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# MARX AND PARETO ON SCIENCE AND HISTORY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

VINCENT J. TARASCIO

## INTRODUCTION

This paper is essentially a comparative analysis of the methodologies of Marx and Pareto. I shall abstract from the doctrines and theories themselves and focus attention on their philosophical underpinnings. This approach recognizes that there is a substructure underlying a theoretical system, a theory of theories, which is more general than the superstructure itself. Hence the basis for differentiating the works of both writers can be found not only in the superstructure, which is most accessible to inquiry, but also the substructure.

My choice of Marx and Pareto is threefold. The economic-sociology of both writers is extremely complex and the existing literature devoted to the works of each writer is far from cohesive. Secondly, there are interesting parallels in the works of both writers when viewed from a methodological perspective, although their theoretical systems appear to be quite different. Thirdly, since Pareto was familiar with Marx's work and referred to it in his own writings, there is the additional opportunity to investigate the latter's influence on the former.

The first part of the paper deals with the problem of ethical neutrality in relation to the sociological theories of both writers. This subject is quite important, especially in the case of Marx, because his sociology of knowledge has been interpreted by some as an attack on the notion of "objectivity" in social sciences. The second part of the paper contrasts Marx's and Pareto's views on the general procedures of science. The third part focuses attention on the problem of interdependence of social phenomena and each author's method of dealing with the problem. The fourth part examines Marx's and Pareto's theory of history. Finally, in the concluding section, some external factors which may have influenced both writers will be discussed.

## ETHICAL NEUTRALITY

The problem of ethical neutrality is rather complex, since several different but related meanings are included under the term. For my purpose, it will be necessary to distinguish between two aspects: (1) the possibility of an observer separating himself from the influences of environmental agents which tend to color his vision of the object of investigation, (2) the separation of facts and values, and the view that the world of facts is the proper domain of

science. The first has its roots in the Cartesian subject-object dichotomy and the second in Kant's separation of facts and values.<sup>1</sup>

In general, the first aspect of ethical neutrality has not been an important issue in economics—the subject-object dichotomy has been implicit in the history of economics. In other words, economists have more or less assumed that the observer can separate himself from the object of investigation. The second aspect of ethical neutrality listed above has received a great deal of attention in economics. Essentially this is the basis for the rather crude distinction between “what is” and “what should be,” or the more refined distinction between methodological and normative judgments which recognizes that both types of judgments are value judgments.<sup>2</sup>

Although economic science has not concerned itself explicitly with the subject-object dichotomy, a general sociology characteristic of the systems of both Marx and Pareto, in which scientific activity is a part of the *object* of investigation, cannot ignore it—hence the sociology of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Marx's interpretation of history is all encompassing in the sense that his methodological views are an explicit part of his theories of society. Marx the philosopher and Marx the social scientist are one. What is important is that an extension of Marx's views on “human nature” and the derivation of ideas to include science would tend to cast doubt on the subject-object dichotomy in the social sciences. This issue is it questions the trustworthiness of empirical observation, in particular, and the possibility of an “objective” social science, in general.

If one does not distinguish between actors and observers in Marx's work, there is the temptation to resort to a denial of the subject-object dichotomy.<sup>4</sup> Human character is essentially molded by environmental agencies such as

<sup>1</sup> This tendency toward the “metaphysical dualism of the knowing mind and the known external word,” Decartes' sharp formulation of a subject-object dichotomy, is discussed in detail by Talcott Parsons, “Unity and Diversity in the Modern Intellectual Disciplines,” *Science and Culture*, ed. G. Holton (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), pp. 39–69. For Kant's separation of facts and values see Vincent Tarascio, *Pareto's Methodological Approach to Economics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> The latter recognizes that values are a necessary part of social science, but some can be dispensed with, i.e., the distinction between methodological and normative judgments. Also, in addition, there are cultural influences operating on methodological judgments, which give meaning, relevance, purpose, etc. to scientific activity. For a more detailed discussion see: Vincent J. Tarascio, “Values Judgments and Economic Science,” *Journal of Economic Issues* V (March 1971), pp. 98–102.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion on Marx's sociology of knowledge see: Karl Mannheim, *Essays in the Sociology of Knowledge*, ed. Paul Kecskemeti (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1952), pp. 143–144, 213–214; Jacques Maquet, *The Sociology of Knowledge* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1951) pp. 21–23, 86–88; Werner Stark, *The Sociology of Knowledge* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1958), pp. 140–151.

<sup>4</sup> It appears incorrect that Mannheim, *op. cit.*, p. 1, succumbed to this temptation.

physical surroundings,<sup>5</sup> occupation,<sup>6</sup> society and its institutions.<sup>7</sup> But the fundamental factor underlying these environmental agencies, in varying degrees, is the system of production which, in turn, identifies individuals according to their class positions in this system. In a strict sense, man is a product of his class, and his perceptions, attitudes, aims, etc., are those of his class.<sup>8</sup>

Given the important influence of environmental agencies on human character, how can an individual scientist (observer) remove himself from his class position as "scientific objectivity" would require? Or more generally, since, according to Marx, our social existence determines our consciousness, in what sense is the subject-object dichotomy valid? It is rather interesting that Marx did make the sharp distinction between the acquisition of knowledge by *scientists* and the superficial notions of the "ordinary mind" (the majority of the people).<sup>9</sup> In other words, Marx did accept the subject-object dichotomy<sup>10</sup> in the case of scientific inquiry, and his views on class positions applied to the actor not the "true" scientist.<sup>11</sup>

For Marx, the "ordinary mind" represents the actor, the subject of investigation by professional economists. The actor never really grasps the nature of the economic process of which he is a part for the reasons mentioned above. His perception is largely conditioned by his whims, prejudices, and especially class interests, and so on. The "ordinary mind" lives in a world of "illusionism."<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, a few individuals are given to the quest for scientific knowledge. The procedures of science alone are not sufficient in themselves to insure objectivity. Energetic activity of the mind is required to penetrate beyond immediate (subjective) experience.<sup>13</sup> This penetration into the nature of reality is essentially a mental process involving abstraction and synthesis.<sup>14</sup>

It is not clear whether for Marx the energetic activity of mind, which allows the individual scientist to advance beyond the stages of mere "illusionism," is

<sup>5</sup> Marx, *Capital, A Critique of Political Economy*: Vol. I, trans. S. Moore and Edward Aveling (Chicago, 1909); Vol. II trans. E. Untermann (Chicago, 1907); Vol. III trans. E. Untermann (Chicago, 1909); I, pp. 563, 563 n., 564.

<sup>6</sup> Marx, *Capital I*, p. 198; Marx-Engels, *Die Deutsche Ideologie* in *Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Berlin, 1927-32), pp. 10-11.

<sup>7</sup> Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Trans. N. I. Stone (Chicago, 1907), pp. 267-268; *Poverty of Philosophy*. Trans. H. Quelch (Chicago, 1910).

<sup>8</sup> Marx, *Capital I*, p. 15.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Marx, *Capital III*, pp. 1022-1023.

<sup>10</sup> Marx and Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Part I, Vol. 5, p. 534.

<sup>11</sup> Marx, *Capital I*, p. 594; III, p. 369.

<sup>12</sup> Marx, *Capital I*, pp. 591-592; III, pp. 369, 198, 199, 1016-1017.

<sup>13</sup> Marx, *Capital III*, pp. 1022-1023.

<sup>14</sup> Marx, *Capital I*, pp. 12, 24-25.

itself a product of environment or an inherent characteristic. Although Marx recognized that heredity plays a part in the variations of individual capacities, these variations are not related explicitly to scientific abilities, as far as I have been able to determine.<sup>15</sup>

In summary, Marx stresses the overriding importance of environmental influences upon perceptions of individual members of various classes, but he allows for individuals to rise above their class positions through a mental process—freedom from the heavy hand of social existence on class consciousness occurs through the “mind.” Scientific objectivity, in the sense of the subject-object dichotomy is possible, but only for a very few.<sup>16</sup>

Pareto, like Marx, accepted the Cartesian subject-object dichotomy.<sup>17</sup> Unlike Marx, he did not stress exclusively the importance of environmental agencies in molding human character.<sup>18</sup> Instead, he avoided the controversial and unresolved problem of environmental versus heredity-biological explanations of social behavior by focusing on basic motivational complexes (residues).<sup>19</sup> These were manifestations of “sentiments,” whose causative factors were unknown. These motivational complexes give rise to specific patterns of explanations. The patterns of explanation were, for Pareto, largely rationalizations of “sentiments” manifested in the residues.<sup>20</sup> In other words, in the case of the *actors* (the subject of analysis), both Marx and Pareto pointed out that the individual was not the master of his own fate. As we have seen, Marx argues that consciousness is determined by social existence; for Pareto individuals are governed by basic motivational complexes, which are manifestations of “sentiments,” the source of which is a matter of psychological research, outside the scope of his sociology. Nevertheless, the patterns of explanations of the actors in the system of both Marx and Pareto are similar in that they are akin to ideology.

<sup>15</sup> For instance, Bober, *Karl Marx's Interpretation of History* (1st ed. 1927, 2nd ed., New York: Norton, 1965) gives a contradictory statement from Engels, “The art of working with concepts is a difficult procedure, it ‘is not inborn and also is not given with ordinary every day consciousness.’” (p. 120).

<sup>16</sup> Actually, Marx appears to have occupied a middle position between classical materialism and classical idealism. Although his synthesis of the two traditions transcends the classic subject-object dichotomy, he found that the prevailing circumstances made practice of it impossible. Consequently, he had to accept the continuing existence of the dichotomy, even though it was the “result of the still distorted process of cognition.” Shlomo Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 69.

<sup>17</sup> Pareto, *The Mind and Society*, trans. and ed. A. Livingston (4 vols.; New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1935) I, sec. 95, pp. 50-51.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, I, sec. 108, 108 n., p. 56.

<sup>19</sup> For Pareto's theory of residues see *Ibid.*, vol. II.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, vol. III, for the theory of “derivations.”

Pareto does not separate the conditions of scientific activity from those of other forms of social behavior. Much of Pareto's sociology rests upon his distinction between two general personality types; individuals endowed with an "instinct for combinations," i.e., with the ability to "create a new entity or association out of disparate elements," and individuals who have a propensity to conserve existing combinations and associations (this Pareto calls "persistence of aggregates").<sup>21</sup> The former personality type is the innovator of ideas and organization in all forms of human activity, political, economic, religious, and so on, as well as *scientific*. The latter type tends to form a strong element of stability in society, as well as *science*. Scientific activity is merely one aspect of social activity and not something apart from it. Science has its innovators and those who are content to extend or apply the inventions of the innovators. What differences exist among various classes of activities are the criteria used to judge performance—these criteria are *subjective*. Science, then has its professional norms which differ from say those of the military, business enterprise, and so on. But this does not suggest that practitioners suffer from "illusionism," or that scientists are free from it.

Unlike Marx, who thought that only a few possessed a scientific gift, Pareto viewed scientific activity as merely a particular form of human activity. For Marx, a scientist possessed special quantities which distinguished him from the "ordinary mind." In the case of Pareto, a scientist was merely an individual who was applying himself to a particular activity rather than another. Science then had its innovators as well as its conservers. Pareto viewed scientific activity in a matter of fact way—within the grasp of anyone who was willing to cultivate a "detached" frame of mind and who was able to master the tools of the profession.<sup>22</sup> Although Pareto recognized that a "man entirely unaffected by sentiment and free from all bias, all faith, does not exist," he stressed the importance of the subjective minimization of value judgments.<sup>23</sup> This capacity was a matter of cultivation rather than an exclusive property of a gifted few.

The second aspect of ethical neutrality mentioned above is that of Kant's distinction between fact and value. This issue has been expressed in terms of "what is" versus "what should be" or "positive" versus "normative" theory. It is obvious that Marx rejected these distinctions in his role as revolutionary and prophet. Marx concludes his first preface to *Capital* with the remark that he welcomes scientific criticism, but he cares little for the prejudices "of so-called public opinion," to which he never made any concessions.<sup>24</sup> Yet for

<sup>21</sup> For concrete examples in history see *Ibid.*, IV, sec. 2227-2236, pp. 1555-1566.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 1-13, pp. 1-9.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, I, sec. 142, p. 72.

<sup>24</sup> Marx, *Capital* I, p. 16.

the most part, *Capital* has been accepted by many more for reasons of sentiments than those of scientific demonstrations. Pareto's sociology contains a political polemic and preceptive part, which detracts from its "positive" character. Even Pareto, who preached for the separation of fact and value and achieved it to a remarkable degree in his economic theory, could not resist the temptation to depart from his "neutral" position when he turned to sociology.

It is quite clear where Marx's sympathies lay. Marx despised the bourgeoisie and worshiped the proletariat.<sup>25</sup> Capitalists were the chief villains in the drama. He aired his racial prejudices and his contempt for ruralism.<sup>26</sup> Pareto lost no love on the decadent bourgeoisie, who were digging their own graves with their humanitarian sentiments, the proletarians who were gaining political and economic power at the expense of less organized groups in society, and the "speculators" (both political and economic) who were exploiting the conflict between the classes, indeed contributing to it for personal gain.

In summary, both Marx and Pareto viewed scientific activity as a valid source of knowledge, even though such activity was *part* of the object of investigation in their respective sociologies. Nevertheless, there were fundamental differences in the philosophies of both writers concerning the proper procedures of science.

#### THE PROCEDURES OF SCIENCE

Because of the complexities of concrete phenomena, analysis and synthesis are necessary procedures of science. Analysis involves breaking down the concrete into elements composing it and then examining the elements separately. In the natural sciences these elements may be examined by experimentation, where possible, or by a process of abstraction. In the social sciences, often deprived of experimental means of analysis, one must usually resort to abstraction. Synthesis interrelates the constituent parts. Through this *mental* activity our grasp of the aggregate grows.

The above views on the procedures of science were shared by both Marx and Pareto.<sup>27</sup> Pareto went further by defining various levels of abstraction, one of which involves the basis for various specialized disciplines.<sup>28</sup> He never tired of arguing the necessity for a synthesis of the theories of the various

<sup>25</sup> It might be argued that Marx found greater empathy in the *concept* of the proletariat as a universal class than in the "masses" or flesh and blood workers. He was dubious about exclusively proletarian membership in socialist movements, and emphasized that revolutions originate in elite groups. See Avineri, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Bober, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Marx, *Capital* I, pp. 12, 24-25, Pareto, *Mind and Society* I, sec. 25, p. 17.

<sup>28</sup> *Idem.*

social sciences in order to deal with concrete problems.<sup>29</sup> In the case of Marx, there is no explicit recognition of the necessity for specialized disciplines. Indeed, economic phenomena are an integral part of the social whole.

It might appear that Marx's general conception of the procedures of science is quite standard, and similar to that of Pareto. Nevertheless, all of these considerations were general preliminaries to a dialectic method cast in terms of a logical-historical framework. The true scientist is faithful to the dialectic method, mindful of the evolution and the interrelations of phenomena, alert for the conditions which generate the negation of what exists and new transformations.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, Pareto recognized no *formal* basis for the distinction between natural and social sciences.<sup>31</sup> Hence the methods of the natural sciences were, for him, a valid source of knowledge in the social sciences. The implications of the views of both writers or the procedures of science will be examined in relationship to the problem of interdependence of social phenomena and their theories of history.

#### INTERDEPENDENCE OF SOCIAL PHENOMENA

One of the salient features of Marx's interpretation of history is the way in which it draws upon sociology, history, economics, and, to a lesser extent, philosophy. In economics only Adam Smith was able to achieve a synthesis of such broad scope. The essential unity of social life was stressed by Marx and the method of synthesis was the dialectic, which stems from Hegel. This dialectic materialism of Marx is commonly interpreted to mean that production constitutes the determining element in history.<sup>32</sup> This point is so well known, it requires little elaboration. Nevertheless it does present a logical problem of some import with respect to the interdependent nature of social phenomena. In particular, there is involved an apparent contradiction between causal explanation and functional interdependence.

In a purely deterministic context, the causal agent of all social phenomena in Marx's schema is the mode of production.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, according

<sup>29</sup> Pareto, "On the Economic Phenomenon," *International Economic Papers*, III (1953), p. 186.

<sup>30</sup> Bober, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

<sup>31</sup> Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Social Science*, Trans. E. Burns (New York, 1939), pp. 97-99, is more specific on the distinction between the "natural," "organic," and "social" sciences than Marx. For Pareto's views see *Mind Society* I, sec. 99, pp. 52-53.

<sup>32</sup> For example see Karl Popper *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1950), pp. 304-308; Bober, *op. cit.*, pp. 301-310. I realize that the deterministic nature of Marx's theory is a matter of controversy. Some would rather stress the idealistic side of Marx more than others, for instance, Avineri, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-77.

<sup>33</sup> The determinism of Marx's schema has been subjected to several interpretations. As Bober points out, "There is hardly a perceptible difference between the claim that the mode of production is the only determinant of history and the claim that the mode of production



to Engels, the dialectic method emphasized the reciprocity between economic and all other factors, with the economic movement finally asserting itself.<sup>34</sup> Engels claimed that neither he nor Marx ever asserted the deterministic nature of the economic process.<sup>35</sup> Instead, the dialectic method stressed the importance of the interdependence of social phenomena, with the economic ultimately asserting itself.<sup>36</sup> Yet a method which is intended to deal with the interdependence of social phenomena, qualified by a determining factor (production) merely reduces to a unicausal explanation of *all* social phenomena. This unicausal explanation is hardly what is meant by interdependence or reciprocity.

The dialectic method is more relevant to the *scope* of analysis rather than a method designed to deal with the interdependent nature of social phenomena. Marx (and Engels) merely broadened the scope of economics to include other social phenomena. This analysis involved a causal explanation cast within the framework of a dialectic schema. Of course, there are parts of Marx's work which reflect a recognition of the interdependence of social phenomena, but mere recognition is hardly an adequate treatment of the problem.

Pareto recognized that Marx's theory of history was essentially deterministic in the sense discussed above.<sup>37</sup> He argued that the significance of Marx's dialectic schema was that of calling attention to the importance of class conflict as a dynamic element in the social process.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, because conflict was conceived in terms of *materialistic* agents, Marx deprived himself of the full range of applicability of the concept of conflict in his sociological analysis.

In contrast to Marx, Pareto adopted a functional interdependence approach in his sociology. This approach allowed him to study the *reciprocal* relationship between ideological, political, economic, and motivational factors—how one influenced the others and, in turn, how each influenced the one.<sup>39</sup> In short, Pareto extended the concept of general equilibrium to sociological analysis.

Both Marx's (dialectic) and Pareto's (general equilibrium) approaches to the

overrides all other influences and in the last resort governs institutions and events." *op. cit.*, p. 302. In any event, as will be pointed out in the text, any form of causal explanation is inconsistent with functional interdependence.

<sup>34</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Correspondence, 1846-1895* Trans. Dona Torr. (New York: 1942), pp. 475, 484, 512. One might object to linking Engels to Marx in this respect, since it may be argued that Engels was both more materialistic and deterministic than Marx. Nevertheless, Marx never seems to have aired any fundamental disagreement with Engels on this point. For an example of some subtle distinctions made by interpreters of Marx see, Avineri *op. cit.*, pp. 65-66.

<sup>35</sup> Marx-Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, pp. 475, 484, 512.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Pareto, *The Mind and Society*, sec. 2207, n. 1, pp. 1543-44.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 2020, p. 1412.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 2206-2395, pp. 1572-1727.

problem of interdependence of social phenomena presented advantages and limitations. Marx's dialectic approach was deterministic, but at the same time accounted for the dynamic forces in history. Pareto's general equilibrium approach dealt explicitly with the reciprocal relations which determine the social equilibrium, but it was essentially static. Both Marx and Pareto argued the efficacy of their particular methods. What is important for my purposes, their respective methodological positions were not only reflected in their theoretical systems, but the former were the formations of the latter.

The issue of scope of analysis is logically quite separate from method and methodology. On the matter of scope, both Marx and Pareto were at one in their criticism of the narrow scope of economics.

#### MARX'S AND PARETO'S THEORY OF HISTORY

In the preceding section, I have argued that Marx's schema is essentially a unicausal explanation of history cast in a dynamic framework. Yet he relied on the use of "laws," which ordinarily are related to static analysis. On the other hand, Pareto's system was essentially a static general equilibrium theory, which involved a great deal of historical analysis. Since history deals with change over time, how is Pareto's theory of history consistent with his static analysis? Obviously, there are important differences in Marx's and Pareto's theories of history which require further elaboration.

Marx believed that social life is subject to definite laws which reveal a sequential operation of cause and effect.<sup>40</sup> Since laws or uniformities are invariant over time (or timeless) it might appear that their application is inconsistent with Marxian dynamics. This is not the case, since laws are made relative to the mode of production.<sup>41</sup> Hence their applicability is limited to a specific set of historical circumstances. As these historical circumstances change then new laws develop in conjunction with the new "background" conditions. Marx's conception of laws was relativistic rather than universal.

It is crucial to recall that in Marx the only element in his theory which does not undergo change, an unalterable fact of human history, is the notion of class conflict.<sup>42</sup> Everything else—production, economic laws, institutions, ideas, ideologies, the composition of classes, etc.—changes over time. The notion of conflict is temporally universal. This is the central theme in Marx.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Marx, *Capital* I, pp. 13–14, 671.

<sup>41</sup> Marx, *Poverty of Philosophy*. Trans. H. Quelch. (Chicago: 1910), pp. 119, 139, 168, 174.

<sup>42</sup> Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1888) sec. 1, pp. 12–32.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* One may distinguish between the proletariat as an historical phenomenon or as a paradigm of the human condition at large, as does Avineri, *op. cit.*, 52–64. In the latter case the human condition is conflict, and is consistent with my interpretation.

The conflict among *classes* is the dynamic element in his dialectic process.<sup>44</sup> The objective factor in history is the mode of production; the subjective factor is the self consciousness of classes and their conflict. What is most important, conflict has a material basis for Marx. The subjective and objective factors are inseparable. History, then, is the history of class struggles within the context of changing modes of production.<sup>45</sup>

Pareto was not concerned with interpreting history, although his sociology can be used as a basis for a theory of history. His interest in history was that it provided him with the material from which to infer social uniformities or laws.<sup>46</sup> Although he recognized the relative nature of economic laws, both spatially and temporally,<sup>47</sup> in his sociology he attempted to identify those elements in history which remained constant over time. This identification involved considerations beyond the influence of modes of production, institutions, ideas, etc., which are constantly undergoing change. For Pareto, history had often been the history of ideologies and hence the history of mere prattle.<sup>48</sup> What was needed was a theory which penetrated the facade of ideology and revealed the underlying uniformities in history. Such uniformities are necessary for any meaningful theory. These uniformities are revealed in his motivational analysis. His motivational analysis relied on classes of invariants (residues).<sup>49</sup> In the case of Marx, the mode of production formed the "background conditions" in which his economic laws operated. For Pareto, the focus was on spatially and temporally universal individual motivational complexes, quite apart from any environmental agencies. Hence his theory focused attention on the subjective factors in history, in contrast to Marx's dual subjective-objective reference. It is not surprising then that Pareto generalizes Marx's conception of *class* conflict to a conception of personality conflict.<sup>50</sup> These personality types are invariants in the sense that they do not change over time. For instance, one personality type approximates what is commonly called an innovator. Innovators have existed throughout human history. There have been military, religious, etc., innovators. They all possess common characteristics (class I residues), but they differ according to where they apply their talents, or according to the particular alternatives available during any period in history. For example, the entrepreneur of the nineteenth century was merely an innovator applying his talents to industrial enterprise.

<sup>44</sup> Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action* (York, Pa.: McGraw-Hill, 1937), p. 485.

<sup>45</sup> Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, sec. 1, pp. 12-32.

<sup>46</sup> Pareto, *The Mind and Society* IV, sec. 2410, pp. 1735-36.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, III, sec. 2017, pp. 1410-11.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, secs. 2156-2169, pp. 1501-1510.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, II, contains Pareto's theory of residues.

<sup>50</sup> One such example is Pareto's theory of the *S*'s and *R*'s. Cf. *Ibid.*, secs. 2231-36, 2310-14, pp. 1558-66, 1644-50.

Pareto's sociology rests upon a reasonable assumption that in some fundamental sense, human personality *types* have not changed much throughout recorded history and that irrational factors in human motivation are always present.<sup>51</sup> Because these motivational complexes are fairly constant over time, or because their composition changes very slowly, Pareto could abstract from the time dimension (and thus avoid many problems of dynamics) so that his sociological analysis was cast in terms of (timeless) static equilibrium. The historical material which was used in the inductive part of his study was no longer essential for the formation of his theory of social equilibrium. On the other hand, his static equilibrium theory is sufficiently general, in the sense of not being made to depend upon any particular set of historical circumstances, to be applicable to any historical period. In this sense, Pareto's sociology can be viewed as a *general* theory of history.

The temporal generality of Pareto's sociology becomes quite obvious when it is contrasted with Marx's schema. To use V. I. Lenin's own words, Marx's analysis is:

strictly confined to the relations of production between the members of society: without ever resorting to factors other than relation to explain the matter, Marx makes it possible to discern how the commodity organization of social economy develops, how it becomes transformed into capitalist economy, creating the antagonistic . . . classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, how it develops the productivity of social labour and how it thereby introduces an element which comes into irreconcilable contradiction to the very foundations of this capitalist organization itself.<sup>52</sup>

It is rather obvious that one must strain facts somewhat to fit Marx's conceptions of proletariat and bourgeoisie (and capitalist) classes into modern capitalism.<sup>53</sup> Yet, for Marx, capitalism was characterized by these class antagonisms. If one alters the definitions of classes then one must admit that capitalism (in the Marxian meaning of the terms) has undergone a significant transformation. This would be inconsistent with Marx's conception of the dialectic process—i.e., the fall of capitalism resulting from the antagonism between the proletariat and bourgeoisie (or capitalist) classes. Such a problem does not occur in Pareto, since the basis for his sociological analysis

<sup>51</sup> S. E. Finer, *Vilfredo Pareto, Sociological Writings* (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 27–28.

<sup>52</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works* (London: 1959), II, p. 418.

<sup>53</sup> It is not clear if Marx regarded capitalism as an existing reality or a model, since he dealt with both aspects. In the case of the latter the similarity to Weber's ideal type concept has been pointed out by Avineri, *op. cit.*, pp. 150–174. That model may be useful for historical interpretation, but the predictive content of Marx's theory is in his dialectic process. The following discussion in the text is with respect to that (perhaps too narrow) reference.

rests upon motivational complexes which can be applied to any particular set of institutional (or other) circumstances. Hence Pareto's work is relevant to today's circumstances, at least in terms of its applicability, whereas much of the *scientific* parts of Marx's work have lost their relevance.

#### MARX AND PARETO: AN OVERVIEW

Marx was influenced by Hegel and the writings of the classical economists.<sup>54</sup> On the other hand, Pareto had the advantage of time, since he wrote after Marx. By the time Pareto entered the scene, Walras had developed the theory of general economic equilibrium to explain the workings of a complex economic system. Marx, on the other hand, relied on the very imperfect tools of classical economic analysis and developed from them the theory of surplus value. Pareto viewed practically all of Marx's *economics* as redundant in terms of the developments which had taken place in economic theory.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, he was intrigued by what he referred to as Marx's sociology. The conception of class struggle was viewed by Pareto as being Marx's greatest contribution to social theory.

Pareto set out to do for sociology what Walras had done for economics. This sociology was the study of the reciprocal relations which determine the social equilibrium. He worked explicitly with the hypothesis of interdependence and his social equilibrium theory is general equilibrium theory.

Another important consideration is the influence of contemporary modes of thought on the theoretical systems of both writers. Classical economic theory was essentially dynamic in nature and fitted very nicely into Marx's dialectic schema. Pareto, whose economics was in the tradition of the Lausanne school, tended to reflect the neoclassical static orientations of the period. This influence was sufficient enough to cause Pareto to cast his sociology in the same mold, in spite of his respect for Marx's sociology. Of course, Pareto's training in the physical sciences was also an important factor in his orientation.

Finally, both authors held entirely different visions of mankind, particularly with respect to its prospects. We recall that Marx, like Hegel, conceived of the development of mankind as a single process towards a determinate goal. The process was not a continuous single line with quantitative increases, but dialectical. The dynamic elements in the evolutionary process were the class interests and the antagonism they caused. As Marx proclaimed, "no antagonism, no progress." Marx's conception of progress was a movement in the

<sup>54</sup> This is not the case with Marx's social and political philosophy as demonstrated by Avineri's, *op. cit.*, recent interpretation.

<sup>55</sup> For a review of those writers who seemed to have had a lesser influence on Marx's thoughts see, Avineri, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-12, 27, pp. 52-57, 77-79, 86-87.

direction of communism. In this sense, he believed in the perfectability of mankind—he was a child of the enlightenment.

Pareto, wrote his sociology in a period of increasing skepticism which began about the turn of this century. Pessimism and doubts about “progress” had become widespread. From an objective standpoint, all we observe throughout human history is change, according to Pareto. Whether or not this change constitutes *progress* is a matter which involves utility considerations. The contemporary (as well as current) state of knowledge was such that the criteria for making welfare judgments were bound to be subjective and very limited in their applicability.<sup>56</sup> Pareto called attention to the subjective nature of the criteria of both actors and observers, including those of Marx. Pareto focused his attention on scientific aspects of the contemporary state of society—what is—and left the separate issues of what “ought to be” to the reformers and “what will be” to the prophets. His predecessor wore all three hats.

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<sup>56</sup> For a detailed analysis of Pareto’s sociological welfare theory see: Vincent J. Tarascio, “Paretian Welfare Theory: Some Neglected Aspects,” *Journal of Political Economy*, 77 (Jan./Feb. 1969), pp. 1-19.