

Dedication

*In memory of those who made their mark upon the history set out here;
who symbolized in their very lives the ways in which
science, philosophy and politics have come together for Marxism;
who died tragically and before their time:*

Christopher Caudwell (1907 - 1937)

David Guest (1911 - 1938)

Antonio Gramsci (1891 - 1937)

Georges Politzer (1903 - 1942)

Jacques Solomon (1908 - 1942)

Boris Mikhailovich Hessen (1883 - 1937)

Nikolai Ivanovich Vavilov (1887 - 1943)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Because of the extraordinary scope and complexity of this project, the organization of my research has been a highly complicated affair and in it I have had an enormous amount of help. I have also benefited greatly from my discussions with philosophers, historians, and scientists of a wide range of views and from the criticisms of those who have read my manuscript.

My research took me abroad on a number of occasions: to the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Austria, Great Britain, the United States of America, and Canada. Aside from access to sources and interviews with philosophers, historians, and scientists, my travels, in taking me to many of the places where the history I was writing had unfolded, made events far more vivid to me than they would have been otherwise.

I went twice to the Soviet Union. The second time, I spent four months of 1978 in Moscow, working in Soviet libraries, giving lectures, and having discussions with Soviet philosophers. During this time, I achieved an insight into the character of Soviet philosophical life and a vivid sense of the sociohistorical atmosphere in which Soviet philosophy developed in its own distinctive way that I could not have achieved otherwise. I was often at the Institute of Philosophy of the USSR Academy of Sciences in Moscow, where I gave a paper outlining my research and, in the lively discussion from the floor which followed, received many useful comments.

Among the Soviet philosophers who assisted me in my work, I would especially like to acknowledge the following: from the Institute of Philosophy in Moscow: Professors Y.V. Sachkov, T.I. Oiserman, A.D. Ursul, M.E. Omelyanovsky, I.A. Akchurin, L.G. Antipenko, K.K. Delakarov, Y.B. Molchanov, E.P. Pomagaeva, I.I. Petrov, B. Bogdanov, S. Brayović, E. Stepanov; from Moscow University: Professors S.I. Melyukin, J. Vogeler, Y.A. Petrov; from the Institute for the History of Science and Technology: Professor B.G. Kuznetsov; from other Moscow institutes: Professors E.P.

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A trip to Prague in March 1978, to participate in an international symposium on Dialectical Materialism and Modern Sciences, sponsored by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, and to read a paper, brought me into contact with a number of philosophers and natural scientists in Eastern Europe and was the occasion of a number of discussions relevant to my work. I am grateful to Academician Radovan Richta, Director of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences.

Those from Eastern Europe with whom I had discussions away from their home base were: from Poland, Professor Wladyslaw Krajewski of University of Warsaw whom I met in Dubrovnik, Professor Piotr Sztompka of Jagiellonian University of Krakow, whom I met in Hannover, and Professor Adam Schaff, whom I met in Düsseldorf and Vienna; from Bulgaria, Professor Azaria Polikarov of the University of Sofia, whom I met in Bucharest; from the German Democratic Republic, Dr. Wolfgang Harich whom I met in Vienna; from Czechoslovakia, Dr. Julius Tomin, whom I met in Dublin.

A trip to Vienna to meet with Professor Adam Schaff of the Polish Academy of Sciences and of the European Center for Coordination of Social Science Research in Vienna was especially important to me. His ruthless honesty in discussing many difficult matters with me was something for which I shall always be grateful, however painful it was at the time. Not in Vienna at this

time, but extremely helpful to me in correspondence, has been Professor Walter Hollitscher of Vienna and of Karl Marx University in Leipzig.

A somewhat idyllic sojourn in Dubrovnik brought me the opportunity to discuss in some depth the development of Yugoslav philosophy and philosophy of science with quite a number of Yugoslav philosophers and scientists. I spoke at greatest length with Professor Svetozar Stojanović, Professor Mihailo Marković, Professor Ivan Supek and Dr. Srdjan Lelas. Dubrovnik was also the setting of some extremely stimulating discussions of the epistemology of science involving Professor Ernan McMullin, Dr. William Newton-Smith and Mr. Rom Harré which pushed me to probe certain issues further myself. Discussions of the current state of Marxist thought with Professor Joachim Israel and Professor Marx Wartofsky were also helpful.

Various international conferences I attended brought similar opportunities, particularly the 16th World Philosophical Congress in Düsseldorf in August 1978, the 6th International Congress of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science in Hannover in August 1979, and the 16th International Congress of the History of Science in Bucharest in August 1981.

My numerous trips to Britain were extremely important to my work, not only for my research at the British Museum and the Marx Memorial Library, but for my contact with British Marxists. I am particularly indebted to Mr. Maurice Cornforth, Mr. Gordon McLennan, Mr. James Klugmann, Mr. Monty Johnstone, Mr. Desmond Greaves, Dr. John Hoffman, Dr. Julian Cooper, Mr. David Pavett, Dr. David Margolies, Mr. Jonathan Rée, Dr. E.P. Thompson, Professor Roy Edgley, Professor Joseph Needham, and Professor Ralph Miliband. I am also grateful to Ms. Rosemary Sprigg, executor of the estate of Christopher St. John Sprigg, for access to unpublished material relevant to this study. Interviews with Mr. Paul Beard, Mrs. Elizabeth Beard, Mr. Nick Cox, and Mr. William Sedley were useful to me in my research on Caudwell. So too were unpublished manuscripts of works on Caudwell by Dr. Jean Duparc of Nanterre and Dr. George Moberg to which they graciously gave me access. I am indebted to Dr. Duparc for lengthy and challenging discussions and generous hospitality when I came to Paris to read his thesis for the doctorat d'état. While in Paris, I also spoke with Dr. Dominique Lecourt about the various issues raised here.

My trips to the United States and Canada in 1979 and 1980 advanced my work in two ways. I gave lectures based on my research at the Center for Philosophy and History of Science of Boston University, in the Marxism and Science seminar in the History of Science Department of Harvard University, at the Philosophical Colloquium of the University of Toronto, at public lectures sponsored by the Departments of Philosophy of Queens College of the City University of New York, of Fairfield University, and of the University of Bridgeport and by the journal *Science and Nature*, and these raised challenging questions and points of discussion. Also, while in the United States, I had

discussions with philosophers and historians of science that were extremely important to me as I got my work into its final form. I am especially grateful to Professor Robert Cohen of Boston University not only for challenging discussions and criticisms, but for organizing many things for me. I am also grateful to Professor Erwin Hiebert and Professor Everett Mendelsohn of Harvard University; Professor Dirk Struik and Professor Loren Graham of MIT; Professor Marx Wartofsky, Professor Joseph Agassi and Professor Diana Long Hall of Boston University; Professor Howard Parsons of University of Bridgeport; Professor Eugene Fontinell and Professor George Kryzwicki-Herbert of Queens College, CUNY; Professor Ernan McMullin of the University of Notre Dame; Professor Mihailo Marković, Professor Alexander Vucinich, and Professor Mark Adams of the University of Pennsylvania; Professor Robert Tucker of Princeton University; Professor John Stachel, Professor Imre Toth, and Professor Dudley Shapere of the Institute for Advanced Study; Professor Richard Bernstein of Haverford College; Professor Mario Bunge of McGill University; Dr. Dan Goldstick and Dr. Frank Cunningham of the University of Toronto. Also my talks with those outside of the university setting with a lively interest in Marxist philosophy of science, particularly with those gathered around the journal *Science and Nature* and with Mr. George Novack, author of many books on Marxist philosophy, were very encouraging.

I have been extraordinarily fortunate in the number of outstanding scholars who have shown interest in my work and have taken great care in reading and commenting upon what I have written. This manuscript, or at least substantial sections of it, has been read by the following: Marx Wartofsky, Robert Cohen, Ernan McMullin, Mario Bunge, Nicholas Rescher, Stephen Toulmin, Erwin Hiebert, Loren Graham, Mihailo Marković, Adam Schaff, Maurice Cornforth, Walter Hollitscher, Ulrich Röseberg, Helmut Böhme, Jean Duparc, John Stachel, Imre Toth, Tomas Brody, Roy Edgley, Jonathan Rée, Monty Johnstone and Peter Mew. I am much indebted to them for their discerning judgements and challenging criticism.

Closer to home, I must mention the general encouragement in my work given to me by colleagues in Irish universities and in the Irish Philosophical Society, particularly those in the departments in which I have been based while working on this book: the Department of Philosophy of Trinity College, Dublin, the Department of Politics of University College, Dublin, and the School of Communications of the National Institute for Higher Education in Dublin.

Many other people helped me as well, too many people, in too many different ways to be able to name them all here: librarians, interpreters, administrators, apparatchiks of all sorts, and simply friends. Of these, I should

single out Mr. Séamus O Brógáin, who helped me with various technical matters and arrangements and Mr. Sam Nolan who encouraged me in getting through the final hurdles and seeing the task through to completion.

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Although it is not customary to acknowledge publishers, I wish to break such a custom to express the appreciation I feel for the enthusiastic encouragement and robust *joie de vivre* of Mr. Simon Silverman.

However, acknowledging my intellectual sources is really a much more complicated matter than listing persons with whom I discussed my work and giving references to books or papers cited at the end of chapters. Larger movements and deeper processes at work, the weight of various intellectual traditions, and also the whole tempo of the times have made my orientation to this book what it has been.

From the time I began to engage in serious and systematic study of Marxism, many things fell into place for me. I cannot say that I am a Marxist in any unambiguous sense, for I have arguments with virtually all contending schools of thought within Marxism, both orthodox and revisionist, both past and present. I also believe that my view of the world has been forged in the convergence of a number of intellectual traditions, of which Marxism is only one. However, I must acknowledge that Marxism has left its mark on me and decisively shaped my modes of understanding as no other tradition has. As I worked through the history set out here, I was forced to come to terms with many issues in a sharper way than I would have otherwise. There were times when I was quite shaken by what I realized I had to write. My views on various questions evolved, reached points of crisis, and then resolution. My own relationship to Marxism became more and more complicated. I believe that this has been a good thing as far as this book is concerned, for Marxism is a very complex and controversial phenomenon and commentary on it has for too long been far too polarized in terms of simple and one-sided extremes. The waters have for far too long been muddied both by the shallow jargon and hollow self-praise and by the stereotyped polemics emerging in response to them. I have come strongly to believe it deserves much better. I have tried to look at it freshly, neither as apologist nor as prosecutor, but as someone who could recognize it as a formidable intellectual tradition and at the same time be free to subject it to critical assessment. I have, however, never believed that such openness of mind required detachment or lack of commitment, as the still-prevailing academic ethos would have it. No matter how critical or complicated my position in relation to Marxism and the various issues it posed for me

became, I was at all times passionately involved with it. For this, I make no apologies, for I believe that the very intensity of my involvement has enhanced rather than distracted from my understanding.

Moreover, I believe that my active involvement with political organizations of the left, both old and new, at various times and in various places, has been epistemologically important for me. It is not simply that it brought me to know things I would not otherwise know, but it has involved a way of knowing that would not have been open to me in any other way. As is relevant to this book, the history of Marxism in the period under discussion is very much tied to the history of the communist movement. The fact that, while writing this book, I was coming to terms with the communist movement "for real" gave me many troubling experiences, but it also gave me a particular sort of insight that has, no doubt, colored these pages.

The concept of the "unity of theory and practice" has been a notion much vulgarized and much abused, but I think it would be unwise to throw it over. I have long been convinced of the correctness of Dewey's critique of the spectator theory of truth and have long since opted for a participational theory of truth. And so I believe that the world is *known* best by those who most actively take hold of it, interact with it, participate in it. It has been my privilege to have encountered people who have *known* in this way in the course of my research for this book. These include those still alive, whom I have interviewed, and those now dead, whom I have discovered through their texts. I am much indebted to them.

In the end, of course, I had to do my own thinking and make my own mistakes. For special reasons, I must insist that *only* I can be held to account for the views set out here, for better or for worse. I have been exposed to many and conflicting viewpoints and I have weighed seriously what others have said, but I had to decide for myself where I stood. And I have. This has sometimes meant taking issue with people who have been very kind to me, and if their assistance has been turned to ends neither they nor I foresaw, I ask them to try to understand. If they cannot accept the position I have taken, I hope they will at least accept my good faith in taking it. I am well aware of the controversial character of my conclusions, some of which may disturb others as much as they have disturbed me, but I have come to them gravely and could not do otherwise.

Helena Sheehan

INTRODUCTION TO THE PAPERBACK EDITION

So much water has flowed under the bridge, so many tides have come in and gone out again, since the story set out here ended. Days of spectacular advance, days of stark defeat, still lay ahead.

After 1945, partisans came down from the mountains and up from the underground and became professors in the academies of the new order, which came after the devastation of war and the defeat of fascism. In Eastern Europe, and soon after in Asia, followed by areas of Latin America and Africa, the institutions of Marxism-in-power multiplied dramatically. Marxism was in the ascendancy in the universities, research institutes, and journals of the new socialist states.

For some, adherence to Marxism was a matter of deepest conviction: For others, it was brazen compulsion or abject conformity. It was the difference between living fire and stagnant water. It was the dissonance between the elation of discovering a pattern in history and the shock of finding show trials to be part of the pattern. It was the distance from the Long March, through "let a thousand flowers bloom" to the ravages of the Red Guards. It was the gulf between Paris in May and Prague in August of 1968. The contradiction between the two forces played itself out over and over in a continuing drama, one that could only end in tragedy. The codes and procedures of the one-party state could never be the dynamism of a vibrant intellectual force. In the end, socialism could only be built upon consent. Such consent could not be enforced by constitutional provision or policed by a state security apparatus. In fact, it proved altogether antithetical to such measures.

However, through all the purges of institutes and editorial boards, through all the politburo decrees and dogmatic denunciations, there was still something vital struggling for life. There was more even to Zhdanovism¹ than the policing of intellectual life. It was an assertion of the ideological character of all knowledge, all art, all science. It was a belief that philosophy was a fundamental force in the social order. It often had farcical consequences, to be sure: Lysenkoite falsification of experimental