents when I do not know their source;
 - in semantic evolution: this corresponds to the stock of words and acceptations of my own particular vocabulary, as it does to my style of life and to my character;
 - and lastly in the traces which are inevitably preserved by the distortions necessitated by the linking of the adulterated chapter to the chapters surrounding it and whose meaning will be re-established by my exegesis.
- J. Lacan, The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis, p. 216, The Language of the Self, Delta, NY, 1975.
15. J. Lacan, "Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious", p. 166, Ecrits A Selection, W.W. Norton, NY, 1977.
16. F. Engels letter to C. Schmidt 12 March 1895, cited in S. Resnick and R. Wolff, "Marxist Epistemology: The Critique of Economic Determinism," p. 46, Social Text, Fall, 1982.
17. A good description of the Mirror Stage can be found in A. Lemaire's, Jacques Lacan p. 79-81, and 176-8. Lacan discusses the Mirror Stage in Ecrits A Selection, p. 1-8, 137-139, 211-212.
18. S. Freud, Project for a Scientific Psychology, cited in J. Lacan "The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis."

19. J. Lacan, "The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis," p. 49.
20. L. Althusser, "Is It Simple to Be A Marxist In Philosophy?", p. 192, Essays in Self-Criticism, New Left Books, London, 1976.
21. J. Lacan, "The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis, p. 48, The Language of the Self, Delta, NY, 1975.
22. Lacan's statement of the process of psychoanalysis is summarized in the following quotation from J. Lacan, "The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis, p. 147. 'Now the real confronted by analysis is a man who must be allowed to go on speaking. It is in proportion to the sense that the subject effectively brings to pronouncing the "I" which decides whether he is or is not the one who is speaking. But the fatality of the Word in fact the condition of its plentitude, requires that the subject by whose decision is actually measured at every instant the being in question in his humanity, be the one who is listening as well as the one who is speaking. For the moment of the full word they both take part in it.'
23. G. Hegel, "Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage", p. 228-240, The Phenomenology of Mind, Macmillan Co., NY, 1949.
24. Kojève, Alexander. Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, p. 9, Basic Books, NY, 1969.
25. G. Hegel, p. 230.
26. Here the question arises why would people accept bondage? In the Hegelian concept of human interactions there is a "fight to the death for recognition." In this fight no one wins recognition if either or both parties are killed. Survival is possible because the partners are unequals in the fight. Such unequals might be parents and children, employers and employees, wealthy and poor, husbands and wives, i.e. any people who are designated by their roles as unequals. 'Without being predestined to it in any way, the one must fear the other, must give in to the other, must refuse to risk his life for the satisfaction of his desire for 'recognition.' He must give up his desire and satisfy the desire of the other: he must 'recognize' the other without being 'recognized' by him. Now to recognize him thus is 'to recognize' him as his Master and to recognize himself and to be recognized as the Master's Slave.' (see 27 below)
27. A. Kojève, p. 8.

28. Of course people may go through empty psychoanalyses. With incompetent psychoanalysts or unwilling clients this liberation will probably not happen.
29. L. Althusser, "Freud and Lacan," p. 177-203, Lenin and Philosophy, New Left Books, London, 1971.

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