ing in a truly Christian manner that the individual himself becoming one with the "Absolute Mind" may participate in its eternal life and absolute knowledge, Marx, on the contrary, is much more modest and prudent. For him as a materialist both eternal life and absolute knowledge are out of the question for the individual. Remaining in the ancient tradition, Marx is satisfied to attribute to the individual a limited life span. At the same time, he seems to assume that mortal man will attain happiness as soon as his everyday problems are solved. In view of this attitude we may ask, however, whether Marx, like any optimist, takes the tragic aspects of human existence (the temporal and spatial limitations of man, etc.) seriously enough. Is there not a notable hiatus in Marx's system between his materialistic view of nature and his dialectical concept of history?

III

Human history is for Marx, ever more so than for Hegel, the story of eternal progress in the "humanization" of mankind though it may occasionally be interrupted. The "old doctrine of progress - the animating and controlling idea of western civilization (even if it ultimately proved to be no more than an idolum saeculi")[47], had a strong influence on Marx and determined his theory and his practical attitudes towards history[48]. No doubt, Marx's immense knowledge of historical data prevented him from simplifying or exaggerating as did some of the tritest prophets of progress of the nineteenth century. Yet it would be wrong to assume - as Korsch does - that Marx recognized from the outset the delusive character of that so-called historical evolution, according to which "the last stage regards the preceeding stages as only preliminary to itself, and therefore, can only look at them one-sidedly"[49]. One has only to compare this last passage quoted by Korsch from Marx's Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy in the general context of the Introduction with the following passages. Though they are isolated and fragmentary, yet they prove Marx's belief in the importance of economic progress: "The civic society is the most developed and manifold organization of production[50]; ... an industrial people possesses the height of its production at the moment, at which

47) J. B. Bury, The Idea of Progress. An Inquiry into its Origin and Growth. London 1928, p. VII.

48) I know only of one instance where Marx seems to doubt for a moment the progress of human history. In his remarkable speech at the anniversary of the People's Paper in April 1856 he concedes that "there exist symptoms of decay, far surpassing the horrors recorded of the latter times of the Roman empire" (Selected Works, Vol. 2, p. 427).

49) K. Korsch, Karl Marx, New York 1938, p. 51; cf. also Korsch's remarks on Asiatic, Antique, and Feudal Society, Ibid. p. 52 ff.

50) K. Marx, Zur Kritik... Einleitung p. 241.