ized strikingly by Hegel as Geistiges Tierreich. In its social evolution, which for Marx primarily conditions mankind, mankind loses its natural originality, happiness, and spontaneity. Hence Marx devaluates all past history into mere "prehistory". Yet for Marx, the dialectician, this process is everything but purely negative. It is positive in so far as it contains potentially all the preconditions necessary for a change in the opposite direction. The history of class societies and class-struggles results in the end in the pure antagonism of but two classes - bourgeoisie and proletariat. Marx sees in the two world historical contenders the opposition of thesis and antithesis, of freedom and constraint, of emancipation and enslavement. Marx's interpretation of the nature and function of bourgeoisie and proletariat thus remains in the tradition of Hegel's idea of the dialectical relationship of lord and bondsman.

IV

All past history has worked so as to concentrate in the proletariat the whole "mass of poverty, oppression, enslavement, degeneration and exploitation"[62]. The proletariat is indeed the pure embodiment of dehumanization and barbarization. At the same time it contains, however, with the growth of its class consciousness, its antithesis, its own Aufhebung. Recognizing its own enslavement and its task of self-liberation at the same time, the "working class" as "a class which grows ever more numerous and is disciplined, unified and organized by the very mechanism of the capitalist method of production"[63], can in the fullness of time break its chains and raise itself out of the deepest degradation, like a phoenix out of the ashes, enhanced, purified, rejuvenated. Thus it becomes that class which is identical with mankind. As a precondition for future perfection all the privations of previous generations receive a deep meaning and become legitimate. All past history is finally vindicated at least as prehistory: "Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild master and journeyman"[64] and to conclude this enumeration, capitalist and proletarian: they all struggled and suffered ad maiorem gloriam of an emancipated and humanized future mankind.

In the course of its emancipation the proletariat comes to personify ever more clearly the dialectical turn from the negative to the positive. On the contrary, its opponent, the bourgeoisie, personifies the decline from positive to negative. As the ruling class, it enjoys at first all material and immaterial advantages accompanying technological progress and the growing domination over nature. Exploiting the proletariat the bourgeoisie appears in all its might and splendor. Closer scrutiny, how-

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62) Karl Marx, Capital, Vol.I, p.846.

63) Ibid..

64) Marx, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", Selected Works, Vol. I, p.205.