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Charles Fourier and Charles Taylor: Romantic Expressivism and the Socialist Philosophy of Labour.

By

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ABSTRACT

An exploration of the link between romanticism as a *Weltanschauung* and the early socialist philosophy of labour. A romantic interpretation against the utopian socialist interpretations of Charles Fourier's thought using three criteria: materialism, expressivism and social estheticism. Authors found in text include: Charles Fourier, Charles Taylor, Karl Marx, Helvétius, George Lukacs, Robert Sayre, Michael Lowy, Saint-Simon, and Jacques Barzun. Keywords: Socialism; Utopian Socialism; Charles Fourier; Romanticism; Expressivism; Materialism.

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PART ONE: THE JUDGMENT OF FOURIER

Chapter I: Introduction

1) Definition and Periodization of Romantic Socialism

a) the Romantic Century

Socialism, in its modern form at least,¹ and Fourier's socialist project are inventions of the romantic century which starts with the publication of Rousseau's La Nouvelle Héloïse. (1761) and rose out of the enlightenment to reinvigorate European art, philosophy and society, by learning its important lessons and limits.² It is the century of revolution but also of reaction in almost every sphere of human thought. This century defended universal suffrage, freedom of the press, the separation of church and state, the emancipation of women, the democratization of justice and education, the abolition of slavery and the death penalty, the European Union and many other principles and projects realized and still to be realized today. Yet it is also the opposite: a century of restoration, and of absolute rule of tyrants, of social Darwinism, and a century of colonialism, and a return to notions of Catholic supremacy.

However, the romantic century is more than just a century, more than just a brief,

¹ Many have held after Benoit Malon's Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours. Paris: Dervaux Éditeur, 1927, that socialism as a political philosophy has its roots as far back as the Essenes or Plato through to the early Christians and has been present in history in one form or another throughout the ages. Others like Alexandrian in the introduction of his Le socialisme romantique. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1979, believe that this is a confusion between the history of socialism and the history of social ideas. But what is sure is that socialism as we know it today including its various schools, from Anarchism to Marxism emanate from the Romantic period.

² Van Tieghem, Philippe, Le romantisme français. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966.

confused, and heterogenous moment in time. It is also the origin of romanticism, a very complex *Weltanschauung* or worldview.³ As a world view romanticism, like subjectivism and rationalism before it, has a number of characteristics which have remained with us since its inception and which have greatly contributed to western culture.⁴ These characteristics persist in various artistic and political forms today, such as expressionism, surrealism and ecology. According to Sayre and Lowy, many common characteristics exist between such varied romantics as Burke and Byron, Rousseau and Victor Hugo. But, according to them, these other common characteristics are far outweighed by one major characteristic, which they explain as a form of anti-capitalism. It is this characteristic which is most important to this study of Fourier. Sayre and Lowy explain that it has been a long misconception that romanticism is only a response to the political upheavals of a post- revolutionary Europe. According to them romanticism also reflects the profound changes at a socio-economic level caused by a slowly emerging 19th century continental and modern form of capitalism. For this characteristic Sayre and Lowy are inspired by Marx' and Engels' brief comments on Balzac, as well as Lukacs' many works, most

³ Defined here in sense that sociologist Lucien Goldmann first gave it, but reiterated and expanded by Sayre and Lowy in their "Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism" *New German Critique*. New York: Holmes and Meier, no.32, Spring-Summer, 1984, p.51.: "as a mental structure characteristic of certain social groups. Such a mental structure can be concretized in many, diverse areas of culture: in literature and the other arts, in philosophy and theology, in political, economic and legal thought, in sociology and history etc.."

⁴ According to Charles Taylor in *Sources of the Self* (1989) romanticism is an essential part of our modern sense of selfhood. Taylor also believes that our sense of self derives from a combination of the Romantic and Enlightenment centuries. This synthesis according to Taylor defines the modern paradigm.

importantly *The Destruction of Reason*.⁵ According to Sayre and Lowy the counter theories to this slowly emerging form of capitalism vary on the basis of class. Therefore, two major and opposed social classes were losing their traditional communities, i.e., the aristocracy and the peasantry. A third class was also being disenfranchised by industrialization, the urban petty-bourgeoisie. This explains in part the stunning variety and complexity of romantic political philosophies and explains why romanticism can be both socialist and conservative. Therefore, there is --much like Ernest Sellière pointed out in *Le mal romantique* (1908)-- a: *romantisme des riches* and a *romantisme des pauvres*.⁶

In other words, romanticism is a revolt against a concrete present, specifically, the concrete realities of emerging continental modern capitalism and its negative effects on the power of lingering feudal social forces as well as the oppressive effects on the peasantry and the increasingly numerous proletariat.⁷ This phenomenon does not necessarily mean that there exists in all romantic theories a class consciousness or even a revolutionary theory of change. It means rather that all of the diverse currents of romanticism respond to the negative effects and traits, across social classes, of emergent modern capitalism. More specifically they respond directly to what Lukacs' identified in *History of Class Consciousness* (1968), as the social fragmentation and the phenomenon of reification

⁵ Sayre and Lowy, "Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism.", p.55.

⁶ Ernest, Sellière, *Le mal romantique*. Paris: Librairie Plon, 1908, p. 30-31.

⁷ For a further discussion on this see D.Moggach and Paul Leduc Browne, eds., *The Social Question and the Democratic Revolution: Marx and the Legacy of 1848*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2000.

which a society based on exchange value and market relations entails.⁸ All romantics believe that a society based on money and competition divides individuals into egotistical monads that “are essentially hostile or indifferent towards each other.”⁹ Therefore, romanticism broadly answers - in a variety of ways, revolutionary and reactionary- to this fragmentation by reinserting the individual into new and/or traditional communities. As Sayre and Lowy explain, this concern and sense of loss of community is present in all forms of political romanticism, and transforms itself into a general sense of loss of humanity. Therefore, at the basis of this concern is a concern about the alienation of the individual:

The Romantic vision is characterized by the painful conviction that present reality lacks certain essential human values, values which have been “alienated.”¹⁰

This we contend is the central concern of Fourier’s philosophy of labour, which is both an answer to the social fragmentation (*phalanstères, théorie de l’unité universelle*) and individual alienation (*théorie des passions et le droit au travail*), caused by the emergence of modern capitalist society. The basis of this reinsertion and emancipation in Fourier’s philosophy is a fundamentally romantic individualism.

However, the way in which this sense of wholeness and community is rebuilt differs from author to author as well as what is believed to be the essential alienated

⁸ For a further discussion of reification see Lukacs, George, History and Class Consciousness. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971, p.83.

⁹ Sayre and Lowy, “Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism.”, p.55.

¹⁰ Sayre and Lowy, “Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism.”, p.55.

human values or characteristics. It is the way in which an author conceives these that distinguishes different strands of political and philosophical romanticism. The distinction between communities of the future, i.e., revolutionary, and communities of the past or organic communities, i.e. reactionary, is of paramount importance.¹¹ Therefore, it is essential to make important distinctions on this basis in romantic anti-capitalist schools and to situate Fourier within these schools.¹²

b) preliminary definition of romantic socialism

Distinguishing five trends of revolutionary and/or utopian romantic anti-capitalism: the Jacobin-democratic, Populist, Utopian-humanist, Revolutionary-utopian, Libertarian and Marxist, Lowy and Sayre see Fourier as a central figure in the Utopian-humanist school. To understand why he is not classified as a revolutionary but as a utopian let us consider the following definition:

Romanticism in which a pre-capitalist past is projected into a hope for a capitalist future. Rejecting both the illusion of a pure and simple return to organic communities of the past and resigned acceptance of the bourgeois present, it aspires—more or less radically and explicitly, depending on the case—to see the abolition of capitalism and the creation of a utopian future possessing some traits or values of pre-capitalist society.¹³

¹¹ This distinction, that of organic being irrational and reactionary and inorganic being rational and revolutionary, is explained by George Lukacs, notably in his Destruction of Reason (1962).

¹² Lowy and Sayre distinguish at least six trends of political anti-capitalist romanticism: Restitutionists, Conservatives, “Resigned”, Fascists, Liberal, Revolutionary and/or Utopian. However we will only concern ourselves with the last, i.e., the Revolutionary and/or Utopian anti-capitalist trend in order to clarify Fourier’s position in the phenomenon of romanticism. Sayre and Lowy, “Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism.”, p.60-61.

¹³ Sayre and Lowy, “Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism.”, p.60-61.

Whereas, the Utopian-humanist trend of which Fourier is considered a central figure, is defined as follows:

We designate by this term those socialist currents and thinkers who aspire to a collectivist (post-capitalist utopia), but who do not see the industrial proletariat as the historical agent of this project. Their discourse is addressed to humanity as a whole (or to suffering humanity in particular). They might also be designated by the term “utopian socialists”, but this would be ambiguous since most forms of revolutionary Romanticism are utopian in the etymological sense of the word: the aspirations of not-yet existing society (utopia: in no place).¹⁴

However, we have certain reservations which must be pointed out if these definitions are to be accepted. Firstly, not all utopian socialists are romantics. For example Robert Owen’s socialism is not romantic since he was greatly inspired by the Enlightenment’s notion of progress.¹⁵ Nor are all socialisms of this era necessarily revolutionary. But more importantly there exists a great degree of confusion on what is meant by utopian, which Sayre and Lowy define simply as the creation of “imaginary models for a socialist alternative.”¹⁶ What is imaginary about them is not made clear, and no comprehensive definition is attempted. Nor does the very vague term of utopia seem essential to their definition. It is obvious that the term utopian is a vestige of the Marxist terminology which differentiates between scientific and utopian, i.e., between what is and

¹⁴ Sayre and Lowy, “Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism.”, p.61.

¹⁵ “Owen and Saint-Simon, for instance, are above all men of the enlightenment, favoring industry and progress.” Sayre and Lowy, “Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism.”, p.82. Unlike Sayre and Lowy we will hold in the next section that Saint-Simon can be considered to have broken with the enlightenment in the degree that he defended a romantic and expressive form of individualism.

¹⁶ Sayre and Lowy, “Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism.”, p.61.

what ought to be, kind of socialisms. However, the basis of this distinction in Marx, accepted by Sayre and Lowy does not seem adequate to us and will be challenged later in part one, chapter two. We will establish a dialogue between Fourier and Marx which will in turn serve to clarify the basis on which we will attempt to define Fourier's materialism. Hence, in order to avoid imprecision and confusion, we will refer to this group from now on simply as romantic socialists, leaving the unclear distinctions of revolutionary and utopian for later discussion.

c) periodization of Fourier's romantic socialism

Historically, romantic socialism was inaugurated in 1803 with the publication of Saint-Simon's first work: *Lettres d'un habitant de Genève à ses contemporains* and is primarily a French phenomenon.¹⁷ It was primarily in France that both romanticism and socialism were combined in the writings of Henri de Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier to imagine typically romantic social systems to emancipate humanity.¹⁸ This movement of

¹⁷ With two possible exceptions: 1. John Stuart Mill in the latter years of his life and with the publication of his treatise on Political Economy (1848) was influenced by French socialism. Certainly his philosophy is also fundamentally expressivist and his class theory is collaborationist. He was also greatly influenced by Coleridge and Wordsworth and considered his philosophy as a bridge between two centuries, that of the enlightenment and of the romantic. He also goes back to Epicurus to socialize utilitarianism. However, this would be a question of a continental influence on an English philosopher and his socialism would not have emanated from Anglo-Saxon philosophy proper. See Seth, James, English Philosophers and Schools of Philosophy. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1925, p.260, 2. Moses Hess the German pre-Marxian socialist in which Sayre and Lowy see as having "particularly in his youthful writings (1837-45)" developed a "political-messianic interpretation of history" leading to a "New Jerusalem" of equality on earth. However Hess is also greatly inspired, especially in The Sacred History of Humanity (1837) by French romantic socialism and in particular by that of Charles Fourier. Sayre and Lowy, "Figures of Romantic Anti-Capitalism.", p.82.

¹⁸ Alexandrian, Le socialisme romantique. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1979, p.9.

which Fourier is a central figure but which also includes many of Saint-Simonians and Fourierists such as Cabet, Enfantin, Leroux, and George Sand, lasted about fifty years from about 1803 until the coup d'état by Napoleon III and the fall of the second empire in 1851.¹⁹ It began clandestinely under the first empire, went into hiding with the restoration, and in 1830 and had enough support to take action and see some of its projects to fruition under the second empire of Louis-Phillippe. It finally began to lose its strength shortly after its apex in 1843 and with the failure of the revolutions that swept Europe in 1848.²⁰

The similarities and relationships between the two major figures of Henri de Saint-

¹⁹ In the history of socialism these authors often hold a prestigious but confused status. In Fourier's case socialist literature places him in the context of the development of the working class movement as a kind of anti-state sectarian tendency and as kind of missing link between liberalism and anti-state socialism, — this position first held by Charles Gide is simply reiterated in Halévy's work Histoire du socialisme européen. (1937) Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1974, p.89, in which we also find a continuing prejudice towards the utopians — or in the more orthodox Marxist way as a kind of petty bourgeois socialism.

²⁰ Specifically for Fourier the period between 1830 and 1848 (eighteen years) was particularly prolific and saw most of the Fourierist experiments, though according to Henri Louvancour, in De Henri de Saint-Simon à Charles Fourier: Étude sur le socialisme romantique français de 1830, Chartres: Imprimerie Durand, 1913, p.295-301, Fourier himself was not a very successful advocate for his own system, nor was he a capable propagandist. According to Louvancour the experiments were due mostly to two great disciples and energetic propagandist: Victor Considérant and Jules Lechevalier. The first effort inspired by them was undertaken by Theodor Diamant in Scaëni, Romania, and was finally dispersed after an armed conflict in 1835. The last of the experiments, approximately thirty in all, occurred in the United States from Massachusetts to Wisconsin. Also, the important French experiments dated from this time including the Colonie sociétaire de Condé-sur-Vesgre (1832-1834) and l'Union agricole de St-Denis du Sig (Algérie, 1846). In its last days Fourierism would make a brief comeback during the Paris Commune (1871) thanks to its transformation into an Anarchist sect by Joseph Déjacque. However, by 1848 it was being replaced by scientific socialism, which published one of its greatest works, The Communist Manifesto, that same year. Therefore, in total Fourierism can be said to have had a duration of approximately forty one years: from 1830 to 1871.

Simon and Charles Fourier which make them a common romantic socialist group are complex, and an extensive analysis of all of them is not the subject of this work. But nonetheless we judge that the similarities are more significant than their differences. Other than their prophetic geniuses, which some have branded as a form of irrational Christian mysticism or with a stunning lack of academic rigour, as a “folie”, or the fact that they were contemporaries, they have too much in common not to constitute a group apart from other socialists.²¹ The following examples of similarities seem sufficient to us: Firstly, they are both anti-capitalist but do not believe that any social organization which comes about by force is valid, though their theories are surely of a revolutionary nature and promise to radically change their existing societies. According to them a social order originating in violence could not have been born from the depths of human desire, since, much like Epicurus, these authors believe that it is always human nature to avoid violence and pain and that it is inhumane to impose it. This similarly led both of them to condemn the French

²¹ This position is first held by Ernest Seillère in Le mal romantique (1908) and is retaken though in a modified form by Louvancour in his De Henri de Saint-Simon à Charles Fourier: Étude sur le socialisme romantique français de 1830 (1913): “Deux influences surtout semblent s’être emparées à son insu de ses facultés mentales. Et d’abord la plus dominante, la plus universelle de toutes dans notre civilisation européenne, l’idée chrétienne, avec son finalisme providentiel et les attraites de son mysticisme attendri. C’est pourquoi Fourier a pu donner sans effort de son baroque système une confirmation tirée des Saintes-Évangiles, et démontrer que la cité harmonienne sera l’image exacte du royaume céleste...Le romantisme moral issu de Rousseau plonge d’ailleurs par quelques-unes de ces racines dans la mystique chrétienne.” Seillère, Ernest, Le mal romantique. Paris: Librairie Plon, 1908, pp.21-23.

Louvancour on the other hand places a more important role on his materialism: “Presque tous les commentateurs de Fourier ont parlé de son <<culte mystique de la liberté>>... Je crois quant à moi que Fourier n’a rien à envier au mysticisme des Saints-Simoniens les plus religieux; il est comme eux--et peut-être plus qu’eux-- un mystique du matérialisme.” Louvancour, De Henri de Saint-Simon à Charles Fourier: Étude sur le socialisme romantique français de 1830., p.412.

revolution for its violent ends and results. Secondly, their new social orders were to be applied spontaneously and emanate from the individual's desire for social progress and equality. Because of this they preached a form of class collaborationism, or of *harmonie* (a term used by Fourier). Therefore, both of their theories are non violent struggles for equality and change but also share the ultimate goal for this revolutionary change, i.e., to establish a social order in which ownership of property is extended and deemed essential for the exercise of the freedom of all. Thirdly, both preached a form of planetary consciousness or a form of universal internationalism. They claimed they spoke for the species and not a race, nation or a class, and they were greatly moved by a humanitarian spirit. Fourthly, they shared a social messianism based on a pantheistic theology that included a form of materialism or sensualism.²² This major trait was a emphasis on the passions over reason understood in the eighteenth century sense.

Fifthly, and most importantly, both theories justified a form of individualism which was based on the supremacy of the passions and of affectivity over reason.²³ Some have branded this as a form of *égotisme pathologique* inherited from the French materialists such as Diderot and Helvétius. On the contrary we will attempt to demonstrate that the latter constitutes, at least for Fourier, an expressive individualism, which is different than the monadic utilitarianism of the eighteenth century. Fourier will modify the passional and

²² Louvancour, De Henri de Saint-Simon à Charles Fourier: Étude sur le socialisme romantique français de 1830., p.428.

²³ Louvancour, De Henri de Saint-Simon à Charles Fourier: Étude sur le socialisme romantique français de 1830., p.429.

sensualist theory of human nature as a basis for his philosophy of labour.²⁴ These similarities can be considered sufficient proof of the existence of a school of French romantic socialists.²⁵

In conclusion to this periodization and historical definition, and as further indication of Fourier's romanticism, let us consider the words of the subject himself:

Malgré le soin que j'ai pris d'éviter la teinte romantique, tout semble féerie dans les tableaux de l'association; tout y est plus brillant que les féeries mêmes.²⁶

And:

Aimer le genre romantique, c'est aimer l'attraction passionnée et les magnificences qu'elle va créer sur le globe.²⁷

His only reservation toward romanticism was that as an artistic movement it overemphasized the beautiful and tended to forget the good. He brands this type of romanticism as *romanesques*. This mistake is what he identifies as *la leçon romantique*, a mistake he did not want to repeat, and in doing so pronounces himself in opposition to the definition of Sayre and Lowy as a revolutionary:

Nos romanciers ne sont que des romanesques; nous berçant de charme idéal à défaut de biens réels, ils oublient qu'on ne peut pas créer les féeries

²⁴ Seillère, Le mal romantique. 1908, p. 30-31. He also accuses Fourier of an <<égotisme pathologique>>.

²⁵ Alexandrian, Le socialisme romantique, p.26. and Louvancour, Henri De Henri de Saint-Simon à Charles Fourier: Étude sur le socialisme romantique français de 1830, p.428.

²⁶ Fourier, Charles, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier: L'unité universelle: Leçon romantique. Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1966, Tome II, p.173.

²⁷ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier: L'unité universelle: Leçon romantique, Tome II, p.173.

sans de grandes richesses et d'allier ainsi le bon avec le beau, en créant l'Attraction industrielle qui réaliserait toutes les féeries.²⁸

2) Literary Overview:

In the case of literature on Fourier three major branches have appropriated him in their own distinct and, in our opinion, unilateral ways. These include: the psychoanalytical, greatly inspired by Marcuse; the surrealist, inspired by André Breton; and the economic-determinist or later Marxian school inspired mostly by Engels, Lenin and Stalin. The last of these will be dealt with in more detail for the purposes of understanding and answering the background of the utopian stigma on Fourier and his project.

a) the Freudian perspective

The Freudian perspective spends a disproportionate time on Fourier's sexual theories. This is often an effort by various schools of psycho-analytical psychology and psycho-analytical political philosophy to appropriate Fourier as a kind of predecessor to their tradition or as an icon of sexual liberation. This is the case for Marcuse, who credits Fourier for having been the first to develop a complete system in which the libidinal forces of humanity were liberated. In this way Marcuse believes that Fourier was a kind of predecessor to Freud, even if the direct historical relationship between them seemed unlikely. In this light, Freud becomes an inheritor of a tradition, of a long-lasting European school of thought which also included le Marquis de Sade and Nietzsche. In Marcuse's *Eros and Civilisation* (1955), Fourier is also credited for having shown an

²⁸ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier: L'unité universelle: Leçon romantique., Tome II, p.174.

“interdependence of political freedom and sexuality”²⁹ as well as the “transformation of work into pleasure and non repressive sublimation.”³⁰ That Fourier proposes a model of sexual liberation is undeniable and only serves to illustrate and add to the far reaching genius of his work. However, no matter how important the sexual part of his work is, it remains compared to his more economic, philosophical and political writings, a quantitatively small part of his overall system of thought, which in our opinion still remains to be adequately examined. Through its emphasis the Freudian left inserts the expressivist philosophy of labour of Charles Fourier into a liberation of the eros project, forgetting the important industrial and organizational ramifications that his theory expounds.

b) the Surrealist perspective

The surrealist interpretation is perhaps the most kind to Fourier and is the most willing to accept his numerous idiosyncracies. In part this is because they see Fourier through artistic eyes, and his work as an *oeuvre* having emanated from the whims of his inspiration.³¹ According to this interpretation, the greatest contribution of Fourier was to have left to history a great work of imagination, a *chef d'oeuvre* of creation, which had at its core a complete understanding of the socialization of man:

La véritable valeur de son imagination est poétique et éclate dans

²⁹ “Fourier est celui des socialistes utopiques le plus près d’élucider le fait que la liberté dépend de la sublimation non-répressive.” Marcuse, Herbert, Eros et civilisation. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1963, p.200.

³⁰ Robinson, Paul A., The Freudian Left: Wilhelm Reich, Geza Roheim, Herbert Marcuse. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1969.

³¹ Jean Gaulmier in Breton, André, Ode à Charles Fourier. Paris: Éditions Fata Morgana, 1994, p.26.

l'évocation charmante qu'il fait de l'existence des hommes groupés en séries dans les phalanstères.³²

This positive outlook is due to the importance that the surrealist give to imagination. Imagination to the surrealists is of utmost importance, for it is what is in the imagination of men that tends to become real. What is considered real, i.e., what the surrealists call "*platement rationalisé*," is too often for them only what is habitual. In turn what is habitual often leads to a fatalism, a belief in men that things cannot change. But according to the surrealists, Fourier's imagination and its product stand as testaments of a profound questioning against the very sources of fatalism. He is therefore a great humanist:

Exactement comme elle le sera pour le surréalisme, l'imagination pour Fourier n'est pas la <<puissance trompeuse>> stigmatisée par Pascal, elle révèle la réalité. L'ordre combiné n'est pas une invention fallacieuse, mais une découverte qui éclaire tous les secrets de la Nature.³³

Secondly, the surrealist interpretation credits Fourier for having gone beyond the dualism of Christianity and having unified the pleasures of the flesh with the pleasures of the spirit. In this way Fourier made divine love concrete on earth. According to Gaulmier this led André Breton in *Ode à Charles Fourier* to accredit Fourier for having de-transcendentalized Christian Love, by making it physical, by having espoused a definition of happiness which consisted of having many passions and as many means to satisfy them as possible. This was at the same time for Breton a striking blow to "la sottise de l'ascétisme", which through its use of reason had tended to the denial of passion

³² Gaulmier in Breton, *Ode à Charles Fourier*, p.42.

³³ Gaulmier in Breton, *Ode à Charles Fourier*, p.29.

creativity and imagination.³⁴ Therefore, according to Breton, Fourier's definition of happiness leads him to oppose all supposedly "rational institutions" and "intellectuals" and to judge the minutest details of his society. This characteristic effectively constitutes what Breton labels as "*a refus global*." This in turn, according to the surrealist perspective, makes his vision, even at its strangest, an all penetrating, all encompassing and ultimately scientific vision.

Therefore, for Gaulmier and Breton, Fourier possessed all the needed characteristics to be one of the greatest surrealists of all time. For, he felt the need to profoundly modify the existing incoherence of his society and by doing so conquer life through a kind of "*révolte permanente*" against "*les apparences trompeuses*".³⁵ Furthermore, he is deemed also to possess a confidence in the ability of the imagination and its analogies to decipher the hypocrisy of social institutions and customs. Lastly, he held that desires and love were the only divine impulses in the world, which no supreme Being can transcend and which would eventually guide men to the *harmonie de unitéisme*.³⁶ This according to Gaulmier is what defines the surrealist project.

Finally, it must be remembered that unlike many interpretations, including those of his own disciples, the surrealist perspective respects both the content and style of Fourier's writings. Stylistically he is judged to have possessed an admirably intelligent irony, a vengeful humor, as well as highly creative phantasmagoric analogies, all of which they

³⁴ Gaulmier in Breton, *Ode à Charles Fourier*, p.25.

³⁵ Gaulmier in Breton, *Ode à Charles Fourier*, p.26.

³⁶ Gaulmier in Breton, *Ode à Charles Fourier*, p.49.

understand were influenced by romantic occult tendencies. These three stylistic tools are also deemed essential surrealist mediums.

However, the respect given to Fourier by the surrealist school, though admirable in its scope, starts with esthetic concerns and not the ethical concerns of political philosophy and hence, does not say much about the relevance of his social philosophy today. Nor does it question some of the fundamental pre-conceptions or prejudices on Fourier, like his supposed occultism and utopianism. Unfortunately, accepting Fourier with all his stylistic creativity often translates into accepting all the confused interpretations of his work. Replacing his insanity with his artistic genius unfortunately does not offer much to resuscitate his philosophy from its utopian grave. Finally and most importantly for our purposes, there is no attempt to understand in which way the philosophical content of Fourier's writings, and more specifically his philosophy of labour, reflect and contribute to the romantic worldview. The contribution of romanticism to his work is therefore limited mostly to esthetic considerations. Like the Freudian perspective which privileges a sexual understanding and not the theory's economic emancipation in its broadest sense, the surrealist approach is unilateral.

c) the reactionary perspective

The origin of the term utopian to describe the romantic socialists is double: One has its origin in the reactionary opponents of this theories such as restitutionists, conservative anti-capitalists; and the other has its origins in the socialisms that followed it, mostly Marxism.

Firstly, the narrow-minded reactionary critics, mostly restoration enthusiasts,

considered the romantic socialists utopians because their theories were deemed dangerous and impossible for the existing, though increasingly challenged class structures. They sought to isolate them through a stigma of utopianism, claiming they made ridiculous prescriptions for the society that went against the natural organic evolution of society. But when read in hindsight this criticism is not particularly convincing, for one finds in Fourier and Saint-Simon a startling amount of precision and predictive power. For example Saint-Simon predicted a trade agreement between Louis-Phillippe and Queen Victoria considered virtually impossible by the ruling class, and Fourier predicted innumerable social advances such as the creation of leisure activities, heightened life expectancy, certain modern cultural festivals, and industrial housing projects. His most famous prediction was the Napoleonic invasion of Prussia which put him in considerable trouble and explains in part why he was later ignored by the intelligentsia and hounded by the authorities.³⁷ It could also be said that the capitalism in which we live in today could be compared to what Fourier predicted would be the sixth stage of human history what he called the period of *garantisme* which should follow that of *civilisation*.³⁸ In fact when

³⁷ This prediction more than any, and his subsequent refusal of employment in the government as a kind of consultant on foreign affairs, placed the authorities, the intelligentsia, and its media against him. From then on his prophetic intellectual prowess was viewed as potentially dangerous to the state and denounced as “folie”. See Alexandrian, Le socialisme romantique, p.87.

³⁸ This is the position held by Gaston Isambert: “Il est probable que s’il pouvait revivre en 1900, le réformateur socialiste reconnaîtrait que nous sommes entrés sous certains rapports dans le *garantisme*. Il est vrai que les organismes sociaux qui servent d’intermédiaires aux autres, le commerce et la banque, dont il annonçait la disparition, sont plus florissants que jamais.” Isambert, Gaston, Les idées socialistes en France de 1815 à 1848. Paris: Éditeur Félix Alcan, 1905, p.133.

they are truly studied, these men show an impressive ability to read their times, and are the true originators of critical political economy, a trait that Marx, unlike the reactionaries, was in a much better position to appreciate.

Secondly, while labeling the romantic socialists utopian the reactionary romantics attempted to establish a relationship between the literature of utopians such as Thomas More and the writings of Saint-Simon and Fourier. But this comparison is tenuous at best, and the romantic socialists never claimed such writings as their heritage. It is clear according to Alexandrian that romantic socialist literature in its content and style has very little in common with the utopian tradition.³⁹ As Alexandrian points out these early

³⁹ According to Alexandrian in his Le socialisme romantique, it is the recurring mistake of having confused in these theories the qualitative, the form as an adjective “utopians” with the quantitative, i.e., the actual content of the writings as “utopias.” In doing so this has attached them to a literary movement which they clearly do not participate in. This particular mistake was partly a result of the energetic opposition and prejudice of reactionary romantics.

According to Alexandrian utopianism is a literary movement inspired mostly by a misinterpretation of Plato’s Republic. A utopia is a literary construct which serves to contrast the existing society with another which is considered mythical but which also may serve as a criticism of the existing society, literally in Greek *Utopia* means a place that does not exist and must be differentiated with *Eutopia* or a place of goodness. In Utopia (1516) Saint Thomas More criticized the existing administration of England, and strengthened the argument for Catholicism, by creating a mythical land of innocent savages. Inspired by the great Greek geographical novels and the discovery of the new world, More “discovered” a world which served as an antithesis to his existing prosecutory society. This work in turn inspired an entire literary movement through to the renaissance. In France seventeenth century *romans* usually consisted of Europeans discovering a new people with different customs which were viewed as less civilized but living in an ideal society. Sometimes these adventures were based on fact but mostly they were fiction. Examples in France include Denis Vairasse D’Alais’s Histoire de Sévarambes (1677) and in the eighteenth century writers such as de Morelly and Jean-Baptiste Say’s added such works as la Basiliade (1753) and Olbie (1799) to this tradition. However, this movement’s only long lasting contribution to political philosophy was the noble savage myth, which undeniably influenced Rousseau’s criticism of Hobbes theory of human nature. These novelists in France were seldom involved in social reform, though some

socialists were not novelists but “*poètes de l’économie politique*.”⁴⁰ They were social reformers who announced the coming social transformations through detailed economic analyses of the existing contradictions in their societies. They made reasonable predictions in forms of parables, using the tools of sarcasm and irony to captivate their reader ⁴¹ and their social orders were always considered, by themselves and by many others that followed them, as immanently possible, and as anything but mythical. In other words, they recognized the social question in its modern form as tied to new forms of production and distribution and in turn proposed solutions which reordered this distribution and production. The strength of their respective movements and the energy that went into the concrete application of both Saint-Simon and Fourier’s theories attest to this. This confidence in Fourier’s applicability is shown by the following quotes from the Fourierist press before Fourier’s death in *Le Phalanstère* and after in *La Phalange* (1840):

It is not an abstract theory that we come to teach, it is a foundation of which we will show the specifications. We bring fact to men avid for facts and realities... For us who believe ourselves in possession of a more advanced science, it is to experience and testing that we appeal immediately

exceptions like Jean-Baptiste Say participated in politics and was respected as a political economist. They preached a form of reformism but their political contribution to socialism is not significant. Say left his utopian writings to become one of France’s first bank administrators and according to Jonathan Beecher in The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, Boston: Beacon Press, 1971, p.125 in footnote 2, always remained faithful to the doctrines of Adam Smith and Ricardo. His most influential reform was to have attempted to encourage the love of work by creating a kind of precursor to the modern savings plan.

⁴⁰ Alexandrian, Le socialisme romantique., p.10.

⁴¹ Alexandrian, Le socialisme romantique., p.12.

and without any form of trial.⁴²

And:

We are not dreamers and utopians; because dreamers and utopians are those who search after results without having the means of reaching them, who want effects without causes. Now with us, the means and the causes are tied to the effects and to the results. Some Utopians!⁴³

Therefore, the reactionary criticism of the “probability” of the theories and of the insertion of these theories into a prior utopian literary tradition seems tenuous at best and probably stems from a misunderstanding and awe, if not a fear of the radical nature and growing strength of these movements amongst the lower classes and of their theories which seemed capable of questioning everything from the nature of God to sex, and sometimes in the same sentence.

d) the communist perspective

The communist interpretation also understands romantic socialism as a form of utopianism. But unlike the reactionary romantics, Marxism-Leninism as a socialism was in a better position to understand these theories and recognize its own debt to these earlier forms of socialism. However, at the same time it also recognized the competition that these theories represented to their “scientific” theory. The communist perspective of Marx and Engels reflects this knowledge by totally laying aside the reactionary stress on literary form and creating a more solid ground for their criticism, i.e., its content, mostly

⁴² Le Phalanstère, 1 June 1832, p.2-3, in Corcoran, Paul E., “Early French Socialism Reconsidered.” History of European Ideas. Vol.7, No.5, 1986. Toronto: Pergamon Press, 1986. Translation by Corcoran.

⁴³ La Phalange, 9 année, t.1, 2, septembre, 1840, pp.22-33, in Corcoran, Paul E., “Early French Socialism Reconsidered.” History of European Ideas. Vol.7, No.5. Translation by Corcoran.

its revolutionary theory.⁴⁴ Though it is also surprising to note that the two arguments, i.e., the reactionary and the later communist have very much the same outcome.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Like other centuries opponents to social progress would arise to defend the old world and its class structures. These theorists are also romantics; therefore, it is important to differentiate between these opposing trends of romanticism, i.e., what we will call the reactionary and the revolutionary. This distinction between reactionary and revolutionary elements is theorized by George Lukacs. The distinction is relatively clear because by defending the old order the reactionary romantics are opposed to the new trend of French socialist romanticism, identified above. In doing so, they in turn justify dubious abstract political communities: including fictitious organic historical communities, races, pure language communities, and medieval supernatural notions of nobility, which Lukacs identified in his Destruction of Reason (1962) as the predecessors and originators of Gobineau's racial theory, and of fascism and of Nazism respectively:

Only organic growth, that is to say change through small and gradual reforms with the consent of the ruling class, was regarded as a natural principle, whereas every revolutionary upheaval received the dismissive tag of contrary to nature. This view gained a particularly extensive form in the course of the development of reactionary German romanticism.

Lukacs, Georg, The Destruction of Reason. Translated by Peter Palmer. London: The Merlin Press, 1980, p.667.

This movement was strongest in Germany but in no way limited to there. Amongst these German Romantic reactionaries Xavier Léon, in Fichte et son temps. Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1959, p.440-457, identifies Schlegel which perhaps better than anyone exemplifies all the characteristics of irrational reactionary romanticism including the superiority of the German language and race and a defense of a fictitious historical community in his willingness to return to a centralized Holy Roman Catholic Empire, a kind of second Reich and whose theory went as far as to include an *apologia* of the crusades. It is also interesting to note that Fichte is an exception and cannot be included in these reactionaries. In part because much like Fourier he defends the right to work, but also because his theory opposed this very reactionary conception of the German nation in favor of a more universal understanding of humanity. According to Lukacs in no way can these two schools of romanticism, i.e., the revolutionary and reactionary be confused. The major difference therefore would be that the reactionary school conceives things organically whereas the revolutionary does not.

⁴⁵ They both essentially rest on a "realism" or "probability" thesis. For Marx it is Fourier's class collaborationism which was seen as contradictory to the needs of the working class as the universal class of humanity and to the advent of socialism as a dialectical solution to the objective contradictions emanating from capitalism and to the movement of history. Therefore, according to Marx, Fourier mistook the real movement of history and proposed a solution counter to the objective conditions emanating from

The communist perspective both limited and appropriated romantic socialism.

Consider the following passage written by Engels sometime between January and the first half of March 1880:

One thing is common to all three (i.e., Fourier, Saint-Simon and Owen). Not one of them appears as a representative of the interests of that proletariat which historical development had, in the mean time, produced. Like the French philosophers, they do not claim to emancipate a particular class to begin with, but all humanity at once. Like them, they wish to bring in the kingdom of reason and eternal justice, but this kingdom, as they see it, is as far as heaven from earth, from that of the French philosophers.⁴⁶

This quotation from Socialism: Utopian and Scientific exemplifies the way in which the later development of scientific socialism and the communist movement, by far the most widespread and influential form of the twentieth century, contributed to the relative lack of serious philosophical interest in the socialist prophets of France in the early nineteenth century. In positing the utopians as being part of an evolutionary progression of the working class movement and its history to its full practical revolutionary and “scientific” maturity, Engels placed what he called the French utopian socialists within their specific contexts, explaining that their individual philosophies and projects did not escape the existing material conditions of their societies. In this way Fourier’s but also Saint-Simon’s and Owen’s philosophies are historically imprisoned in the pre-industrial bourgeois phase of capitalist development and are only made useful in the way in which

capitalism. Whereas, the reactionaries believed that Fourier’s solutions were counter to the existing order of things especially class and gender distinctions and therefore unrealistic and hence unnatural and improbable.

⁴⁶ Marx, K. and F. Engels, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific in Selected Works Vol.3. Progress: Moscow, 1977, p.117.

they contribute to the three components of scientific socialism, i.e., English political economy, German philosophy and French political action. This position is reiterated by Lenin. In *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism* (1913), he writes:

Early socialism however was utopian socialism. It criticized capitalist society, it condemned it and damned it, it dreamed of its destruction, it had visions of a better order and endeavored to convince the rich of the immorality of exploitation. But utopian socialism could not indicate the real solution. It could not explain the real nature of wage-slavery under capitalism, it could not reveal the laws of capitalist development, or show what social force is capable of becoming the creator of a new society.⁴⁷

In this way the communist movement limited the French “utopian” school’s contribution in the movement of history to a uniquely political role. Fourier specifically is not important so much as a political economist, even though Marx himself admitted that his analysis of early markets was of historical significance and depth, nor as a philosopher, since no philosopher is important other than Hegel, but only as an activist. His importance lies only in the way in which he contributed to the struggle for social equality. Furthermore, this is to limit Fourier’s contribution to a direct contribution to scientific socialism. Within this restricted field Fourier was further restricted to one significant achievement, which was according to Engels to have proposed the idea that the ultimate aim of a more just society was to abolish the existing distribution of wealth and the mode of production which supported it, by a new organization of work in which the right to work was guaranteed.⁴⁸ Therefore, in the historical process from capitalism to socialism,

⁴⁷ Lenin, V.I., Selected Works: In one volume. New York: International Publishers, 1980, p.23.

⁴⁸ Dangeville, Roger, in Marx, K. and Engels, F. Utopisme et communauté de l’avenir. Paris: Maspero, 1976, p.13. In the footnote.

Fourier sheds light on the process towards and nature of a classless society. However, credit is due to him for suggesting only the idea of an alternative organization. Albeit this is a very important recognition, it does not give credit to Fourier for the alternatives that he proposed himself, which we must remember remained nonetheless for Marx “humorously infantile and thoroughly eccentric fabrications.”⁴⁹ And although it could be argued, as Roger Dangeville does in his introduction to his *Les utopistes* (1976), that Marx may have been harmonizing German philosophy with French socialism, this possibility does not however save the philosophies of labour espoused by these supposed utopians from the abyss of history.⁵⁰ In fact the stunning lack of analysis on the utopian socialist philosophy of labour by the vast communist and socialist literature and movements of the twentieth century is evidence of the predominance of scientific socialism’s theory of labour and explains history’s and philosophy’s current judgment. René Schérer similarly concludes for Fourier:

Lorsque l’on a classé Fourier parmi les utopistes, il semble que l’on ait tout dit; on lui accorde une place qui permet de l’ignorer; on le rejette dans la préhistoire du socialisme, qui ne commence qu’avec le socialisme scientifique, c’est-à-dire avec la découverte des lois de la lutte des classes et de la production capitaliste.⁵¹

3) Hypothesis:

It is not a goal of this work to deny Fourier as a contributor to two of the greatest

⁴⁹ Marx, K., *Grundrisse* in Lenin, V.I., *Selected Works: In one volume*. New York: International Publishers, 1980, p.14, in the footnote.

⁵⁰ Dangeville, *Utopisme et communauté de l’avenir*, p.14.

⁵¹ René, Schérer, “Fourier ou l’écart absolu” in Charles Fourier, *L’attraction passionnée*. Hollande: Jean Jacques Pauvert, 1967, p.10.

schools of human thought of the late part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, i.e., scientific socialism, and psychoanalysis, as well as one of the greatest artistic and literary movements of the last century, i.e., surrealism, but on the contrary, the purpose is to add to these interpretations and give credit where credit is long overdue for what, in our opinion, Fourier truly sought to do for humanity. Above all else, we believe he sought to theorize a philosophy of labour which aimed to liberate humanity from uncreative and alienating forms and organizations of work. Therefore, it will be shown that the root of Fourier's socialism is in a romantic expressivist passionate theory of labour which proposes, first, an understanding of subjectivity and subjective action, and, secondly, an ethical and radical reordering of the intersubjective structures and relations of society. In so doing we will defend Fourier against Marx's stigma of utopianism, while proving that Fourier is a concrete revolutionary. To do this we will place him in his political and philosophical context. In doing so, we hope to prove that Fourier's philosophy of labour is greatly influenced by romanticism using the following criteria: 1. Sensualism (Materialism), because his materialism accepts a passionate philosophy which is based on sensual experience as the only true evidence for reality. 2. Subjectivism (Expressivism), because this sensual nature constitutes the nature of man, and life is understood as an expressive and esthetic creative process. 3. Collectivism (Social Estheticism), because this individual is inserted into a collective esthetic project based on this sensual nature. In this way Fourier's political philosophy as a whole is a reflection of the penetration into all spheres of society, including the political and economic, of the romantic outlook. Additionally, we will hold that Fourier's philosophy of labour is a kind of radical romanticism, i.e., a

synthesis of the economic, political, and esthetic concerns of the romantic century and their application to the objective world. In this way and according to the criteria established by Lukacs, Sayre and Lowy, Fourier's philosophy is, after the experiences of the French revolution, a revolutionary and romantic will to create a new concrete society on this new basis and to reinsert the individual into a community. Therefore, Fourier's communism is a revolutionary theory for the esthetic transformation of the world. Briefly, Fourier is a romantic because he shares with his contemporaries three essential features: sensualism, expressivism, and collectivism.

Three questions have led us to this hypothesis: Historically, might it be possible by understanding through Fourier the root and nature of early forms of socialist philosophy of labour, to contribute to an overall understanding of the character of socialism today and in the last century, including Marxism? Secondly and theoretically, is it possible that this early socialist philosophy of labour found in Fourier's work might have the key to solving the problems of hitherto existing "real socialisms," which we understand mainly as having misunderstood the complexity and creative nature of human desires, needs and passions and of misunderstanding the nature of human subjectivity and its relations to the species and to nature, and of imposing alienating political and organizational forms of work arising from such misunderstandings? These misunderstandings were due in part to the "reductionist," would-be scientific model of Russian Marxism, developed from the later writings of Engels by Kautsky, Plekhanov and Stalin. However, roots of this one sided view can also be found in Marx when he establishes a clear distinction between the realms of necessity and creativity in *Capital*. The third and final question was of a more practical

nature. In consideration of Marx's discovery that the productive forces of capitalism have laid the economic and social basis for a probable historical change towards a socialist society; and in light of the current vastness of productive forces created by neo-colonialism and imperialism, and the negative effects of the global market, which empirically are so advanced that humanity could readily fulfill the basic needs of all, would it not be important then to flesh out the moral character and intersubjective nature of any future revolutionary socialist movements and/or revolutionary socialist models for society? If so, would this not also oblige us to take a long look at what was traditionally viewed as utopian systems in order to find a more equitable basis for future socialist societies?

Chapter II: Definition of Fourier' Expressive Romantic and Sensualist Philosophy of Labour: an Answer to Marx

1) Criterion 1 Extensions Into Reality (Materialism)

According to Jacques Barzun in his *Romanticism and the Modern Ego* (1943), romanticism would constitute a kind of neo-epicurean materialism, a kind of extension of the notion of reality from that of the enlightenment century.⁵² Because it is also a century of positivism, the romantics, much like Epicurus and the French materialists, believed that: "what is real is what can be felt."⁵³ According to Barzun, early French romanticism is a new definition of reality based on the intuition of the senses inherited by the French materialists, a reality which will be argued is shared by Fourier. In this way Fourier's project would be indebted to an earlier philosophical tradition. It is precisely this relationship between Fourier and French materialism which is involved in Marx's criticism of Fourier. In assessing Marx's judgement it is important to clarify the differences between Fourier's materialism and the claims of Marx. This will permit us at the same time to introduce Fourier's passional sensual teleology which is essential to an understanding of his romanticism. Through this dialogue with Marx we will argue: 1. That Fourier's philosophy of labour cannot be construed as the same as that of the French Materialists, namely as a form of monadic utilitarian atomism because he does not share the French enlightenment account of labour as a means of appropriation, not of

⁵² Barzun, Jacques, Romanticism and the Modern Ego. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1943, p.93.

⁵³ Marx, Karl, Doctoral Dissertation in Collected Works: Vol.1, International Publishers, 1975, p.32.

transformation, nor the view that the individual and his passions are essentially passive towards nature. 2. That there exists an irreconcilable difference between the later Marx and Fourier on the relationship between man and nature. 3. That it is not correct to see Fourier as having misunderstood the development of history or as having posited man outside of a historical process. Quite the contrary, we will argue that Fourier understood man as an actor in history, but a history conceived differently from that of Marx, with a different relationship between the individual and the species and nature. Therefore, we will argue fundamentally that the difference between Marx and Fourier lies between two opposing yet “acting” teleologies of man, one rationally expressive, the other passionately expressive, but both arising from materialism.

a) Marx, Fourier and materialism (first argument)

Marx’s criticisms of what he called early communism can be said to have their basis in his doctoral thesis. In his thesis Marx prefers the Epicurean chaotic atomistic declination theory to that of Democritus, in which it is held that all atoms followed the same uniform declination. Because of this uniform declination Democritus’ account seems problematic to Marx because it precluded the possibility of intervention into the natural process and so left no scope for human freedom. Through this analysis of Democritian atomistic theory coupled with a study of Hegel’s philosophy Marx derived the importance of reason, consciousness and subjectivity.⁵⁴ This is reflected within his materialism

⁵⁴ For a more detailed discussion of Marx’s model its evolution and its relationship to Hegel and German Idealism see Moggach, Douglas “Marx and German Idealism: Labour and the Transcendental Synthesis,” History of European Ideas, Vol.19, Nos 1-3, 1994, p.137-143.

developed further in the *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845):

The chief effect of all hitherto existing materialism, that of Feuerbach included, is that the thing [Gegenstand], reality sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of object [Objekt] or of contemplation [Anschauung], but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively.⁵⁵

Marx also develops this point further in the *German Ideology* (1845). He writes in opposition to Feuerbach that he:

Does not see how the sensuous world around him is, not a thing given direct from all eternity, remaining ever the same, but the product of industry and of the state of society; and, indeed, in the sense that it is a historical product, the result of the activity of a whole succession of generations, each standing on the shoulders of the preceding one, developing its industry and its intercourse, modifying its social system according to the changed needs.⁵⁶

and:

For instance the important question of the relation of man to nature (Bruno goes so far as to speak of “the antitheses in Nature and History,” as though these were two separate “things” and man did not always have before him an historical nature and a natural history), out of which all the “unfathomable lofty works” on “substance” and “self-consciousness” were born, crumbles of itself when we understand that the celebrated “unity of man with nature” has always existed in industry and has existed in varying forms in every epoch according to the lesser or greater development of industry, just like the “struggle” of man with nature, right up to the development of his productive powers on a corresponding basis. Industry and commerce, production and exchange of the necessities of life, themselves determine distribution, the structure of the different social classes and are, in turn, determined, by it as to the mode in which they are carried on; and so it happens that in Manchester, for instance, Feuerbach sees only factories and machines, where a hundred years ago only spinning-wheels and weaving-looms were to be seen, or in the Campagna of Rome he finds only pasture lands and swamps, where in the time of Augustus he

⁵⁵ Marx, and Engels, *Theses on Feuerbach*, in *Selected Works Vol.2*, p.13.

⁵⁶ Marx and Engels, *Theses on Feuerbach*, in *Selected Works Vol.2*, p.28.

would have found nothing but vineyards and villas of Roman capitalists.⁵⁷

It is on the basis of this condemnation of all hitherto existing materialisms that Marx criticizes the French materialists and what he calls the utopian communists, i.e., whom we have identified as the romantic socialists. This is pointed out by Marx in the following comments on Fourier's participation in the project of the French materialists:

As Cartesian materialism merges into natural science proper, the other branch of French materialism leads direct to socialism and communism. There is no need of any great penetration to see from the teaching of materialism on the original goodness and equal intellectual endowment of man, the omnipotence of experience, habit and education, and the influence of the environment on man, the great significance of industry, the justification of enjoyment, etc., how necessarily materialism is connected with communism and socialism.⁵⁸

In this way Marx shows how Fourier's socialism is an extension of French philosophy and French materialism in particular. He compares Fourier to Helvétius: "Fourier proceeds immediately from the teaching of the French Materialists,"⁵⁹ who is in turn greatly indebted to LaMettrie, whom we will discuss shortly.

Though it is true as Marx pointed out that we find notions in Helvétius that we find in Fourier such as: the natural equality of human intelligence, the unity of progress of reason and progress of industry, the natural goodness of man and the omnipotence of

⁵⁷ Marx and Engels, Theses on Feuerbach, in Selected Works Vol.2, p.28.

⁵⁸ Marx, Karl and Engels F., The Holy Family in Selsam Howard et Martel Harry Reader in Marxist Philosophy. New York: International Publishers, 1987, p.60-61. Note that Marx and Engels here are talking about pre-Marxian socialism.

⁵⁹ Marx, Karl and Engels F., The Holy Family in Selsam, and Martel, Reader in Marxist Philosophy, p.60

education,⁶⁰ these are not at the basis of their similarities. According to Marx, what makes them most similar is that they both share the same epistemology, i.e., they both believe that man draws all his knowledge through the reflective senses, from social relations and the objective world. However, in doing so Marx is also saying that Fourier's theory of subjectivity shares the essentially passive and atomistic one of the French materialists.

This connection is also revealed by other critics at the time, who were ready to point out the same weakness but for quite different reasons. In his *Histoire de la philosophie en France au XIXe siècle: Socialisme, Naturalisme et Positivism* (1882) M. Ferraz professor of philosophy at *La faculté des lettres de Lyon* is clear to point out that socialism suffers from the failings of French materialism's *naturalisme*:

Le socialisme de notre siècle se rattache étroitement au naturalisme, qui lui fournit ses principes, et au positivisme, qui n'en est qu'une transformation.⁶¹

And:

Cette philosophie a ses racines dans les doctrines psychologiques et sociales du siècle précédent... Sa psychologie est tout entière dans les principes condillaciens, que toutes nos idées dérivent de la sensation, ou plutôt ne sont que la sensation elle-même envisagée sous une autre forme, et qu'il n'y a primitivement en nous aucun élément actif et rationnel.⁶²

Specifically on Fourier, Ferraz has only this to add, which does not break

⁶⁰ Marx, Karl and Engels F., The Holy Family in Selsam, and Martel, Reader in Marxist Philosophy, p.60.

⁶¹ Ferraz, M., Histoire de la philosophie en France au XIXe siècle: Socialisme Naturalisme et Positivism, Paris: Librairie académique, 1882, p.xxii.

⁶² Ferraz, Histoire de la philosophie en France au XIXe siècle: Socialisme Naturalisme et Positivism, p.xxiii.

significantly with Marx's viewpoint:

Le défaut que nous signalons ici dans le système fouriériste est celui de tout naturalisme, de tout sensualisme conséquent. L'auteur tend, sans oser affirmer nettement cette tendance, à expliquer l'homme par la nature, la vie intellectuelle et morale par la vie sensible, et la vie sensible elle-même par le pur mécanisme: en un mot, le supérieur par l'inférieur, le plus par le moins, l'être par le non-être, ce qui est absurde.⁶³

Contrary to these two thinkers, one a socialist the other and anti-socialist, we will hold that Fourier's theory is significantly different from that of the French materialists including Helvétius' atomistic form of materialism. We will argue in the following comparison that it is a changed form of sensualism because of its romanticism, for it involves an active expressive theory of subjectivity. This fundamental difference in turn is what constitutes the core of Fourier's romanticism in his philosophy of labour. We will do this by putting Fourier into the philosophical context of the evolution of French materialism and ethics in order to show in which way he breaks with its evolution.

b) the French materialist tradition

French materialism, or as it was called in the eighteenth century sensualism starts with the introduction of Locke's writings in France through Voltaire. Locke as an empiricist believed that all knowledge started with perception. However, Locke, unlike the materialists that would follow him, retained within his philosophy many remnants of rationalism. Because of this Locke did not push his sensualist epistemology to its radical ethical and educational conclusion. Locke kept the mind, not just the senses, involved in

⁶³ Ferraz, Histoire de la philosophie en France au XIXe siècle: Socialisme Naturalisme et Positivisme., p.101.

knowledge. For the basis of what is true, according to Locke, is its conceivability.⁶⁴ To support his claim Locke makes a distinction between perception and sensation. This distinction is also reflected in his ethical and educational teachings. For Locke the importance of education, for example, is to charge the individual student with a desirable sensual content. However, and though in these teachings the importance of sensualism is revealed in the elaboration of his pleasure-pain principle the importance of the environment in the principle also has its limits. Therefore, for Locke restraints to this hedonism are necessary and he is at times a disciplinarian and a social-realist.⁶⁵ Because of this the individual's free will is found in a pre-existing potentiality, or what is defined as an ability to perceive the ethical limits of his hedonistic tendencies. Therefore, the pleasure and pain principle is controlled by an active moral and rational mind.

In Voltaire, imagination will serve the same purpose as perception in Locke's thought. For Voltaire imagination is the active subjective faculty which joins combination and reflection to memory. Voltaire assumes that imagination is the existence of an individual original power of the mind which he calls the faculty of psychology, which is over and above the physical being and its senses. Again the hedonistic deterministic consequences of the sensationalist philosophy are kept in check. Interestingly enough -- and this we will see later is an undeniable influence on Fourier--, Voltaire believed that

⁶⁴ Grossman, Mordecai, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism. New York City: Bureau of Publications Columbia University, 1926, p.56.

⁶⁵ Grossman, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism, p.60.

the origin of the common sense of the pleasure pain principle was divine:

However, Voltaire does not stay on this level of consistency. At times he speaks of God having given men “that good sense which is the instinct of man and on which the law of nature is founded.”⁶⁶

However it is with LaMettrie that French sensualism is first epistemologically radicalized. LaMettrie reduces Locke’s distinction between perception and sensation and Voltaire’s imagination, to simple sensation. He does this by giving ultimate importance to one faculty, i.e., the imagination. For LaMettrie everything is the work of the imagination and all the faculties including judgement, reason, memory are not absolute parts of soul but can be reduced to pure imagining, which ultimately arises from sensation. However, ethically LaMettrie does not deduce logically from this that we are simple hedonistic products of our environment. There remains for him something else which is unexplainable, an original feeling of respect which does not have its origin in self seeking motives but in natural law. This original respect for the others is what keeps our social fabric together.

Later for Condillac man becomes possessed of a completely blank spiritual soul whose purpose unlike Descartes is primarily sensual. The body fills the soul with experience which in turn transforms the soul itself. Therefore, the soul is a passive participant in the sensing of objects, and the generation of faculties comes from the single power of sensation. This is a much greater radicalization than all previous sensationalists, because except for the common sense notion of the existence of external objects, and the

⁶⁶ Voltaire in Grossman, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism., p.65.

possession of a sensing soul, the sensationalism of Condillac denies all pre-existing active original faculties, mental contents, and sentiments.⁶⁷ Therefore, ethically and educationally life is conceptualized as the art of observing. History then is logically the preferred subject of education because it is the study of the life of persons and the factors that created them, the study of others observing and receiving.

Therefore, man slowly becomes with the evolution of epistemological materialism completely conceived as a passive receptor or observer. He is slowly emptied of original content. With Locke, materialism starts from an active subjective component, but evolves in France to a determined objective observer. Individuality becomes an afterthought or an effect. This is reflected by the differing degrees of active agency in the writings of Locke, Voltaire, LaMettrie and Condillac. This has an obvious ethical impact. Sensationalism logically develops in a form of atomism because the universe and man are not integrated, but radically apart. But with the French materialists the integration only comes latter through the mind, perception, imagination, observation, etc... Therefore, there is a separation between men and objects and man and nature, a separation which Hegel and Marx united in their differing yet similar dialectical systems. This original separation also leads to a separation between men. Socially it means that men are exclusive individuals. Being completely passive towards the environment also implies being passive toward others as other objects existing in a sensual world. Therefore, the individual does things not because he has an instinct towards altruism but because of the effect of the action on

⁶⁷ Grossman, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism., p.66.

him as an individual and on his sensations of pleasure. The relationship between men becomes instrumental, men are seen by other men as means to greater or lesser sensation, i.e., a source of pleasure or pain.

However, because it assumes that the content of consciousness comes from the outside, the effect of the environment on our senses, this evolution of materialism also has the potential to promise control of these negative factors and the realization of our earthly ends desires and needs. In this capacity it shows itself to be compatible with socialism. Education, legislation, etc., become important instruments of progress because they can control the negative effects of the environment and our potential for happiness.⁶⁸ This explains in part why materialistic socialism has always espoused a form of positive liberty. Interestingly enough this also points to the potential of harmonization between man and his environment.

c) Fourier and Helvétius' materialism

However, amongst all the sensationalists, Helvétius probably serves as the best example of the apex of this slowly evolving sensualism and atomism and of its ethical radicalization. Now that we have laid the foundation for our differentiation between Fourier and the French sensualists let us now pass to a closer comparison between Helvétius as an example of the *suite logique et éthique* of this radical sensationalism and Fourier, to see in which way he will, while keeping its emphasis on sensing, break with the entire school, by coming back to an active subjective factor. He will thus fill the

⁶⁸ Grossman, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism., p.75.

epistemological, ethical and collectivist void caused by the evolution of French materialism.

As we have stated, before Helvétius follows the logical conclusion of Locke's original sensual epistemology in that for Helvétius the human mind is entirely the product of the environment. This epistemology was first outlined in his *De l'Esprit* in 1758. In this work Helvétius shows in which way the environment is the variable active factor in the making and changing of the human mind, whereas, the constant factor and passive factor, i.e., the extent of the initial self, is what Helvétius calls the soul. The mind is in turn, for Helvétius, the sum total of all the modifications of the soul caused by the varying and active factors of the environment. Therein, it is conceivable that the soul can exist without the mind. The soul is the constant, but the mind is the variable. However, unlike Condillac the soul in *De l'Esprit* is not an entity separate from the body, and sensitivity itself is a property of the organization of matter. In this way there is no distinction in Helvétius between men and animals. The human soul like all animals is sensation. The difference, and why men have advanced further, is a simple difference in the gross structure of the human body and not just the structure of the human mind.⁶⁹ According to Helvétius this difference in gross physical structure, especially our hands, has allowed us to take more advantage of our sensitivity than other animals. Helvétius therefore denies that brain structure, or that of a specific organ, or faculty thereof, of the human body results in the inequality of men. As long as we are born normal we are sensually equal. The soul then is

⁶⁹ Grossman, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism., p.75.

the potential power of the organism, not of a given organ. The function of that overall organism in turn is the passive observation of things that go on about it. Therefore, the soul embraces all the differing faculties which are really only the same faculty under different conditions, i.e., sensations within the human body. They are only aspects of the same activity. According to Grossman because sensation is the only power and constant and plentiful in everybody, then education, defined as access to sensorial stimuli, becomes the all powerful molding tool of human behavior for Helvétius. Fourier's definition of education, as the constant a varied access to a variety of sensous experiences, will not radically break with this notion.

For Helvétius every object the soul perceives leaves a trace which becomes part of the mind. This impression results directly in the passions and explains their variety in individuals, since not all individuals have had the same sensational experiences. That is, at first the soul is passive but once it acquires traces, the mind then becomes active, in that it will seek what the soul desires:

The self of sensationalistic philosophy that thus exists over and above experience, unlike the self of Descartes, is not endowed with any original activity. It is blank. It does not reach out to the outer world. Its only property is receptiveness of an impression whereby it is modified. Only after having been outwardly modified in a certain way does it become active, searching for contacts with the outer world. Passivity as the real quality of man, is one of the main assumptions of sensationalism.⁷⁰

The passions are therefore environmentally conditioned. In his posthumous work

⁷⁰ Grossman, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism., p.73.

De l'Homme (1771), Helvétius calls this eventual “aggressive outreaching”, self-love.⁷¹

Accordingly, all the resulting passions come from self-love. The soul learns as objects are imposed on it to love those particular objects which bring pleasure and to hate those particular objects that bring pain. The individual then learns to love his pleasure and to hate his pain. The origins of preference are therefore the result of what objects the soul has first come into contact with, which brought it pleasure, similarly with the aversions.

Therefore, the Helvétian genealogy of the passions progresses:

sensibility–self-love–desire for happiness–desire for the power of
acquisition–passions⁷²

Society in turn is explained as an affect of this genealogy. In *De l'Homme* we find men are closed entities, distinct from everything else and everyone else. It is in the interest of the individual in acquiring his passions to form a society. The seemingly altruistic passion of friendship is nothing to Helvétius but the love of one's own pleasure. Any notion of disinterested friendship is either hypocrisy or self-delusion.⁷³ Therefore, ethically the individual is profoundly atomistic.

Genius according to Grossman can similarly be explained. It is the effect of culture and the environment that surrounds one individual. This definition of genius is also found in Helvétius' posthumous work *De l'Homme*. It is according to Helvétius, by chance that

⁷¹ Grossman, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism., p.73.

⁷² Helvétius in Grossman, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism., p.85.

⁷³ Helvétius in Grossman, The Philosophy of Helvétius: with special emphasis on the educational implications of sensationalism., p.86.

all those elements combined to create a genius or invention. However, this new creation is not ex-nihilo. Art and invention come from somewhere, they are historically created and much of the culture attributed to genius is actually due to culture itself, i.e., to the environment by which genius is surrounded. In turn the definition of a genius is determined by the environment's capacity to develop passions in individuals. Genius is a reflection. According to Helvétius the man of genius is a man of strong passions. The passions in turn should make us rise to highest attainment of morality. Fourier, as will be seen next will share much of this definition of genius.

d) Fourier, Newton and the theory of passionate attraction as a deistic sensualism

Fourier is at the same time more radical in his sensualism than Helvétius and the French materialist school and more social. He is much more willing to organize the world on the basis of Man's sensations, and unlike Locke and Voltaire, Fourier does not believe that any restraints on the passions are necessary. This is so because of his metaphysical positions, and this is what differentiates Fourier from all the materialists or sensualists before him and what most commentators seem to have forgotten. Fourier is profoundly a deist and a Newtonian:

Je reconnus bientôt que les lois de l'attraction passionnée étaient en tout point conformes à celles de l'attraction matérielle; expliquée par Newton et Leibniz; et qu'il y avait unité du système de mouvement pour le monde matériel et spirituel.⁷⁴

To him the Newtonian universe as perfectly harmonious was itself a proof of the existence of an infinitely wise creator and of the "practicality" of His plans. Passions for

⁷⁴ Fourier, L'attraction passionnée, p.52.

Fourier are defined as:

Toutes ces forces intimes, inclinations, instincts, désirs qui portent notre activité vers un but déterminé.⁷⁵

But these passionnal laws created by God are not rationally determined or the consequence of experience, as in Helvétius, but are given. God chose attraction as the social law of men and therefore suitably gave individual men common and differing passions:

Only God is invested with power to distribute attraction. He wishes to guide his universe and its creatures by attraction alone.⁷⁶

This divine mechanism of the passions Fourier calls the law of passionate attraction. It is based on the Newtonian attraction repulsion physics and, like gravity, can be understood by man. But unlike the duality of matter the law of God decreed for men is attraction alone and therefore “it is by the study of attraction that we must seek the divine social code.”⁷⁷ Unlike the laws of the natural world all human laws and passions, even those that lead to competition between men, tend according to Fourier to social harmony. God as revealed by Christ and Fourier wants men to live in peace and harmony. The study of the law of passionate attraction and its resulting social structures is therefore the study of God’s divine plan.

Unlike Helvétius, Fourier claims the passions are given to man before the body

⁷⁵ Isambert, Les idées socialistes en France: de 1815 à 1848., p.127.

⁷⁶ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome III, p.14-16, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles, p.275.

⁷⁷ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome III, p.111-115 translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.210.

actually senses. They are a priori and are the content of the individual soul. The body in turn is only a partial origin for the passions, because the passions are not only physical. Unlike Helvétius', Fourier's man is not a clean slate. The gross organism is not the only canvas for sensation. The soul possesses at the same time, physical, social and metaphysical passions. The degree to which God gave them individually to man constitutes the differences between men:

Passionate attraction is the drive given to us by nature prior to any reflection; it is present despite the opposition of reason, duty and prejudice, etc...⁷⁸

In this way the environment, education and morality become the enemies or the allies of the individual's soul, not its creators:

All these philosophical whims, which are called duties, have no relationship with nature. Duty comes from men; attraction comes from God; and to understand the designs of God it is necessary to study attraction, nature itself without reference to duty.⁷⁹

And:

The moralists are even more ridiculous in their opinions about love to be ruled by constancy and fidelity, which are so incompatible with the designs of nature and so worrisome to both sexes that no creature remains constant when he enjoys complete liberty.⁸⁰

The passions in turn must be transformed to permit the full almost chaotic

⁷⁸ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.47-51, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.216.

⁷⁹ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome I, p.72, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.216.

⁸⁰ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome I, p.72, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.216.

expression of our souls. Some of these passions given are physically given by God, and they are the passions linked to our five senses: taste, touch, sight, hearing, smell. However, other equally divine passions come only through God and the soul. They include what Fourier calls the affective and mechanizing /distributing passions. Together these constitute the social and metaphysical passions that all men possess to differing degrees and which bring man to form groups and perform acts of social and divine harmony. They include the four affective passions: friendship, ambition, love and familism, and the mechanizing/distributive passions: the cabalist, the butterfly and the composit, with which we will deal later when we shall explain Fourier's intersubjectivity and social theory in part two, chapter four. The affective passions lead us to form three possible groups: that of friends, that of lovers and that of familial relationships. The mechanizing/distributive passions in turn ensure the co-ordination between the sensual and affective passions. The cabalist corresponds to intrigue which leads to the formation of combinations or parties, and other groups of social intrigue. The butterfly refers to man's need to varied or periodic activity and is the most important passion for the ordering of a new society. Finally, the composite is the passion which is the most social, and is according to Fourier the most blind and uncalculating. It combines both the butterfly passion and the cabalist, and is the closest associated with love, and the nearest to Godliness.

This brings Fourier even closer to the Epicurean notion of pleasures, of which the intellectual and friendship are deemed superior, than to the French materialists. This also shows a possible connection with that first romantic, Rousseau, and his notions of *pitié* and *compassion*, which may be construed as social passions. These mechanistic and

distributive passions in turn have the aim to form series of groups, to graduate them, and to set them in competition and/or harmonize them. Competition is not viewed here as divisive but as necessary to the system which is an overall harmony. Every man and woman possesses all the passions (twelve in total), but the degree that someone feels one passion compared to another, as explained before, is divinely determined and explains differing characters or personality types.⁸¹ God created personality types to balance human society. Society then has the responsibility to permit them to flourish, only then can harmony or justice amongst men be established:

The theory of personality types is ideally suited to confound those great intellects who believe that chance presided over the creation of the passions and that God needs the help of the moralists in harmonizing the passions.⁸²

Man should in turn act upon his innate soul given to him by God. This is the basis for the conception of free will within Fourier's passional theory and the root of his expressive sensualism. According to Fourier we are called by God to fulfill our passional destinies; nobody can deny this to us:

By making creation incomplete however, Fourier's theodicy was able to propose a novel solution to the idea of evil and also allow space for notions of free will and perfectibility. God had "left to our industry and our reason, the honor of intervening concurrently with him." ⁸³

⁸¹ Isambert, Les idées socialistes en France: de 1815 à 1848., p.128.

⁸² Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.340-344. translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier., p.233.

⁸³ Fourier, Charles, The Theory of Four Movements. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. The passage of Charles Fourier in the above citation of the introduction is taken from Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier: Du Libre Arbitre., Tome XI, p.255-256.

Therefore, unlike eighteenth century materialism, the passions are innate and varied and precede experience. No faculty of the mind whether it be reason, imagination (Voltaire, LaMettrie) etc, are responsible for them. Life is not defined as passive sensation (Helvétius) or observation (Condillac), or as a calculation of the pain and pleasures that we are faced with organically (Locke and Voltaire). Nor are the passions defined as hedonistic or atomistic, and nor is there a need to restrain them with reason and morality as found in Locke. On the contrary it is important to express them fully in order to free them from the deforming influence of civilization. The environment is not the source of consciousness but its enemy. The environment must bend to the will of the individuals' social, physical and spiritual passions. Dominant morality and reason repress the soul's drive and the mind's consciousness of them, resulting in a loss of self-actualization and social cohesion. Life unlike the materialists is not defined as passionate repressive sublimation, nor as atomistic "aggressive outreaching," but as the active transformation both individually and socially of the world on the basis of our consciousness.

Because of this activity good becomes energy not passivity. As an active agent man must seek to express and develop his pre-existing soul. Not to do so would be atrophy, the epitome of evil.⁸⁴ Fourier's reasoning is very similar to the great English romantic poet William Blake who wrote in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790):

All Bibles or sacred codes have been causes of the following Errors:

1. That Man has two real existing principles: Viz: a Body & a Soul.
2. That energy, call'd Evil, is alone from the Body, & that Reason, call'd Good, is alone from the Soul.

⁸⁴ A possible Fourierist definition of evil would be, intelligence in the service of atrophy.

3. That God will torment Man in Eternity for following his Energies.
But the following Contraries to the these are True:
 1. Man has no Body distinct from his soul; for that call'd Body is a portion of Soul discern'd by the five senses, the chief inlets of this age.
 2. Energy is the only life and is from the Body and Reason is bound or outward circumference of Energy.
 3. Energy is Eternal Delight.⁸⁵

Much like Blake, God, Spirit, and the passions in men are the active principles of movement, whereas matter, reason and the senses are in turn the passive and moved principles. But unlike Blake Fourier adds a third mechanizing principle. This regulatory principle is the principle of justice (*harmonie*) for man and the principle of mathematics for the physical movement of the universe.

Therefore, unlike that of the moralists, duty comes from an internal source, i.e., from nature itself and the expressive nature of man and its divine origin. This in turn cannot be reflected or imposed by any exterior code of morality or conduct. However, it must be kept in mind that there is a social component to this because men, in Fourier's system must seek others to flower this individuality.

Hence, unlike LaMettrie, Condillac, and Helvétius, and unlike Marx's judgement of him, Fourier's Man is not a passive receptor, where the external environment determines the soul's content. Fourier does recognize the negative effects of society on the degree that the passions can be felt and sought out; however, the soul only learns from its environment the limits and possibilities of realizing the potentiality of its passions. These limits, men must surpass collectively.

⁸⁵ Blake, William, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. Paris: The Trianon Press, 1975.

But how is it that an individual acts in accordance with his soul? He must follow his physical, moral and intellectual instincts without exception. This is why some, including Ernest Seillère, have called Fourier's philosophy a mysticism. But underlying this is a belief like Rousseau's in the capacity, if men were left alone, to be good. Fourier's model goes beyond this anarchism for his model aims to permit man's potential genius to flourish. Like artists, individual men must come into contact through self-knowledge and introspection with their creative passionate beings and transform the objective world around them and in harmony with others. This is precisely what Fourier intended with his social project. He in turn shared his introspective revelations with civilization, i.e., his anatomy of the passions. He calls on man to do the same, but how? This is very similar to obeying the spirit, or the Holy Ghost, only that it is his own human divinity that he is obeying, even though it participates in God's larger divinity. Through this obedience to his own soul, man truly becomes a demi-god, because it is only through the expression of our own natures that the realization of God's larger divine social plan of a Jerusalem on earth can come to be. God wants man to transform nature in his individual image, while respecting what Fourier refers to as its *conscience*. But how does he propose for us to do this? What praxis did he leave for this introspection and realization of true selves? The answer is expressive, creative and attractive labour. Labour therefore is the mystically privileged social and individual form of this creative transformation:

Convergent-Compound or Bi-Compound freedom: This consists of the two independent elements, active physical freedom and active social freedom in alliance with attractive productive work. It presupposes unified adherence, the individual consent of every work-man, woman and child-and their impassioned collaboration in the performance of work and in the

maintenance of the established order. This sort of liberty is the destiny of man.⁸⁶

There is also, unlike Helvétius, a sense of profound internal duty for Fourier. The individual's duty is toward what God intended for him, i.e., individual and social harmony. It does not come from an external human, episcopal or secular moral system but a passional one. Man has the duty to allow those innate drives given to him by a divine source to be expressed. But he also has a duty toward the permitting the free expression of other souls or personalities. This implies a *reconnaissance* and a respect of the other as well as a lack of repressive behavior toward the other. This knowledge of duty is not rationally determined but comes through revelation. In other words, I know what my passions are and how they are affected either by their realization or repression through and by others and I must respect the passions of others. This seems to imply that only a chosen few will have this knowledge at first. Furthermore, man is not alone but part of a divine whole. Without this respect of the expression of the individual a society cannot function harmoniously, nor progress. Therefore, we conclude that there is a symbiotic relationship between freedom and harmony, in Fourier's system, which is far from the atomism of Helvétius. The way this is applied intersubjectively and concretely in his social project will be further discussed in part two chapter four.

It is interesting to note that this also creates a different definition of genius than Helvétius'. For Fourier, like Blake, genius is found in the possession and particular expression of strong passions, but passions which are not isolated from other individuals.

⁸⁶ Fourier, *Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier*. Tome III, p.152-156, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, *The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier*, p.142.

Only through a harmonious society (the reign of voluptuousness) where individual passions social and non- social are realized in interaction with others can true genius be realized. For Fourier genius is the natural state of man because all men possess strong passions, only this genius is repressed by morality and especially unattractive non-passional and non-creative forms of work. Fourier's originality on this issue is that he gives to genius a social dimension which differentiates him markedly from the artistic retreat of other romantics. We must also note here that this also implies a notion of collective genius. Therefore, it is through the intersubjective relationships between individuals in a passionately ordered society that true freedom is possible. True freedom and genius therefore is social. This is much more similar to Hegel's and Marx's "positive" reasoning than that of the "negative" reasoning of the French materialists, though it is also different with its emphasis on the passionate non- rational nature of men.

Finally, Fourier breaks with the entire French school of materialism in two important and romantic ways. First he defines man as a human creative agent and secondly he inserts that agency into a new non-rational and non-utilitarian Newtonian and divinely inspired whole. Man is inserted into a cosmic, and social destiny. This reinsertion, as well as his willingness to create a new society from a disenfranchised one, is as we have seen earlier in our discussion of Sayre and Lowy and will expand later, a typically romantic project.

2) Marx, Fourier and Nature (Second Argument)

Having established that Fourier's materialism is significantly different from that of the French materialists let us move to our second argument.

In the following two sections we will argue that Fourier's romanticism cannot be equated with utopianism. The latter accusation of utopianism is used by the late Marx and his followers in a pejorative sense, to designate a theory cut off from reality. We will address these accusations by vindicating romanticism's active passionate sense of subjectivity as non-utopian by showing that: 1. It presumes a different relationship between man and Nature. 2. That unlike Marx's accusation, it is not an a-historical theory.

Like Hegel before him, Marx's man is called to transform the world on the basis of his rational self-consciousness, and the objective world is an instrument which is both transformed and in turn transforms Man's consciousness. In other words Man is active objectively and rationally. History therefore is the process in which men have rationally, individually and socially transformed objects. This is the essence of what Marx calls practical materialism, i.e. communism. In this respect Fourier and Marx only differ on their emphasis on the passions or on reason.

However, in Marx's and Engels later writings and in the communist movement inspired by these, Marx's ontology seems to take on a different more determined meaning. In the application of human agency to economic history and the natural sciences by Engels and Plekhanov, Marx will be further distanced from the French romantic socialists. If we take these later developments which are at the basis of the communist movement and the Soviet Marxist tradition (Plekhanov, Lenin and Stalin) then a major conflict with Fourier's philosophy of labour arises.⁸⁷ What constitutes Fourier as a utopian becomes not so much

⁸⁷ Bender, Frederick, L., The Betrayal of Marx. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1975, p.2.

his attachment to a passive materialism, as discussed earlier, but his discussion of economic growth and labour. It is Fourier's refusal to recognize that some types of work will always remain painful or necessary to man, i.e., economically determined, which earns him a utopian label. The Marxist-Leninist tradition concerned with the survival of "existing socialism" essentially held that Fourier did not understand the relationship between man and nature as a relationship of necessity and because of this created a social theory cut off from reality, what Hegel refers to as an "ought to be."⁸⁸ This distinction also serves as characteristics of the "scientific" character of Marxism-Leninism and of the non-scientific nature of other socialisms.⁸⁹ But if we look further we find that this difference lies on a questionable basis, i.e., that for the late Marx, even under socialism, the sphere of necessary labour remains to a degree alienated. This later distinction is elucidated clearly in the third volume of *Capital*, in which Marx assumes that what is necessary is intrinsically and a-historically unpleasant:

In fact the realm of freedom does not commence until the point is passed where labor under the compulsion of necessity and of *external utility* is required. In the very nature of things it lies *beyond* the sphere of material production in the strict meaning of the term. Just as the savage man must *wrestle* with nature, in order to satisfy his wants, in order to maintain his

⁸⁸ Bender explains further that: "their utopian character lies in their criticism remaining on the level of the effects (e.g. poverty, inequality, injustice) of bourgeois society rather than seeking the grounds of the effects in the *economic preconditions* of the capitalist production process upon which bourgeois society is based." Bender, The Betrayal of Marx, p.56. Italics are mine. The difference being here that Fourier rejects the normative basis of bourgeois political economy because it precludes for him a harmonious relationship between men and between man and nature. Whereas, and to differing degrees, Marx and Engels accept these economic laws as "science." For Fourier these sciences are *incertaines* at best.

⁸⁹ Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World, p.295.

life and reproduce it, so civilized man has to do it, and he *must* do it in all forms of society and under all possible modes of production.⁹⁰

Yet perhaps what Marx failed to realize was necessary labour does not immediately imply that it cannot be made to be creative or pleasant. It would seem that in the application to the science of economics the late Marx mistook the necessity of social reproduction for the coercion implied in this necessity. In other words that there is a confusion, exemplified by the above quote, between two definitions of “necessary.” The

⁹⁰ Marx, Karl, Capital Vol. III (1894), p.952-55 in Howard Selsam and Harry Martel, Reader in Marxist Philosophy, p. 269. Italics are mine. However, according to Moggach in “Marx and German Idealism,” p.139-140, this can be explained by the different ways Marx will interpret Hegel in the different stages of the evolution of his thought. According to Moggach, the key is the way in which he will appropriate Hegel’s Logic differently than in the 1844 Philosophical and Economic Manuscripts by making a distinction in Capital between different forms of labour, i.e., between concrete labour and craft labour: “Marx’s second usage of the model of Hegel’s *Logic* occurs in *Capital*. He invokes the same threefold structure of purpose, execution and result as an explanation of the qualitative character of concrete labour. This analysis accords with the first model of labour, stressing the teleological positing which initiates the labour process. Despite some recent commentaries, concrete labour must be distinguished from craft labour and can refer to collaborative production; what is central is that its determinacy derives from the particular result envisaged, from the specific telos-intuition which animates it...This model subsequently enables Marx to make a distinction fundamental to *Capital*, between concrete labour erected toward specific purposes, and formally undifferentiated social labour (appearing in capitalism as abstract labour).” In this way Marx could have been criticizing different forms of labour in the Manuscripts and in Capital, which had different goals resulting in different organizations of labour. Therefore, according to Moggach there may not be a contradiction in the evolution of Marx’s philosophy of labour and the dialectical materialists argument is one sided and ignores the coherence of the early and late Marx.

Nonetheless, this does not mean that Marx criticizes the way in which the result as being outside the subject can result in the loss of freedom, i.e., in which way the telos-intuition is determined in socialized labour or concrete labour effects the freedom of the individual to the subjective transformation of the objective world around him. Which is what we believe to be the central point of Fourier’s criticism of “Civilized” work and its organization. In this way Fourier’s criticism can be a complement to that of Marx and a criticism to that of the dialectical materialists.

first relating to the quantitative amount of work which is necessary for society to be able to reproduce itself, and the second relating to the qualitative, as the forced unfree execution of labour. This later form of “necessary” is what Fourier objects too.

Therefore, “the need to” becoming “the have to,” i.e., to the actual coercion involved in the activity of working as a necessary *techné* is what differs the late Marx and the communist movement and Fourier. Hence, the substance worked upon, for Fourier, cannot have within it the assumption of pleasure or displeasure but only the task itself — the human activity chosen either socially or individually, and the work as the method in which the result is attained— because it is human activity may have coerced, uncoerced, pleasurable or un-pleasurable characteristics, structures and results. But for the late Marx and the communist movement it would seem that the existing relationship to nature created by this social organization of work becomes determined, i.e., the necessary outcome imposes the necessary *technai* which are themselves unpleasant. Any suggestion that work can become pleasure is therefore a utopia or an unrealistic social project. In other words a project which does not accept the determined relationship between man and nature as a relationship of exploitation, necessity and opposition, is utopian. Therefore, one can only hope under the constraints of this “anthropological reality” for a lessening in the actual negative physical conditions of the work and a greater degree of control through the collectivization of ownership.

According to Bender it is this change in the relationship between the subject and object of late Marxism, which has its roots in Engels dialectical materialism and Plekhanov’s Darwinism, which negates the subjective factor through a materialistic

ontological tyranny.⁹¹ It is in turn this relationship towards nature defined as “determined” which prescribes alienating forms of work and organizations in society which constitutes a tyranny.

But Fourier’s criticism of civilized work also objects to the negative judgment implied in this relationship towards nature. Because civilized work assumes that because man has been in opposition to nature that he must be forever be at odds with nature. However, increased knowledge of the methods of exploiting nature, which Marx also points out as one of the great elements of progress inherent in capitalism, also results in an increased knowledge of the laws of nature, i.e., what Fourier would call its *conscience*. But it also increases the ease of necessary social reproduction. This positivism that Marx accepts in part and Fourier accepts completely has within it the assumption and potential of harmonizing man’s social productive needs and activities with the activities or physical laws of nature. But to do this the ontological status of nature as an “other” must be changed and its radical neutrality affirmed. This is precisely what Fourier defends by recognizing its divine origin. This will be seen in more detail later with our discussion of Fourier’s expressivism in chapter one part two. But for now it is sufficient to say that if Fourier’s judgement on nature’s “status” and our relationship to it is assumed then the means of production that Man has made unpleasant can surely also be made to be

⁹¹ Frederic L. Bender explains, in The Betrayal of Marx, p.2, that the early Marxism which he calls “Marxian humanism” was betrayed by: “the grafting of the materialist interpretation of history onto an allegedly “Marxist” ontology, the so called dialectical materialism, which was accomplished primarily by Engels and Plekhanov in the years between Marx’s retirement from active political life (roughly 1875) to Engels’ death in 1895.”

pleasurable and harmonious with nature.

Furthermore, these organizations of labour are in turn judged, by Fourier, as alienating to the individual, when they result in passionless atrophy, passionless sublimation and crushed consciousness. These necessary organizations of labour are in turn evil (in the theological sense) because the methods used for necessary labour contradict the divine plan as an active passionless harmony between men and nature. Therefore, for Fourier, unlike Marx, we are not insurpassably alienated from nature and access to our means of production is not a sufficient solution:

Meanwhile let me remind you that it is not enough to merely acknowledge the authority of nature, whose sovereign influence you admit. It is not enough to repudiate moral philosophy and its claims to change the passions: in order to reintegrate yourself with nature you must study her decrees in passionate attraction, which is her interpreter. You make a great show of your theories of metaphysics: what good are they if you scorn to study attraction, which is what governs your soul and your passions? Your metaphysicians lose themselves in the minute ideology. But what on earth does all this scientific twaddle matter?⁹²

The actual activity of work and its *technai* must also be changed if we will cease to be alienated from nature. The changing of these methods is something that is entirely in human control. Therefore, more is needed than just the collective restoration of the objects ripped from our breasts and the collective control over their means of production. In doing these we must also change the actual relationship with nature implied in these organizations. In other words we are only alienated from nature by our collective and unconscious perpetuation of the methods and the dehumanizing social organizations we use to exploit nature and not by some anthropologically determined “necessary”

⁹² Fourier, Theory of the Four Movements, p.189.

relationship:

D'autre part, rétablir le travail dans l'unité de l'énergie passionnelle, c'est aussi, chez Fourier, le brancher sur l'énergie latente de l'Univers, subvertie, bloquée, par le travail morcelé et dissocié de son produit.⁹³

Simone Debout also concurs with this when she writes:

La monstrueuse production de l'archibas inverse la monstrueuse mécanisation et la séparation. A force de tenir ses outils à distance et d'utiliser une énergie extérieure à lui l'homme se coupe de la nature.⁹⁴

However, it is also important to remember that Fourier does not completely deny the kingdom of necessity, only that necessity does not necessarily imply physical pain or instinctual self-denial, nor is it not reconcilable with creativity.⁹⁵ Unlike Marx, Fourier does not accept the separation between the kingdom of necessity and the kingdom of creativity but attempts to reconcile them through positive ontology which aims to insert man harmoniously inside of nature. With this, Fourier recognizes a subjectivity or consciousness to nature that is compatible with that of humanity. The relationship between humanity and nature becomes a relationship between many subjects to a meta-subject, i.e., what he calls, *la conscience de l'univers*. Nature and humanity can participate in the same unlimited and eternal universal consciousness. In this way a man can become a

⁹³ René Schérer et Guy Hocquenghem, "Fourier Théoricien de la production." in Lefebvre, Henri, Actualité de Fourier. Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1975, p.104.

⁹⁴ Debout-Oleszkiewicz, Simone, "Oeuvres de Charles Fourier," in Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome I., p.XXVII.

⁹⁵ Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World, p.296. This opinion is also shared by Nicole Beaurain in "La science fiction se fait opéra." in Henri Lefebvre Actualité de Fourier, p.234: "Fourier est un réaliste: le travail est une nécessité pour l'homme, une nécessité voulue par Dieu, contre laquelle nous ne pouvons rien. Heureusement, pense Fourier. Que serait une vie sans oeuvres."

mirror of the universe. The objects of the world are there calling for a harmonious esthetic transformation, emanating from and reflecting the expression of our individual consciousness. This breaks with the biblical, Promethean and Cartesian submission of nature by humanity and could serve as a basis for a future socialist ecology:

Fourier's radically optimistic assessment of work was rooted in his denial of an irreconcilable antagonism between man and nature. He did not share Marx's Promethean vision of man as constantly engaged in wrestling a living out of a hostile environment.⁹⁶

And:

Chez Marx, l'homme reste dominateur de la Nature; cette conception reste dans la lignée cartésienne. Pour Fourier, non: l'homme <<produit>>, certes, il transforme les choses et les lieux. Mais toujours en alliance avec la terre, sans la détruire ni la traiter comme objet de possession. C'est que la liaison entre l'homme et la Nature n'est plus la même, n'est pas cartésienne: entre l'un et l'autre et de un à l'autre, passe le flux productif désirant. La pensée de Marx reste encore dominée par une métaphysique du sujet.⁹⁷

Therefore, Fourier's goal is fundamentally different from Marx, since Fourier wants to reunite man with nature and put aside all artificial separations.

This possible later Marxist and communist criticism of Fourier has another implication though secondary to our purposes here. The above difference also relates to production as the basic social activity of man. Fourier's economic theory is judged by later Marxism on the basis of a theory of production that does not question the anarchy of growth of productive forces. This is the major characteristic of bourgeois political

⁹⁶ Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His thought., p.296.

⁹⁷ Schérer and Hocquenghem, "Fourier Théoricien de la production." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier., p.96. The specific way in which Fourier breaks with Descartes will be discussed in the next chapter in our discussion on materialism.

economy, which by appropriating the classical liberal theorists and inserting the evolution of the productive forces in history Marx does not fundamentally criticize. René Schérer points this out in *Fourier: Théoricien de la Production* (1975):

Il faut abandonner une fois pour toutes l'idée d'estimer la justesse économique de conceptions de Fourier sur la production à échelle d'une coupure qui rend incompréhensible et sans objet l'accroissement des forces productives. Cela certes, est le propre de l'économie bourgeoise, mais cette idée subsiste, elle n'est pas fondamentalement critiquée dans le marxisme.⁹⁸

Therefore, unlike Fourier's, Marx's economic theory remains fundamentally instrumental with the major difference being that profit is replaced with socialist growth:

Marx délimite la sphère du travail nécessaire, toujours soumis à une finalité extérieure.⁹⁹

Even with the socialism of Marx man's collective and ontological relationship with nature will not change, because nature will continue to serve the productive forces of history, albeit a changed one. However, by stating that the productive forces are entirely in human control and must be changed to be in harmony with nature, Fourier is in fact offering a deeper criticism of bourgeois classical liberalism. Fourier, while keeping the idea of necessity, makes an essential criticism which at least the late Marx cannot, i.e., the way capitalism establishes an exploitative relationship with nature, which is the essential relationship, as Marx has taught us, conditioning human relationships. Inferring that a new unitary relationship with nature can change the forms of work so that harmony with other

⁹⁸ Schérer and Hocquenghem, "Fourier Théoricien de la production." in Lefebvre, *Actualité de Fourier*, p.98.

⁹⁹ Mailer, Janina Rosa, "Fourier et Marx." in Lefebvre, *Actualité de Fourier*, p.290.

men can be found cannot be evidence of Fourier's utopianism, since Marx's theory essentially prescribes as much. On the contrary this renders men at least in part responsible towards nature, which since the advent of environmental ethics and the current precarious state of the environment, has been proven to be true.

3) Not A-Historical (Third Argument)

A third and final argument leading to the Marxian stigma of utopianism on Fourier needs to be discussed before we move onto to what we think Fourier actually builds. Having shown that the materialisms of Marx and Fourier are different and having shown that the later Marxist criticism lies on the assumption of a relationship between man and nature that Fourier rejects, we may consider the third and more practical stigma of utopianism. In his early writings differentiating his approach from that of rival socialisms, Marx also offers a criticism of Fourier's understanding of the historical process. He accuses Fourier of having ignored the industrial transformations of the continent, and of not recognizing the proletariat as universal class.¹⁰⁰ In other words, Fourier is accused of having been a petit bourgeois in his economic solutions, a criticism Marx will reiterate later in the century for Proudhon. This is in turn linked to Marx's Hegelian criticism of the

¹⁰⁰ Bender explains again that: "their utopian character lies in their criticism remaining on the level of the effects (e.g. poverty, inequality, injustice) of bourgeois society rather than seeking the grounds of the effects in the *economic preconditions* of the capitalist production process upon which bourgeois society is based." Bender, The Betrayal of Marx, p.56. Italics are mine. Again, the criticism here is inaccurate because having dealt with this question of relationship towards nature, Fourier was criticizing the root of the effects of bourgeois society, which if they are to be understood as symptoms of the economic organization of labour in society must have at their root man's relationship with nature which is the major and basic economic relationship. Therefore, the root of the effects are understood in Fourier but they are not judged as preconditioned.

abstract “ought” in favour of understanding the real movement of history. This criticism is obvious in the *Communist Manifesto*:

The Socialist and Communist systems properly so called, those of Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen and others, spring into existence in the early undeveloped period, described above, of the struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie (see section I. Bourgeoisie and Proletariat). The founders of these systems see, indeed, the class antagonism, as well as the action of the decomposing elements, in the prevailing form of society. But the proletariat, as yet in its infancy, offers to them the spectacle of a class without any historical initiative or any independent political movement.¹⁰¹

But these claims were also present before, in the 1844 Manuscripts:

The transcendence of self-estrangement follows the same course as self-estrangement. *Private property* is first considered only in its objective aspect— but nevertheless with labour as its essence. Its form of existence is therefore, *capital*, which is to be annulled “as such” (Proudhon). Or a particular form of labour — labour levelled down, fragmented, and therefore unfree — is conceived as the source of private property’s *perniciousness* and of its existence in estrangement from men. For instance *Fourier*, who, like the Physiocrats, also conceives *agricultural labour* to be the least *exemplary type*, whereas *Saint-Simon* declares in contrast that *industrial labour* as such is the essence, and accordingly aspires to the *exclusive* rule of industrialists and the improvement of the worker’s condition. Finally, *communism* is the positive expression of annulled private property — at first as *universal* private property.¹⁰²

Though a great admiration is shown for this stage of socialist history and specifically for Fourier, he is still held in a prison of Marx’s historicism. Fourier is still seen as a kind of economic conservative, with solutions which did not sufficiently reflect the transformations of the modes and means of production. Though this is a criticism based on the criteria of normativity of another system, i.e., scientific socialism, we will still hold in

¹⁰¹ Marx, and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto in Selected Works*, Vol.2, p.134.

¹⁰² Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 in Collected Works*: Vol.3, p.294.

the following that it is possible to defend Fourier against such a criticism. But in order to see if this is a just accusation it is important to understand the objective social conditions in which Fourier lived and worked and the way in which he responded to them and why. In this way we can see, in our opinion that contrary to Marx and Engels, Fourier proposes a *dépassement* on his own basis and not a return to any former agricultural society, real or mythical, and that by doing so he recognized the potential in the industrialization and urbanization of the economy. This will also permit us to see how his theory does constitute, at least under the criteria proposed by George Lukacs, Sayre and Lowy's, a revolutionary theory through its advocacy of a radical and universal transformation of society in the future. In doing this we will hold that Fourier's project was not only responding to political events but that he was also acutely aware of the social question in its modern form, though still in its early phases of industrialisation.

Fourier's project is like many socialisms and romanticisms, a criticism of post-revolutionary France and of its great political and economic instability. Fourier himself between his birth on April 7, 1772 and his death on October 10, 1837 witnessed eight different political regimes including: absolute monarchy, constitutional monarchy, Jacobin republic, directorate, consulate, empire, restoration, and the bourgeois monarchy of Louis-Philippe.¹⁰³ Also, Fourier was more than once a victim of state terror and political chaos. For example when he returned to Lyon in 1793 to claim his inheritance he bought colonial goods to be resold at a profit. At the moment when he received his merchandise, Lyon

¹⁰³ Armand, C.F., Introduction à Fourier: textes choisis. Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1953, p.19.

rebelled against the Jacobin convention. A blockade of the town followed and the governmental military stepped in and bombarded the city. Almost immediately Fourier was ruined as his goods were appropriated by the insurgents to feed the besieged populace. The Lyon forces conscripted him into the militia and he served in a company that was massacred in a battle with the government's cavalry. Fourier was one of the only survivors of this bloody event. The siege lasted two months and the city was defeated. Fourier was then imprisoned and forced to serve on a seventeen-month campaign in the same government cavalry which he then deserted. He eventually escaped the guillotine by buying off his persecutors with a watch and some maps.

This political instability was aggravated by the industrial transformations of France, which unlike England, had really begun at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries.¹⁰⁴ By the end of the eighteenth century the pressures of industrialization began to be felt demographically and there was a beginning of a rural migration to the city centres. In Lyon close to Besançon where Fourier was born, lived and wrote, this phenomenon was most evident. By 1793 Lyon was the very animated hub of industrial and commercial activity. It was one of the first cities in France to see the future of violent class conflict, especially in the silk and textile industries.¹⁰⁵ This was due to the extreme concentration of wealth by a few families and city magistrates in the area.

But agricultural, commercial and financial crises plagued all of France after the

¹⁰⁴ Massari, Roberto, "Fourier et la révolution industrielle." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.70.

¹⁰⁵ Massari, "Fourier et la révolution industrielle." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.71.

revolution, which in turn also contributed greatly to the political instability. These economic crises were the result of administrative chaos and the absence of all centralized organization or control which in turn permitted an unfettered speculation and movement of capital, resulting in the greatest abuses. Profiting from the political chaos and lack of regulation, speculators sprang up. They accumulated great wealth which was invested in new industrial workshops. The creation of these new industries resulted in the growth of the industrial proletariat but also in very harsh conditions full of unemployment, exploitation, general economic insecurity, housing problems, epidemics, etc. Napoleon himself could not find adequate solutions for the transitory nature of this period, and these crises continued well into the 1830's.¹⁰⁶

By the beginning of the nineteenth century it was evident to most that the Revolution had not brought what it had promised to the peasantry. Charles Pellerin pointed out in 1883 that it was a myth that the revolution had given to the peasantry access to the land as their basic instrument of work. He points out that by 1848 the peasants who worked on their own land owned less than a tenth of the arable soil in France and yet at the time:

On entend partout répéter que depuis 1789 les paysans n'ont cessé d'acheter de la terre et qu'aujourd'hui ils possèdent la plus grande partie du territoire.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Massari, "Fourier et la révolution industrielle." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.70.

¹⁰⁷ Approximately 4 million hectares of an estimated 50 million. Pellerin, Charles, "Le prolétariat agricole en France." Critique Philosophique. Paris: Imprimerie de Ch. Lambert, no. 14, 5 mai, 1883, p.221.

Fourier was both a participant and a critique of this economic evolution. While traveling through Europe, including Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany between the years 1796 and 1803, Fourier observed the state in which agriculture had fallen. The peasants by the year 1800 were in a situation which was rapidly deteriorating. The propertyless peasantry, as the most numerous class, was being punished by high taxes imposed by the administrations and Napoleon aggravated the situation with additional taxes for his war machine and other grandiose public projects.¹⁰⁸ They also felt the whip of the large land owners, who were able to take advantage of the rapidly growing national market due to the naval blockade.¹⁰⁹ They also suffered under the crises of overproduction caused by a simultaneous lack of external markets or methods of transportation. Fourier was blind to none of these abuses, and all of these impacts and many others are criticized in lengthy very detailed descriptions throughout his works from the beginning through to the end of his intellectual career including: *Théories des quatre mouvements* (1808), *Le nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire* (1829) and *La fausse industrie* (1835).

At the time the integration of the working class in the labour market was also difficult and the workers used to an artisan economy resisted technological industrialization, considering it dehumanizing work. They were slowly losing the basic element over the control of their lives, i.e., the actual control of the tools of their trade.

¹⁰⁸ Massari, "Fourier et la révolution industrielle." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.70.

¹⁰⁹ Massari, "Fourier et la révolution industrielle." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.70.

This led them to turn their frustrations onto the machines by throwing their wooden sabots into the workings of a machine, hence the term sabotage. In France much like in England technological innovations like the steam engine were viewed skeptically by workers because such technology created mass unemployment. In Paris alone, out of 66 830 workers there was 22 000 unemployed.¹¹⁰ At the same time small businesses were being crushed and with them were, according to Fourier, one good chance of resisting the speculators and the monopolization of the market. Fourier, much like classical liberalism, was adamantly anti-monopolist.¹¹¹ According to him the smaller industry could foster a greater cooperative spirit, in turn “restoring the equilibrium between capital and work as well as promoting individual talents.”¹¹²

But according to Fourier the greatest evil was not industrialization but that these economic upheavals fostered financial speculation and commercial struggle. His economic

¹¹⁰ Cf. Armand, and R. Maublanc, Fourier. Paris: ESI, 1937, p.31.

¹¹¹ In the way that justifying the right to own property as essential to freedom in and out of the state of nature is similar, though radically different as will be seen later, to the necessity that every individual own property because it is essential for the expression of the self. Both, of which since the discoveries of Taylor and Macpherson can be respectively identified as expressive individualism (Sources of the Self, 1989) and possessive individualism (The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism, 1962), must logically conclude that less liberty both qualitative and quantitative is left for all individuals if property is centralized in the hands of a few, therefore they must be by definition anti-monopolist without of course being against private property. It is clear that many have found much anti-monopolist sentiment in the philosophies of Hobbes, Locke and to a greater extent Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill, though never finding within Locke and the others the same degree of importance and thorough treatment as that found in the French romantic socialists.

¹¹² The word *talents* has a specific meaning in Fourier, it is inherent to his sensualism and is directly related to the way he defines human passions and their interaction, their importance in his social project will be discussed in chapter four.

analysis is a clear and detailed condemnation of the entire financial sector of the economy. The merchants, the bankers, the insurance clerks, the mediators, the stock brokers, and all such employments are considered to be useless to the wealth and health of society and are for Fourier evidence of the malaise of “civilisation.”¹¹³ This is what he names la *fausse industrie*, for it is considered a non-productive and hence devious and dishonest economic activity which fosters the worst vices of man including: antisocial behavior, greed through economic competition, deviousness, chaos, patronage and free trade. The fortune amassed by these merchants are considered to have been done to the detriment of other productive sectors of the economy, and those that practice it are deemed social parasites. Fourier was shocked particularly by the wheat cartels, which in 1812 he witnessed throwing wheat into a river to keep the prices high while an estimated 55 000 Lyonnais workers were begging in the streets for food.¹¹⁴

Therefore, above all else Fourier’s socialist project is a call to economic order and resistance to unfettered commercial capitalism. In this way he is a precursor to modern political economy, sociology and socialism.

Fourier ne s’égare pas dans une critique de détail ou d’événements isolés considérés d’un point vue abstrait. Véritable précurseur d’une sociologie systématique plus moderne, il s’efforce d’identifier l’axe autour du quel

¹¹³ Much like Rousseau civilisation has a distinctly negative sense for Fourier. Because we live in civilization does not mean for Fourier that we are “civilized.” However, unlike Rousseau’s history of inequality Fourier’s history is a progression not a regression into more and more inequality and loss of passional freedom.

¹¹⁴ Massari, “Fourier et la révolution industrielle.” in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier., p.86.

pourra s'ordonner l'ensemble de sa critique sociale.¹¹⁵

And so the basis of his criticism is a criticism of the chaotic and unattractive characteristics of the capitalist economy and of the incoherence of its modes and means of production, which, if we conclude with Lukacs cannot be similar to the irrationalism of the reactionary romantics. Therefore, Fourier in no way justifies the absolute bourgeois right of property over others:

Le fait qu'à la base du discours de Fourier on trouve, non pas une critique de <<l'irrationalité absolue>>, déjà pratiquée en France au début du XIXème siècle, mais celle de <<l'incohérence industrielle>>, c'est-à-dire, de la forme particulière d'irrationalité caractéristique du système capitaliste dans sa phase naissante, nous paraît, constituer l'aspect le plus intéressant et le plus durable de l'oeuvre théorique de Fourier.¹¹⁶

Fourier does not believe that society can develop spontaneously without falling into chaos. The isolation of producers and their massive unemployment is sufficient proof of it. But he also criticized the growth of these non-productive sectors of the economy, because they were imbued with a physiocratic spirit which he believed was a relic of feudalism's worst moments of privilege.

Fourier criticized the specialization and division of work as an effect of this chaotic economy which has also been used as evidence of the utopian nature of his theory. However, Fourier was not against the specialization of tasks at a technical point of view per se, since there will be a high degree of specialization in his *phalanstères*, but is

¹¹⁵ Massari, "Fourier et la révolution industrielle." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.78.

¹¹⁶ Massari, "Fourier et la révolution industrielle." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.80.

opposed to the negative social aspects of this phenomenon.¹¹⁷ The difference is that in the *phalanstères* the individual will work in a variety of tasks during one day in which specialization is paramount. This is opposed to the monotonous specialization of civilized industry:

La division du travail est poussée à l'extrême, mais les activités parcellaires de Lucas (a phalanstarian) au lieu d'engendrer la monotonie, comme en civilisation, sont censées obtenir le résultat contraire: variées, ces activités sont choisies librement et selon le seul critère de l'attraction passionnée.¹¹⁸

Nor can his philosophy be construed as anti-technology for the problem with specialization and technology is not the actual machine but that in a capitalist society it is used as a limitation to the freedom of work,¹¹⁹ and its variety, for a goal outside of the individual, i.e., for the instrumentalization of the individual's labour for the profit of others which also leads to unemployment and insecurity.¹²⁰ Therefore, because his views of the capitalist use of technology and specialization are negative to the subjective expression of

¹¹⁷ Massari, "Fourier et la révolution industrielle." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.86.

¹¹⁸ Beaurain, Nicole, "La science fiction se fait opera." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.235.

¹¹⁹ According to Douglas Moggach Fichte, within the tradition of German idealism, also understood the relation of the subject to the object as a relation of transformation through the exercise of freedom: "The philosophical task (Fichte's) is to show how the subject enters into interrelationship with external objects. As a practical force, reason requires that this objective realm must ultimately be derived from the productive action of subjectivity. The outer order is made consonant with freedom." Like Fourier the importance is on the reordering of the productive forces in order to permit this freedom to be expressed. Moggach, Douglas, "Reciprocity, Elicitation, Recognition: The Thematics of Intersubjectivity in the Early Fichte.", Dialogue. Canadian Philosophical Association, XXXVIII, 1999, p.271-296. Paratheses are mine.

¹²⁰ Alexandrian, Le socialisme romantique, p.26.

the individual does not necessarily mean he rejects them entirely nor does it make him a utopian or petty-bourgeois.

Still the Marxian school sees Fourier's *phalanstères* as a return to an agricultural based economic system as evidence of a misunderstanding of the role in history of the proletariat. This argument stems from the agricultural nature of his social project, *les phalanstères*. It is true that he did not believe that increased production was necessarily better for humanity and even writes of the terrible ecological consequences of constant growth:

Le peuple, dans ce cas, dépenserait bien moins pour faire bonne chère, qu'aujourd'hui pour vivre impitoyablement. L'épargne de combustible serait immense, et assurerait la restauration des forêts et climatures, bien mieux que ne feront cent codes forestières inexécutables.¹²¹

However, recognizing the negative effects of industrialization on the standard of living and the ecology is certainly not grounds enough to make him a utopian. On the contrary this is a forward looking idea, taken up largely by the ecological movement in our times. Even if it is true that his economic criticism which focuses on commercial capitalism reflects an emerging industrial stage, this only means that he was a man of his times, which he can hardly be blamed for. However, these are not the central issues in the argument, because the Marxian argument holds that his social theory advocates a turn backwards to an idealized, or mystified "rural Arcadia."¹²²

However, much evidence can be found that Fourier did not indulge in this kind of

¹²¹ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI., p.41.

¹²² Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World, p.289.

rêverie. Beecher in *Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World*, keenly points out that even with the early publication of the *Théories de quatres mouvements* but also with his later correspondence and articles in the *La Phalange* a very negative connotation is given to the peasantry and the peasant life in general. In a criticism aimed at a certain poet Delille, Beecher writes that Fourier was very severe in his criticism of charlatans who extolled the “virtue and innocence and contentment of rural life,” and while they “gorged themselves in their castles writing such gibberish, the gross and cheating peasants” were reduced to “eating roots” and “extreme coarseness.” Fourier also uses terms like “living automaton” and complains of their “extreme monotony.”¹²³ In fact Fourier’s theory is not a mystification of rural work but its criticism and its eventual *dépassement* by a new kind of work ethic based on passional attraction. The kind of work that will replace it in the *phalanstères* will have little or nothing in common with the one criticized by Fourier or by Marx for that matter. Nor is it clear that working the land will necessarily be the major activities of the members of such a new society, only that a pristine countryside as an environment to live and work is better for humanity. In fact as we have seen part of Fourier’s criticism and argument against civilized industry relies on a positive outlook on industry and the manufacturing sector. Fourier reduces this type of activity in the *phalanstères* on two bases. The first is that he fundamentally believes that agricultural work offers more intrinsic attraction because it creates a privileged relationship between man and nature. Hence, the location of the *phalanstère* in the countryside which serves the needs of harmony of man with nature. Secondly, because he has faith in the powers of

¹²³ Beecher, *Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World*, p.289.

industry, and of manufacturing to perfect itself to the point that it can be reduced to a bare minimum of activity:

Societary (phalanx) industry achieves the highest perfection in the manufacture of each of its products: furniture and clothing will last an extremely long time. They will become eternal.¹²⁴

Fourier believes that if the element of profit is taken out then industry will seek to create quality. This quality will eventually be so high as to make almost indestructible goods. This is a non market, non consumer and non-bourgeois oriented understanding of industry and use of technology. Certainly we can see today with the advanced technology we possess that he is right in his understanding of its potential.

Furthermore, Fourier's view of civilized agricultural and industrial work is one of disharmony and penury. However, this emphasis on the criticism of rural work is largely attributed to, as we have said before, the transitional nature of the French economy. At the same time there were few large industries: the great iron works at Le Creusot and the textile mills at Lille serve as exceptions and proof that the process of industrialization had begun. By 1850, ten percent of industrial workers were employed in industries of twenty or more workers. But during most of Fourier's's life time large industrialization was still developing and even at his the time of his death, the population was overwhelmingly rural:

Given the persistently traditional character of French economic life in Fourier's time, it is hardly surprising that he consistently played down the importance of factories and manufacturing work in Harmony.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.209, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.288.

¹²⁵ Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World, p.290.

But Fourier's economic criticism is not just a criticism of rural work. It also, as we said, reflects the very transitional nature of French economics, and it incorporates new theories of economic sciences, and labour organization, to criticize old forms of organization of work. In this way his expressive passion theory of work which we will see in the next chapter also serves as a criticism of emerging industrial work. In this way his understanding of work and work related problems do apply to industrialization. For example his criticism of boring, menial, repetitive tasks, his discussion on the work ethic and its misplaced morality, its relationship to family, the psychological costs of demeaning and physically taxing work, his awareness of alienation, insecurity, exploitation and petty frustrations of functionaries and of the petty bourgeoisie, just to name a few, all remain relevant today.¹²⁶

4) Miscellaneous Arguments

Having answered the major Marxist accusations of utopianism, there remain some final points as evidence of the non-utopian revolutionary nature of Fourier's socialist project.

Some, including Marxists, have seen his negative comments on the French revolution as evidence of reaction. This criticism is often coupled with Fourier's lack of a revolutionary "weapon" or a revolutionary class. It is true for reasons stated earlier that Fourier rejects the violent overthrow of an existing society and with it the end of the French revolution. However, this particular criticism of reaction is only valid if violence serves as the central criterion for what constitutes a revolutionary theory. But the lack of a

¹²⁶ Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World., p.291.

violent revolutionary theory does not mean that Fourier was without a class perspective and does not necessarily mean that a theory is not revolutionary. Perhaps it simply means that a different revolutionary path was chosen for ethical or spiritual reasons. But if we use revolutionary as René Schérer and Lukacs use it, i.e., the degree, in its historical context, that the theory challenged the existing civilization, not only its economic order, but in all its dimensions including its cultural and moral order, then Charles Fourier is clearly a great revolutionary. Considering that many of Fourier's writings had to be held back from publication because of their shocking content, and what has already been said about his criticism of agricultural and industrial work above, it is also safe to conclude that with Schérer that Fourier's moral thought is also revolutionary:

Pour ce prolétariat, au moins jusqu'à la commune, la lutte révolutionnaire est à la fois lutte de classe et lutte de civilisations, pour de nouveaux rapports humains, pour la suppression de la famille, pour la transformation complète de l'éducation, pour l'émancipation de la femme, pour l'amour libre.¹²⁷

In the spirit of Fourier the major criteria of a transforming theory and for a society for that matter, is the degree that it will free us to love. According to René Scherer this radical theory of *Agape* would be enough to rank him higher than the Marquis de Sade as a moral revolutionary:

C'est que, chez Sade, tout doit être sacrilège, alors que chez Fourier rien ne l'est plus. Accordons à Fourier une connaissance plus précise des ressorts passionnels, libérons-le des restrictions que lui ont imposées sa formation familiale, sa culture, son public, l'Harmonie devient la mise en oeuvre de cette société sans lois dont Sade n'esquissait l'idée que négativement, puisque aussi bien il le faisait en fin de compte dans le cadre

¹²⁷ Schérer, René in Charles Fourier, *l'Ordre Subversif*, Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1973, p.30.

d'une civilisation dont il acceptait les présupposés, indispensables à sa contradiction passionnée.¹²⁸

Fourier unlike the aristocratic de Sade was able to liberate himself and his work from the prejudices of his class and society. This makes his works both more complete and more revolutionary.

Finally, the way in which Fourier's creative passional work is used as central to human self-development and expression would also prove at least the progressive nature of his project and certainly does not place his philosophy in contradiction to the proletarian needs of his time. This theory also differed him from other socialists like Proudhon, Buchez or even Robert Owen and Saint-Simon who viewed work as a sort of "rampart against vice and self-indulgence," or a method of self-disciplining and differing man from the animal and giving to his existence a purpose or a moral value.¹²⁹ For Fourier these theories seemed contradictory to the subjectification of work which, since the advent of individualism and its political transformations, seems a logical progression. Making work expressive serves both to destroy the relationships of servitude in capitalism for both the agricultural and the industrial worker while at the same time serving the modern project of freedom.

The above discussion and elements seem to indicate for us, in at least a cursory sense, enough evidence of Fourier's "real" understanding of history and the possibilities for change herein.

¹²⁸ Schérer, in Fourier, l'Attraction passionnée, p.17.

¹²⁹ Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World, p.291.

5) Conclusion to Part One

In this first part we have essentially said what we think Fourier is not. At first we began by defining what was meant by romanticism and romantic socialism. Secondly we briefly positioned Fourier vis-à-vis the schools of thought that have judged him both positively and negatively. In this discussion we discovered that romantic socialism is predominantly a French phenomenon and that it spans in its foundation years about half a century. But more importantly we found that it was a willingness to reinsert the individual into a society, a common project on the basis of a form of social equality that emanates from the disjointed conditions of the peasantry and working class immediately after the French revolution. We have concluded by this that history's judgement, including its philosophical judgement of Fourier is incomplete because of the lack of understanding of his expressive and fundamentally romantic philosophy of labour. Following this we have proposed a different reading of Fourier by questioning the major socialist judgements on his philosophy, i.e. that of Marx and his direct descendants.

We have in turn indicated in this discussion with Marx that it is not in our opinion correct to stigmatize Fourier as a utopian on the basis of his fundamentally differing passionate understanding of man. Nor is it as easy to say that Fourier represents a kind of petty bourgeois socialism, the question is more fundamental, because both Marx and Fourier understood man as historically active, but they start with completely different teleology, ontology and anthropology. We concluded this because Fourier's vision of a new society does not seem to us to serve as a mythical or transcendental land, or as an imaginary antithesis of his society, but is a view of its concrete *dépassement* with a new

immanent order arising from the conditions of the old.

Furthermore, on utopianism, we have seen, thanks in part to George Lukacs and René Schérer, that Fourier cannot be considered a reactionary romantic, since his socialist project does not rest on an exclusive, artificial or organic community, but on one which speaks for the human agent as a whole. In this way Fourier's social theory is a kind of passional "universalism", an important criterion (universalism) borrowed from Lukacs which distinguishes between reactionary particularism and revolutionary universalism. In other words we discovered that Fourier's philosophy was revolutionary.

In conclusion to this discussion on Fourier's utopianism we would like to add that the relationship that Fourier posits between nature and men "*de la sauvagerie*" cannot be construed as we have seen as utopian, passive or reactionary, but also we hold that it cannot be construed as pagan, feudal, or ancient. The relationship between man and nature for Fourier is not one of total insertion within a *telos* of the cosmos, as it was for the pagans and classical philosophers, but humanity and its individual passional *telos* exists outside of it due to freewill and therefore is capable of transforming nature for their own passional not rational self-expression. The *telos* of nature and of man are separate but potentially harmonious. According to Fourier if men simply obeyed their passions they would in turn harmonize their activities with the divine destiny of God and God's law of attraction. However, it must be remembered that the choice to conform to this *telos* is entirely ours; though nature and God call us to do so, it is our will which ultimately decides. This reflects and promotes a modern, if not a contemporary ecological project. Therefore, the "advances" of French sensualism are kept without what we consider some

of their ethical disadvantages, i.e. the exploitative relationship towards nature and ultimately the instrumental relationship with other human beings.

On the utopian stigma we also concluded that a level of uncertainty exists in the strength of the criteria established by Marx between “scientific” and “utopian” for Fourier. It does not appear to be sufficient to us to label Fourier as a utopian and we therefore agree with René Schérer that:

Le postulat sur lequel le socialisme utopique a fait place au socialisme scientifique qui l’a ainsi relégué dans la préhistoire du mouvement ouvrier, nous paraît de plus en plus un postulat purement théorique.¹³⁰

Hence we believe that it is more precise to conclude that in the competing realm of socialist ideas in the romantic century that Marx’s and Engels’ criticism of Fourier probably served, much like their criticism of anarchism, very practical purposes of competing for ideological hegemony over the worker’s movements.

Perhaps the final word on utopianism should be left to Fourier. For Fourier the determining factor which makes a theory utopian or not is the degree that it attempts to deny the passional nature of the human being and tries to impose on him a rational order which denies or does not consider this nature in the organization of a new society. In this, Marxist-Leninist communism, in its current form, and perhaps Marx himself, would be utopian. *Le Phalanstère* is right in pointing out that on this question Fourier would have probably turned things up side down in this way:

Charles Fourier est un utopiste qui prétend rompre avec l’utopie. Celle-ci (l’utopie), estime t-il, entendait brimer les passions et les désirs, les ramener sous le juge *exclusif* de la raison, alors qu’il importe, au contraire, de les

¹³⁰ Schérer, in Fourier, *l’Ordre Subversif*, p.31.

laisser s'épanouir afin de les utiliser pour le plus grand bien de la société.¹³¹

Therefore, for Fourier, attempting to change nature is the truly utopian pursuit ultimately leading to self destruction. This also constitutes his major criticism and vehement opposition to past philosophies and sciences, which he calls *Les sciences incertaines* and to the socialisms of Henri de Saint-Simon and Robert Owen.

In this first part we also questioned other judgements on Fourier by showing that he differentiates himself from the previous school of French materialism. This also constituted an indication of the presence of Fourier's expressive philosophy of labour. In this discussion we saw that Fourier broke with the trend of French sensationalism towards an increasingly passive understanding of subjectivity and social atomism. We showed this by contrasting Fourier to Helvétius. In this way we concluded that Fourier's philosophy and French romantic socialism combines the tradition of the French materialists with the social and esthetic concerns of the romantic century, which we consider to be the originality of the early French romantic socialist period, and to be at the core of early socialist romanticism's criticism of the enlightenment period. We also saw that this new philosophy of Fourier's was historically a direct answer to the difficult experiences of the French revolution of which Fourier himself experienced and hence constituted a criticism of liberalism's strictly political rational ordering of society and formal political rights.¹³²

In this way, we could conclude that Fourier can be situated in the French romantic

¹³¹ Le phalanstère, 1 June 1832, pp.12-16 in Rouvillois, Frédéric, L'utopie. Paris: Flammarion, 1998, p.138.

¹³² Barzun, Jacques, Romanticism and the Modern Ego, p.22.

period from 1761-1850, characterized by a revolutionary will to create a new society:

The critical philosophers of the eighteenth century had destroyed their own dwelling place. The next generation must build or perish. Whence we conclude that romanticism is first of all a constructive and creative; it is what may be called a solving epoch, as against the *dissolving* eighteenth century.¹³³

Therefore, in conclusion we can now move on to propose that Fourier is a romantic socialist thinker who sought to reinsert the individual into a new society based on a creative passionate teleology of man. Hence we will show in the following chapters that his philosophy of labour is a fundamentally romantic, expressive, non-utilitarian, socialist sensualism. We will go on to show in the last chapter the social applications and consequences of such a romantic definition of agency. In other words we will begin with Fourier's understanding of subjectivity and the role of labour therein and then move on to its intersubjective consequences.

¹³³ Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego., p.22.

PART TWO: FOURIER'S ROMANTIC SOCIALISM

Chapter III: Fourier's Romantic Expressivism and its Consequences

1) Criterion 2: Subjectivism (Expressivism)

a) Fourier's expressivism

We have seen that Fourier's agent is not a rational nor a passive conception, but that he shares with other romantics what Barzun identified as a major romantic trait, i.e., an active, or as we will see in this chapter, an expressive sensualism. We have done this by contrasting Fourier to two authors, Marx and Helvétius. However, we have not sufficiently defined Fourier's agency as expressive. What do we mean by expressive sensualist agency and what is the origin of this romantic trait? Furthermore, what role does labour play in this expressivism?

The term expressivism as a romantic criterion was analyzed by Charles Taylor in chapter twenty, *Nature as Source* and chapter twenty one, *The Expressivist Turn*, in his genealogy of the modern self entitled *Sources of the Self* (1989). According to Taylor, in their search to find a new reality and new societies, the early romantics accepted the notion, proven in part by the renaissance, but given weight by the enlightenment philosophers, that truth was to be found through reason. But, according to Taylor, they also viewed this reason as potentially dangerous. In part, because the rational ordering of society had contributed to human suffering, but also more deeply, because they viewed this as an inadequate understanding of human nature.

Against the classical stress on rationalism, tradition, and formal harmony, the Romantics affirmed the rights of the individual, of the imagination, and

of feeling.¹³⁴

As we explained earlier in our discussion of Sayre and Lowy, the effects of this rational language of rights and its incoherence in the face of the economic changes of industrialization, led to a degree of dissatisfaction in the existing social order as disenfranchised classes were being pushed aside under various reform movements. This led the romantics in general to view the rule of rights developed by the enlightenment notions of liberty and equality as narrow and simply formal. According to Taylor romanticism can be explained by the effort of finding a counterweight for these “excesses of reason.” The counterweight was to be found in the romantic idea of nature. The theoretical basis of this counterweight was laid before the revolution and as early as Rousseau’s *L’Emile* (1762).

Rousseau as the first romantic attributed man a basic nature which was good. He also endowed man with some basic passions, like *amour de soi* (an individual passion towards love of existence) and *pitié* (a kind of social passion like sympathy), which were according to him distorted by society, mainly by private property and its inequalities. According to Taylor, with this new view of human nature, Rousseau effectively reinvigorated the language of rights. This we will argue in the following pages is where Rousseau’s and the romantic influence on Fourier is the clearest seen.

Fourier like other romantic socialists is both indebted to the language of rights of the revolution and yet a judge of the incompleteness of these rights under the rational

¹³⁴ Taylor, Charles, Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989, p.368.

philosophy of the enlightenment. The failure of the revolution and the Jacobin experiment, in creating greater equality and better living standards for the labouring masses, served for Fourier as we have seen in our earlier discussion on Fourier's response to the objective economic and political conditions of his life time, as sufficient proof of this incompleteness. But even in the face of these conditions, and regardless of his negative experiences of post-revolutionary France, Fourier remained profoundly Rousseauian. In fact, we will argue briefly in the following that Fourier's reaction to the shortcomings of the revolution, was to radically extend Rousseau's philosophy to a greater passional understanding of man. By doing this we will also show to what extent Fourier is indebted to Rousseau.

In his earliest book *Théories des quatre mouvements et des destinées générales* (1808) this extension of Rousseauian philosophy is made abundantly clear:

"Everything was good when it left the hands of the creator", says Rousseau: it is a truth for which he adduces no evidence, and he weakens it in the next line by adding: "In man's hands everything degenerated." But it was not man who brought animals and plants down to the level they are now, whether domesticated or wild; it was incoherence, by breaking down the order of Series...¹³⁵

In this work he differs only slightly from Rousseau by indicating that it was not solely the fault of the creation of private property and agriculture that inequality first appeared. He explains that certain environmental factors also put pressure on human communities and their collective property. According to Fourier five fragile circumstances were present in the societies of primitive men before their descent into inequality: 1. The

¹³⁵ Fourier, *The Theory of the Four Movements*, p.58.

absence of preconceived ideas (prejudice), and consequently an amorous freedom, 2. The numerical paucity of inhabitants and the hence the superabundance of flocks, fruit, fish, game, etc., 3. The absence of any indicative signs of wealth because of the lacking of any mechanical skills to create precious objects, 4. The absence of wild beasts, 5. The beauty of beings in their original state including men, which implies a kind of esthetic equality, i.e., all human beings before the descent of man into inequality were strong, long lived and beautiful.¹³⁶

This primitive order was characterized much like Rousseau's primitive communities (identified by Fourier as *séries*) by peace: "peace reigned not because of the general well-being but because of a property inherent in the *séries*, namely the development and systematic involvement of the passions which, outside progressive series, clash with each other and give rise to war and every other sort of discord."¹³⁷

In time though, Fourier believes that this order became "disorganized as a result of incidents contrary to the five productive circumstances"¹³⁸, mainly by one major factor, demographic growth.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Fourier, The Theory of the Four Movements, p.58.

¹³⁷ Fourier, The Theory of the Four Movements, p.59.

¹³⁸ Fourier, The Theory of the Four Movements, p.59.

¹³⁹ According to Roberto Massari this characteristic of Fourier's state of nature theory would be Malthusian in origin: "De Malthus et de son école, Fourier a retenu l'existence d'une loi liée au développement même de l'humanité et par conséquent, inexorable: la civilisation est menacée d'une crise de surpopulation, non en termes absolus, mais compte tenu de la disponibilité des ressources." Massari, "Fourier et la Révolution Universelle," p.77.

In turn the original abundance of food was put into question because agriculture had not been sufficiently developed. This increase in population also attracted predators which resulted in the creation of the first weapons. Then, according to Fourier, men began to resort to pillaging and the hoarding of foodstuffs, i.e., to private property. This necessity to protect these foodstuffs from other men resulted in the separation of man from man and its incoherent social structures. This situation was aggravated and the weapons which were originally created to defend themselves against animals were turned against other men and war appeared. Marriage also arose from this idea of property and became the principal method of acquiring and exchanging wealth. Marriage in turn necessitated tribal chiefs which arose to settle disputes between families and decree the marriages. In the fear of losing their power and wealth created by this incoherence, these chiefs in turn distorted the past so that all men forgot their original state of happiness.

Therefore, with Rousseau, Fourier breaks with the Hobbesian notion of “men were wolves toward men” by inserting man into a primitive community. Therefore, anthropologically, as in Rousseau, men are also understood as social in Fourier. Though it is interesting to note that, unlike Rousseau, Fourier believes much like Hobbes does, that it is the lack of natural resources which led to human conflict. However, Fourier maintains unlike Hobbes in agreement with Rousseau, that political and economic inequality did not have their root in natural inequality. For Fourier, as in Rousseau’s account might does not make right. Therefore, there is in Fourier a distinction between natural and “artificial” inequality. Hence Fourier held that there is no original natural equality in primitive community but that there is an equality of property, or simply the lack of a notion of

property:

However it is important to realize that there was no equality or community (in the agricultural sense) in the primitive order. Philosophic chimeras of that sort, as I have said, are incompatible with progressive Series, which demand the opposite, a scale of inequalities.¹⁴⁰

This inequality, which Rousseau identifies in the *Origin and Foundation of Inequality of Mankind* (1755), as “natural inequality,” appears in Fourier’s account more as a difference of capacities and talents than as an actual inequality. Compare these two passages:

Rousseau:

I conceive that there are two kinds of inequality among men the human species; one, which I call natural or physical, because it is established by nature, and consists in the difference of age, health, bodily strength, and the qualitties of the mind or of the soul: and it depends on a kind of convention, and is established, or at least authorized by the consent of men. This latter consists of the different privileges which some men enjoy to the prejudice of others; such as that of being more rich, more honoured, more powerful, or even in a position to exact obedience.¹⁴¹

Fourier:

In those days the race easily lived to the age of a hundred and twenty-eight (eight times sixteen); the rest of the earth’s progeny was equally vigorous, while the roses of creation were more beautiful than the ones in our gardens. This general perfection continued throughout the first social period, which was made possible by the concurrence of these five circumstances...The passion were more violent than they are today. Men had none of that pastoral simplicity that has never existed anywhere outside poetry. They were proud, sensual, and the slaves of their desires; women and children were the same; the so-called vices were pledges of concord, and will be pledges of social harmony once more, as soon as the Series are

¹⁴⁰ Fourier, The Theory of the Four Movements, p.59.

¹⁴¹ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, The Social Contract and Discourses. London: Everyman’s Library, J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1988, p.49.

reconstituted... Human beings of all races were free of prejudice when they were created, and nowhere dreamed of making amorous freedom a crime: their vigour and longevity gave them quite contrary opinion, and led them to orgies, incest and the most lubricious customs.¹⁴²

The above seems to imply that for Fourier, unlike Rousseau and Hobbes, there was less prejudice and a greater amount of original natural equality in primitive communities. This greater equality, in strength of passions, health, and longevity, in turn led men to form passionnal Series in which their vigorous natures could be fulfilled and expressed. Hence, original primitive community of men appears in Fourier's account as a passionnal social unity.

In turn another important similarity exists between Rousseau and Fourier. In Fourier as in Rousseau the solution to the present age and its political, moral and economic inequality also lies in an attempt to reconstitute, albeit in a changed form, the original equality and inequality through a collective project:

I think I have adequately described the causes for our remaining in complete ignorance of primitive society. This ignorance will cease: the theory of Social Movement will bring the subject back into the light, and describe the mechanism of that first stage of society in full detail, and show how it was succeeded by savagery, the patriarchate and barbarism.¹⁴³

However, it is important to note that the proposed solutions are very different. In *The Social Contract* (1762) Rousseau's republic and general will appear political in nature, whereas for Fourier, the solution of the reconstituting of the passionate *séries* appears in the first place as economic. Contrary to Rousseau they operate outside of the

¹⁴² Fourier, The Theory of the Four Movements, p.59.

¹⁴³ Fourier, The Theory of the Four Movements, p.61.

state as examples of the potential and feasibility of a radical reordering of industry in order to regain the original strength, freedom and equality of human passions. In this way Fourier seems more optimistic about the degree that we can return to an original Edenic state. In other words the political and judicial frameworks of the enlightenment are rejected more so than in Rousseau. The root of this *écart*, as we have shown earlier is romantic socialism's sensualism/materialism, i.e., its concern for the concrete needs of humanity.

However, what we have attempted to show by the above is that Fourier proceeds essentially in the same way as Rousseau in justifying social change. In other words, his argument also appears as a kind of "romantic naturalism." By doing this Fourier essentially adopts the Rousseauian language of rights by endowing man with a greater degree of individual and social passions. In turn, Fourier inserts himself in the romantic project of developing this new more "natural" source, as opposed to artificial reason, for agency and rights.

However, having said this, it is important to mention here that in Rousseau this source of nature appears as nature itself, i.e., as the anthropological nature of man, whereas for Fourier, this source is both natural (in the case of the five physical and sensorial passions) and divine (the mechanizing or social passions). These general but different affinities to Rousseau are also pointed out by Henri Louvancour in *De Henri de Saint-Simon à Charles Fourier: étude sur le socialisme romantique français 1830*.

(1913):

Fourier lui part de ce principe, que << tout est bien sortant des mains de

l'auteur des choses>> (Rousseau, *L'Emile*), que la <<civilization s'est trompée>>, qu'elle est un <<renversement des vues de la nature>>, un <<développement de tous les vices>> et c'est une idée de Rousseau dont il partage et développe les vues sur les <<passions>> qui sont <<les plus sublimes des oeuvres de Dieu>>. ¹⁴⁴

Therefore, the specificity of Fourier and the romantic socialists vis a vis other romantics and Rousseau specifically, is their "ethical materialism." Unlike the other romantic sensualisms, the uniqueness of the early romantic socialists' is that they extended these rights to include the basic sensual or physical nature of man and wished to order society on this new basis. According to them justice could not be just a "*égalité de droit*" but must also be sensually concrete, what Fourier called a social minimum for everyone:

Equality of rights is another chimera, praiseworthy when considered in the abstract and ridiculous from the standpoint of the means to introduce it into civilization. The first right of men is the right to work and the right to a minimum. ¹⁴⁵

And:

Freedom from worry is a form of happiness experienced by the animals. But it is also a human right, although it can only be enjoyed in Civilization by the very rich. ¹⁴⁶

A just society must in turn have the five following elements:

1. The integral direction of movement
2. Economy in the choice of means.
3. Distributive justice.
4. The universality of providence.
5. Unity of

¹⁴⁴ Louvancour, De Henri de Saint-Simon à Charles Fourier: Étude sur le socialisme romantique français de 1830., p.53.

¹⁴⁵ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VII, p.117-119, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.162.

¹⁴⁶ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome III, p.167-170, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.144.

system.¹⁴⁷

The first, relates to encouraging the design of God and aims for the freedom of the individual expression of the divine passions. The second, refers to the ultimate principle of the economy which God chose as passionate attraction. This passionate attraction is the driving force of human affairs, resulting in the greatest division of labour and the greatest amount of passions fulfilled. The third, refers to sensual and passional rights. For Fourier the first sign of the presence of justice should be the guarantee of a social minimum for all, which would increase in proportion to social progress. The fourth, prescribes that the above must be universally applied to all men without violence. Finally, the fifth implies the use and study of attraction which is the known agent of God to harmonize social relations.

We can see by this notion of justice found in Fourier that the French romantic socialists in general sought to incorporate physical needs and sensuous experience into these principles. But it also went much deeper than this, because by doing this, as we have seen earlier when we discussed Fourier's materialism the French romantic socialists also incorporated this sensual nature as a universal understanding of human nature. In doing so they equated human freedom with concrete sensual existence. In turn this is perhaps the most significant change that romanticism as a *Weltanschauung* has brought to political thought, i.e., finding another source, other than the possession of a rational mind and its cognitive faculties for man's agency and its rights. Therefore, romantic socialism and

¹⁴⁷ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.351-355, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.210.

particularly Fourier's, is not simply a heightened concern for equality arising from the French revolution and the economic changes brought on by the industrial revolution, but a reaction against the revolution's attempt to morally replace the Church with a state sanctioned rationally sourced morality, i.e., republican nationalism.. Therefore, Fourier's project shows itself as an attempt to discover a successor, not just of capitalism and Catholicism but also of the revolutionary morality inherited by the enlightenment in favor of the freedom of man's passional and divine nature.¹⁴⁸

Accordingly, Fourier believes that man's true nature cannot be held imprisoned under any rationally determined morality. In fact the specificity of the divine nature of man for Fourier is the neutrality of the senses and passions, which is applied as a kind of overall moral neutrality:

My theory is limited to utilizing the passions just as nature gives them and without changing anything. That is the whole mystery, the whole secret of the calculus of passionate attraction. The theory does not ask whether God was right or wrong to endow human beings with particular passions; the societary order utilizes them without changing anything and just as God has given them.¹⁴⁹

This counter morality seeks in turn to allow individuals the most expression possible of their passionate expressive natures. Though man is held as naturally good the desires of men are not judged right or wrong but fundamentally necessary, i.e., an equal part of men beside reason. Hence, after having asserted the moral neutrality of the senses as human nature, Fourier used it as a source to create a political and economic order

¹⁴⁸ Isambert, Les idées socialistes en France: de 1815 à 1848., p.140.

¹⁴⁹ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome V, p.157, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier., p.205.

where these senses were given their rightful place beside human reason. This new social order has no external moral code to govern or limit the degree and range of these material experiences. In fact Fourier's new economic and social structure aims at a form of total liberty without constraint. This implies a total freedom of the individual from authority moral and/or coercive. Gaston Isambert agrees with this assessment when he writes:

Pour assurer le développement le plus complet des facultés de chacun, pour rendre l'existence phalanstérienne la plus attrayante qu'il soit possible, l'indépendance individuelle doit être presque absolue, et par conséquent toute règle, toute contrainte, toute autorité doit être absente du phalanstère. Fourier croit que c'est dans la satisfaction de tous les désirs qu'est placé le bonheur. Une liberté complète doit donc régner dans la phalange, et non pas seulement cette liberté relative, conciliable avec un <<État>>, telle que l'organisent les hommes politique, dits <<libéraux>>, de la civilisation.¹⁵⁰

Therefore, Fourier also shares the second criterion of romanticism to be added to that of sensualism, because he uses nature as the source of the human self or agency and defends the expression of it. These two criteria will be added to by our third, i.e., that he seeks to reinsert the individual into a new community, in chapter four. It is our opinion that to completely understand Fourier's romanticism one must understand these three traits. The characteristics, that such a conception of agency implies ethically and for a community will be discussed further in chapter four. But first we have also indicated that Fourier linked the esthetic concerns of the Romantic century with its ethical concerns. The above explained the major ethical concerns; we are left with its artistic concerns. This will permit us to further explain in depth his notion of agency and its link to labour. We will do this principally by contrasting Fourier to Taylor.

¹⁵⁰ Isambert, Les idées socialistes en France: de 1815 à 1848., p.141.

b) Taylor's expressivism

Though, as we have seen from the above, Taylor reveals the importance of nature for expressivism and analyzes many significant aspects of romantic subjectivity, we believe that Taylor's account misses important elements of Fourier's own expressivism, namely: the importance of physical and social passions in this expression, the importance of labour as the universal human creative activity, the necessity of creating new social mechanisms to permit this expression to be fulfilled, including the change of the nature of ownership of property, and the importance of a social minimum to this expression. This limitation arises, in our opinion, from Taylor's overemphasis on the beautiful, i.e., on romantic artistic notions of expression attached to a narrow definition of typically romantic forms of art, specifically, literature and poetry, and hence of having ignored the importance of the establishment of a concrete good. This in turn leads to a new definition of human agency which is not, in our opinion, after having explored Fourier's thought, sufficiently emancipatory. These weaknesses in Taylor have been examined by other authors such as Hjort. We will proceed with this comparison between Taylor's conception and that of Fourier's by proceeding first with their similarities then with the above problems of Taylor's conception, and then finally we will discuss their differences with an exploration of Fourier's expressivist theory of labour.

According to Taylor romanticism gives art a new status as immediate expression of nature, without any interference from a mediator. The painter, for example, will simply allow nature to express itself directly through his brush and oils. The sensibilities of the artist, his sentiments and his talent becomes increasingly important. Sensations and

emotions become privileged means or faculties of expression since, according to the romantics, could not be in disharmony with nature. Therefore, nature also becomes a source of contention against the rationalism of the ancients and of the enlightenment. Romantic philosophers, Rousseau and Herder in particular, will begin to defend and encourage the use of the individual's right to his sentiments and his imagination. These rights are defended by Fourier when he in turn defends the passionate nature of man:

Human beings are in a similar position. Their attraction can attain its goal, universal harmony, only when the two prerequisites of harmony are available. These are luxury and the theory... Since you are unable to repress the passions, you study the means of accommodating them to established practices, laws and circumstances. You would do better to study the means of changing the circumstances so as to adopt them to the designs of Attraction.¹⁵¹

For Taylor nature in turn becomes a source found equally in everyone, there is a democratization of divine knowledge, of its potentiality, and an extension of its artistic expression. This manifests itself with the importance romantics place on intuition. This interior "nature as source" according to Taylor makes self-articulation ultimately important. We can only understand this source and share it with others by articulating it. This in particular will affect Taylor's views on the importance of language. For Taylor we are "self-interpreting animals" and this process of self-interpretation is what he will name the expressivism of the romantics. With this expressivism the source of Truth changes and becomes identifiable by the intuition or revelations of single individuals. Therefore, man becomes the privileged animal, because he can have a direct contact with the Truth or

¹⁵¹ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome XI, p. 328-331, translated in Beecher Jonathan and Bienvenu Richard, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.214.

what he calls Hyper goods. This also indicates a profound philosophical change; rational philosophy can no longer be viewed as a simple proof of divine creation and the Cartesian monopoly on the divine proof was broken. Because men can participate individually in revelation through intuition reason begins to lose its “revealing” importance and becomes a simple tool of reproduction and identification:

And what can stifle it is precisely the disengaged stance of calculating reason, the view of nature from the outside, as merely observed order.¹⁵²

Therefore, reason also takes on a negative connotation because it can act as an oppressive force by suppressing intuition and its access to the source. This is also the core of Fourier’s criticism of *les philosophes et les sciences incertaines*:

A fourth philosophical science, moral philosophy, which also boasts of making man its study, does just the opposite. The only art that the moralists know is that perverting human nature and repressing the soul’s impulses or passionate attractions on the grounds that they are not suited to civilization and barbarian order. The real problem on the contrary is to discover the means of escaping the civilized barbarian order. This order is in conflict with man’s passions and inclinations, all of which tend to unity, to domestic and agricultural association.¹⁵³

However, it is important to remember that neither Taylor nor Fourier are anti-rationalists. For Fourier reason has its place, like many other romantics, in identifying nature and especially in helping meet the needs of the passions that are used in turn for ordering society on a new basis. Reason therefore is a tool, or possibly a faculty of intuition, and is considered inferior to direct experience and feeling for revelation:

¹⁵² Taylor, Charles Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity, p.370.

¹⁵³ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome III, p.109-123, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.160.

Le libre arbitre se divisera en simple et en composé: simple s'il n'opte que pour la raison seule ou la passion seule, composé s'il opte pour tous les deux, s'il parvient à une raison coincidente avec l'attraction passionnée.¹⁵⁴

But again the role of this reason is limited for Fourier and it cannot impose order nor can it go against the free will and expressive natures of the human individual's intuition:

Du moment qu'on met en jeu la contrainte, les châtiments, pour faire exécuter un ordre, il ne remplit aucune condition de Libre Arbitre, et si on veut nous persuader que Dieu ou la loi nous donne cette prérogative, il faut d'abord supprimer les enfers, les gibets et autres voies coercitives, borner les ressorts du Mouvement aux deux éléments indiqués, savoir: l'impulsion directe ou adhésion irréfléchie, qu'on nomme Attraction, et l'impulsion indirecte ou adhésion réfléchie, qu'on nomme Raison positive, convenance de plaisir calculé.¹⁵⁵

Therefore, according to Taylor and Fourier the romantics remain skeptical about the power of reason because of its potential to objectify nature and separate it from man. For Fourier it is also through our sentiments that we can find a direct purer and more spontaneous contact with moral knowledge, i.e., with God and his divine social plan for man. The belief in this is reflected in Fourier's own discoveries of passionate attraction and his overwhelming confidence in his philosophy's revelations.

Where Taylor and Fourier fundamentally differ is in the chosen medium of their agents. For Taylor the language of poetry is the language "par excellence" for communing with nature. He is in agreement with Wordsworth and Aristotle when he writes:

Poetry is the most philosophical of all writing...its object is truth, not individual and local, but general and operative; not standing upon external testimony but

¹⁵⁴ Fourier, L'attraction passionnée, p.99.

¹⁵⁵ Fourier, L'attraction passionnée, p.99.

carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony.¹⁵⁶

Therefore, poetry, specifically romantic, for Taylor is the privileged individual language of this self-interpretation and articulation. We will come back to the differences between Taylor and Fourier after we discuss the problems with this poetic agency. This will reveal Taylor's artistically narrow understanding of agency and allow us to contrast to it Fourier's more universal one in the next section.

First, it must be pointed out that Taylor agrees with our premise that this historical development of romanticism is not a simple fragmentation of a society. Nor are these developments contrary to the existence of a God:

And indeed, a theory of nature as a source can be combined with some form of Christian faith, following the lead of Deism in which God's relation to us passes mainly through his order, as we can see in Rousseau, and later the German Romantics.¹⁵⁷

This combination is also what we find in Fourier and its universal harmony as the destiny of man. However the important thing is that this development is not one of total subjectivism, but of the subjectification of expression, of what is common to all human beings, what Taylor will call Hyper goods. However, what was lost to these poets according to Taylor is the exploration of a rationally contrived "objective" cosmological order. Far from being a negative development it is with this subjectification that cosmological orders can be individually revealed and discovered. This of course constitutes a direct attack by the romantics on the basic premises of the objectivity of the

¹⁵⁶ Taylor, Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity, p.372.

¹⁵⁷ Taylor, Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity, p.370.

authors of the enlightenment and of the secularization of the transcendental order. This does not mean that there is no common fabric which unite men, on the contrary, for Taylor like Sayre, Lowy and Lukacs, the romantics are creators of new social projects, e.g., the poet Rilke or the philosophers of nationalism such as Herder and Fichte. We could also add to this list the French romantic socialists, Fourier and Saint-Simon. For Taylor this conception of art and the articulation of the common Hyper goods effectively opposes the negative forms of the modern notion of the self, i.e., of instrumentalism and utilitarianism. We will show later in the next chapter that they are also challenged by Fourier's passions which are themselves forms of revealed Hyper goods. According to Taylor the romantic conception of art can also create a human solidarity which has been lost. This certainly was also the goal of Fourier's revelation of the passions.

c) Taylor's artistically narrow understanding of agency

However, problems exist with including Fourier as an example of Taylor's romantic poetic conception of agency. Essentially, Taylor conceives of the romantic political movement as an artistic and philosophical movement. His choice of the romantic poets as the purest examples of human agents is limited in scope and universality. This mistake is essentially the same made by other romantics, i.e., of having defended the beautiful and forgotten the good, that we revealed earlier by showing Fourier's criticism of the *romanesques*.¹⁵⁸ Met Hjort, a critic of Taylor, tends to agree with this assessment. He also agrees with us that Taylor's philosophy of expressivism does not limit itself to a simple analysis of literature. For Hjort, it is also evident that with *Sources of the Self*

¹⁵⁸ See p.11.

Taylor is conceiving a new model of the modern agent. For Hjort, the principal question of Taylor's philosophical project is a definition of the way in which the modern agent acts ethically. So Taylor's theory could be considered a philosophical anthropology. According to Hjort, Taylor's comments on literature are more important in their capacity to support a new conception of the individual. According to Hjort, the tendency of Taylor to accept the esthetic theories of romanticism puts him into a position in which he must answer for its weaknesses; for example he is forced to accept a normative conception of art and a condescending view of popular culture. His mistake was to confuse the esthetic with the political, i.e., the beautiful with the good, and not to have separated the political teachings of the romantics from their artistic theories and works. His choices of authors are also predetermined by a historical definition of what is considered romantic literature, i.e., what is considered beautiful. In other words, he must accept what is considered the canon of romantic literature, of which Fourier and many other French romantics, which tend to be more political in general because of the effects of the revolution, are not a part. In turn, this artistic definition attached to notions of the beautiful poses a serious problem for Taylor's conception of esthetic autonomy:

My main point is that Taylor fails to recognize the ways in which literary practices are shaped by self-interest and social conflict and power. Although my task here is to identify problems with Taylor's approach to literature, it is worth noting in passing that these issues are similarly overlooked in his theory of agency, as well as in his genealogy of the modern self.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ Hjort, Mette, "Litterature: Romantic expression or strategic interaction?" In Tully, James, The Philosophy of Charles Taylor In Question. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p.127.

In other words, according to Hjort, Taylor does not understand literature as part of a complex world of relations of power, another point which would distance him from Fourier.

Furthermore, Taylor's agent is passive to a rapport with Truth and Hyper goods even if he articulates these Hyper goods through the creativity of articulation. Divinity is exterior to man to be revealed and expressed through him. This probably shows to what extent Taylor is influenced by Catholic theology. Whereas, in Fourier men are partly divine and are actors in the fulfillment of God's plans, which seems closer to the Gnostics and their Gospel of St Thomas than to Catholic orthodoxy.¹⁶⁰ However, the importance of Taylor according to Hjort, is that in a philosophical climate of non agency, Taylor has proposed a new subtle debate which does not reject all the gains of modernity, naturalism and scientific reason. Therefore, he permits the opening of a debate where the agent is construed as more than the simple instrumental conception. However, for Hjort, Taylor's

¹⁶⁰ The connection between Fourier and various mystic societies in Lyon, like the Freemasons, which often embody Gnostic traditions, is historically unclear. We know that he wrote and had a great respect for certain marginal faiths like that of the Freemasons (a whole chapter is dedicated to them in his first book Theory of Four Movements (1808) and that he was anti-Catholic Church hierarchy. However, the similarities with Fourier and The Gospel of St Thomas (the principal gospel of the Gnostics) are hard to ignore; consider the following passages: On the unity of the passions and divinity: "Jesus said: Woe to the Flesh that depends on the soul; woe to the soul that depends on the flesh." (p.75). On the divinity of Man and its passionate nature: "Jesus said: That which you have will save you if you bring it forth from yourselves. That which you do not have within you will kill you if you do not have it within you" (p.74). Further on the divinity of Man and the Natural world: "Jesus said: It is , i who am the light which is above them all. It is , i who am the All. From me did All come forth, and unto me did All extend. Split a piece of wood, and , i am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there"(p.53). Translations taken from: Mayotte, R.A., The Complete Jesus. South Royalton, Vermont: Steerforth Press, 1998.

conception stipulates that an agent cannot be truly free without recognizing certain conditions, and a background beyond the reach of the agent himself without however following this reasoning to its logical end. Taylor's theory is an attempted equilibrium between the agent and his culture and according to Hjort its emphasis on recognition of the other fails to put into consideration all the effects on the agent. However, we agree with Hjort that the strength of Taylor's argument is to recognize that the expressivist ethic of the romantics can be found in our society and our increasing idealization of the artist. But according to Hjort, by doing this Taylor puts too much importance of the romantic conception of art. Taylor's mistake is to have interpreted the whole tradition of modern art and literature in terms and within a romantic bourgeois or traditional conception of art. For our purposes this would certainly explain his overlooking of the romantic socialists. Additionally, this uniquely romantic conception of esthetics is a limited conception which excludes and considers inferior all practical, technical or theoretical ideas of art which do not conform to its criteria. It is in this way that the theory is limited to art and forgets labour as basic human activity. Therefore, his agency model has a limited emancipatory potential because the activity of his agent is already pre-determined. Through this filter Taylor reduces art as an *oeuvre*, i.e., a particularly genial autonomous creation, a magnificent being in itself created by man. Art exists for beauty's sake, abstracted in a specific way from the objective world; art does not serve an end, but is a means in itself. Art, therefore, has its specific laws and norms. The intention of Taylor is to safeguard art from economic or other interests. He is afraid to accept a form of art which would be part of the economic market and of its class interests. But the exclusion of these factors and the

restrained conception of art that Taylor proposes is profoundly problematic for romantic socialism's understanding of the expressive agent. A theory of art must take into consideration how art is produced and the conditions in which the art is created, as well as the way in which art is utilized, the factors which, according to Hjort, Taylor forgets in his effort to safeguard artistic autonomy. What Taylor seems to forget is that art can become itself a factor effecting and creating social division and is part of the ideological and technological superstructure which ultimately serves the hierarchy of relations of power. In this way it can also serve as a cultural weapon against this superstructure:

What is construed as esthetically valuable is not, in other words a simple given (as found in Taylor) but is itself a social construction involving social interests and conflict. And if literature is marked by conflict, then literary interaction is strategic in crucial aspects.¹⁶¹

Therefore, artistic sensibilities become class based, and having a good artistic education simply means being part of the good class. A perspective Fourier would completely reject. This explains the abstraction of bourgeois art and explains the profoundly useful or interested art of the working class (e.g., social realism and other forms of revolutionary art) or the peasantry (e.g., folk art). Accordingly Taylor risks being taken as an apologist for "la haute culture bourgeoise." He risks defending what is viewed as esthetically legitimate by the dominating class. Therefore, Taylor would be defending a heteronomous conception of art, and a heteronomous conception of the expressive agent in our society. His effort to safeguard the autonomy of art and with it modern agency would have failed.

¹⁶¹ Hjort, "Litterature: Romantic expression or strategic interaction?" in Tully, The Philosophy of Charles Taylor In Question, p.132.

In conclusion, we believe, that the problem in Taylor's explanation of expressivism and its relevance for understanding Fourier, lies in not having chosen a more universal notion of agency and praxis. To have limited it to a illuminated and educated (at least artistically) class of poets using a specific poetic language and in turn chosen as the true examples of human agents. This is due to two major difficulties in his theory that we do not find in Fourier. Firstly, a defense of a limited and legitimate artistic expression linked to the intuition of Hyper goods which presents a significant problem for their universality. Secondly, a refusal or simple omission to extend expressivism to the most universal human activity, i.e., labour, which is an evident refusal to conceive of a new conception of work inspired by the romantics and their expressivism. This extension would have essentially made Taylor's ethic revolutionary which it is not nor does it aspire to be, for it remains profoundly liberal.

d) Fourier's philosophy of labour as an expressive sensual individualism and its theory of justice and emancipation

Taylor's discovery of a romantic artistic agency is also present in Fourier but in a much more extended way. With Fourier this romantic notion of agency and its expressivist ethic and medium is broadened beyond the narrow confines of the "beautiful" and its artistic expression to include the basic human activity of work. As we explained this broadening comes from his sensualism and in this way Fourier will be unique in understanding the depth and ramifications of the "elevation of the senses" of romanticism. Fourier will understand, unlike Taylor, that if man's nature is sensual expressive and that sensuality is what permits men to know "the real," then every man must have access to the

necessary conditions to satisfy the passions which arise from these senses. In other words he must intuit, identify, and objectify his passional nature. Satisfying the senses and their passions goes beyond the simple needs of survival, which are according to Fourier attached only to the five basic physical senses. It concerns more than the simple reproduction of the corporeal self. It assumes an ability by every individual not only poets or artists to recognize, interpret, speculate, articulate and create one's desires, needs and passions, without the psychological coercion of morality determining their content. For Fourier the real emancipation of man is to be able not only to decide on his "good life" and intuit "Hyper goods," like it is in Taylor's account, but also to decide what his desires and passions demand of him and to act concretely to realize them, i.e., to have a direct relationship with the content of his soul and with God. In Taylor's words to act in a greater way than artistically for the realization of the revealed Hyper goods. This led Fourier to choose work as the praxis of this expression and to universalize it:

Rather it was his belief that work could become the gratification of man's deepest needs and the fullest expression of his powers. For Fourier, full human self-realization was only possible through work.¹⁶²

This aimed to create and guarantee the right to a concrete project emanating from our subjectivity. Fourier's socialist project therefore is Rousseau's authenticity, what Taylor's identifies of romantic expressivism, made concretely possible. This explains the Fourierist slogan: *Le droit au travail!*

Therefore, labour is conceived at the same time as being: creative praxis and poiesis, instrumental and expressive, reproductive and creative, physical and

¹⁶² Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World., p.274.

psychological.

Pour la première fois également, les relations entre chaque travailleur et son travail prennent les couleurs de la vie. Fourier nous met en présence à la fois de ce que le travailleur ressent dans son corps du fait de travailler en <<civilization>> (maladies professionnelles) et de ce qu'il éprouve dans sa conscience (dégoût du travail).¹⁶³

It is part of man's very divine nature to share in the transformation of God's creation. Because of this Fourier recognizes the important role of human sensuous activity. The ability to create on the basis of the passions is what distinguishes men from animals, though the animal soul is also considered partly divine in origin. The difference essentially is the possession of free will. For Fourier one needs only consciously intuit his passions to enter into a free and harmonious relationship with nature, God and other human beings. This is finally how the artistic esthetic ideals of nature as a source of artistic creation and the democratization (subjectification) of this conception of poesis of the romantics found their way into the philosophy of labour of Charles Fourier.

Therefore, for Fourier, there is no privileged poetic individual language only the language, of the passions, i.e., his language of the anatomy of the passions. There is however a privileged social language for the expressive order, and this is the analogy of the musical language of harmonies; we will come back to this analogy in the next chapter on Fourier's social estheticism. But the privileged individual and social medium of

¹⁶³ Dautry, Jean, "La notion de travail chez Saint-Simon et Fourier." Journal de psychologie. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 52ème année, no.1, janvier-mars, 1955, p.74.

expression (the praxis of poiesis) is attractive work.¹⁶⁴ Attractive work is in turn the praxis of expressive passionate intuition:

The sophists are used to considering nature in a simplistic manner, and they have allowed their mania for simplification to confuse the debate about freedom. They have not been able to distinguish between the simple, compound and bi-compound varieties of freedom. For more than a thousand years they neglected the first of freedoms, material and bodily freedom.¹⁶⁵

Material and bodily freedom refers to the minimums of which Fourier guarantees as rights to all individuals in the *phalanstère*:

There is not a trace of it in civilized legislation which increases the poverty of men in proportion to their industriousness. The first sign of justice should be to guarantee the people a minimum which would increase in proportion to social progress...Is there any justice in a state of affairs where progress of industry does not even guarantee the poor a chance to obtain work?¹⁶⁶

And:

The first right of men is the right to work and the right to a minimum.¹⁶⁷

But work is not a simple right for it is also a constitutive right of society. Men are

¹⁶⁴ With one possible addition, i.e., the sexual act taken as eros in the broadest sense, which is both expressive and social in Fourier's philosophy. There are only two fundamentally creative activities for Fourier which need to be freed, i.e., sex and its accompanying eros and work. The distinction between these two are in turn reduced when work becomes pleasurable, and pleasures become work. This way it becomes feasible that Fourier can write of the honorable place of respect the phalanstériens will give to the sex worker.

¹⁶⁵ Beecher, Charles Fourier The Visionary and His World., p.155.

¹⁶⁶ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.351-355, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier., p.209.

¹⁶⁷ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VII, p.117-119, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier., p.161.

brought together through the laws of passionate attraction, but it is work that organizes men socially:

Le travail est fortement pensé comme concernant non un individu, quelconque et abstrait, mais un ensemble d'hommes concrets.¹⁶⁸

However, primarily work must obey the expression of the passions found in all individuals, including all the basic five physical and seven social passions, revealed to us by Fourier. The passions must be given heed in the type of work practiced and in the choice of the profession:

La division du travail doit être très grande, afin de permettre à chaque sexe et à chaque âge de choisir telle ou telle fonction qui lui conviendra, sauf à justifier de probité et d'aptitude.¹⁶⁹

However, not all passions are given equal weight in this model. The most important passion for work is the butterfly or *papillonne*; that passion that leads us to diversity in expressive activity. This passion according to Fourier prescribes that the actual task of technical work must not last more than about two hours (this will also be discussed further in chapter four). This is to ensure the constant presence of passion and the maximization of creative output, to make civilized industry into attractive industry.

But in order for work and industry to become attractive, i.e., expressive, the following conditions must be met:

1. Each worker must be an associate who is compensated by dividend and not by

¹⁶⁸ Dautry, "La notion de travail chez Saint-Simon et Fourier." Journal de psychologie, p.74.

¹⁶⁹ Isambert, Les idées socialistes en France: de 1815 à 1848., p.135.

wages.¹⁷⁰ This seeks to save Man's passions and creative energies from the exploitative relationship between employer and employee and unite men who were once divided. Every person owns the property worked upon, and no one person can claim full ownership. This reveals Fourier's socialism. 2. Each person must be paid in proportion to his contribution in capital, work, and talent. This serves as a guarantee that an order of equality does not suppress the natural inequalities inherent in the divine distribution of the passions (the soul) and of their expression. This three fold distribution of wealth will be discussed later in chapter four. 3. Work sessions must be varied about eight times a day because, according to Fourier man cannot remain enthusiastic about an agricultural or manufacturing task, or any task for that matter, for more than an hour and a half to two hours. This does not assume that all possess the passion of the butterfly to the same degree. It simply aims specifically to ensure that the passions are not crushed by the oppressive conditions of work seen in the prior stages of history; Barbarism and Civilization. It also ensures that men have many passions and can exercise as many of them daily. It also serves as a stimulant for work, avoiding the boredom of repetitive hours at the same task, which in turn should ensure a high level of production. 4. These tasks must be performed by groups of friends who have gathered together spontaneously and who are stimulated and intrigued by love or amicable rivalry. This is supposed to ensure the fullest realization of the passions and create a greater human solidarity. Working with others who have the same passions permits the full development of individual passions.

¹⁷⁰ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome III, p.117-119, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.274-275. All seven are taken from this translation.

Whereas, competing against other groups guarantees that the competitive passions such as the cabalist are fulfilled. This form of amicable competition also constitutes a passionate incentive to increase production. Spontaneous refers to the absence of any coercive organization that would impede this freedom or competition. Accordingly, man must feel part of a social group, and this feeling is filled by the economic unit called *groupes* which share the same passionate form of work. A series of these *groupes* of the same passionate profession is in turn called a *série* and a group of these *séries* a *phalanstère*.¹⁷¹ The social dimensions of this philosophy of labour and its social organizations will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. 5. Workshops, field, and gardens must offer the worker the enticements of elegance and cleanliness. This condition assures the proper education of the senses and the satisfaction of the passions attached to these five senses, and makes the very place of work an outlet and object for the transformation by the workers through their own creativities. This is also an effort of Fourier's to integrate man back into nature,

¹⁷¹ It is interesting to note that Fourier invents this word by borrowing the military term, phalanx. This is due in part, because he wishes to stress the degree of unity and organization that his social project entails. But it is also clear that this is an invention, and that he did not intend a synonymous correlation between *phalanstère* and phalanx, if he had intended this he would have simply used the term phalanx. This is clear because a phalanx, or military unit, leaves little room for individual expressivism, passionate sensualism, or voluptuousness. Furthermore, it is clear that Fourier's society is in no way spartan or stoic like a military unit. It must also be noted with this that Fourier's use of language is notoriously unorthodox and creative. According to Beecher the origin of this term may be cosmological: "the study of Fourier's earliest manuscripts shows that at the outset of his career he was trying in a very literal way to make use of concepts borrowed from physics and astronomy in the development of his psychological and social theories. Thus his ideal community, which he eventually named the Phalanx, was originally sometimes called, *le tourbillon*; and the names he originally gave to three distributive passions (later named the Cabalist, Butterfly and Composite) explicitly identified them as varieties of movement: Composition, Oscillation, and Progression. Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World, p.67.

i.e., *l'harmonie universelle*. 6. The division of labor must be carried to the supreme degree in order to allot suitable tasks to people of each sex and every age. This division unlike capitalist division does not serve efficiency and profit, but on the contrary serves the variety of passionable individuals which once satisfied should lead to a collective voluptuousness (*voluptés*). It also aims to make sure that all personality types and passions can be given a specific suitable activity and that the utmost productive capacity is fulfilled.

7. The distribution of tasks must make sure that every man, woman or child has the right to work, or the right to take part at any time in any kind of work for which she is qualified. Much like the sixth this aims to give a certain sensual minimum to all members as well as access to expressively transforming attractive work and the objects upon which to labour. This is further developed in the next and final condition which is simply identified as X. Which stipulates that in this new order it is essential that all people enjoy a guarantee of well-being and a welfare minimum standard of life sufficient for their present and future needs and survival. This guarantee must free them from all anxiety either for their own welfare or for the welfare of their dependants. This is a broadening of the seventh condition and shows to what extent Fourier was concerned with welfare as the basic condition. According to Fourier it was only when men, women and children were freed from the necessity to work that they could become capable of regarding work as creative and attractive.¹⁷²

In conclusion all seven of these conditions serve the expressivist and sensualist understanding of agency and labour developed by Fourier and the theory of justice or

¹⁷² Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and his World, p.278.

emancipation which logically flows from it. In turn, these conditions aim to change history by increasing the passional and sensual nature of man giving him new passions and new work, and therefore they constitute the dynamic framework for the historical development of continuously sensually growing individuals:

His essential aim was to create an institutional framework within which work might serve as the ally rather than the enemy of the immutable human passions.¹⁷³

This is also shown by the gradual evolution of Fourier's historical stages to a greater and greater degrees of social harmony:

Periods preceding the development of industry:

K. Bastard, without man.

1. Primitive, known as Eden.

2. Savage state or inertia.

Fragmented, deceitful and repugnant industry:

3. Patriarchate, light industry.

4. Barbarism, medium industry.

5. Civilization, large scale industry. (This is the stage of Fourier's society)

Societary, truthful and attractive industry:

6. Guaranteeism, semi association.

7. Sociantism, simple association.

8. Harmonism, compound association.¹⁷⁴

However, the above framework and stages depend on condition X being fulfilled socially. The period of history in which X is fulfilled is referred to as the sixth stage that of *Garantisme*. In turn this guarantee to an expressive minimum of socially organized labour and welfare is an essential stage before *Harmonie* can reign. All preceding stages before

¹⁷³ Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and his World, p.274.

¹⁷⁴ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.xi-xii, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.189.

guaranteeism are characterized by penury, exploitation and passional sublimation and separation between men. Whereas, all stages after guaranteeism will be characterized by a greater degree of social unity, passional expression and unity with nature.

This final social emancipation of men in *Harmonie* will in turn have both spiritual and physical consequences; spiritually it will lead to divine universal harmony, physically to the reign of voluptuousness. In turn it is by the reign of this *Harmonie*, which by satisfying the demands of man's passionate natures through attractive creative and esthetic work, that Fourier believes other physical senses can be developed and discovered. It is the penury of the senses which keeps man from evolving physically. The stage in which the guarantee of passional social work leads to the development of more senses is numbered the ninth and is the beginning of the ascending compound series and the apogee of human happiness and unity with nature (referred to, in *Théories des quatre mouvements et des destinées générales*, as the Northern Crown). It is clear by this that even history is affected by Fourier's romantic expressivism, in that the ultimate historical destiny of man is to increase social unity on the basis of a passional expressive understanding of human agency.

Chapter IV: Fourier's Social Theory, Building a New Esthetic Society

1) Criterion 3: Fourier and the Esthetic Outlook (Social Estheticism)

The major traits of romanticism, i.e., the will to create a new social project (explained in chapter one), the understanding of the the human being on the reality of senses (explained in chapter two), and more importantly its new expressive agency (explained in chapter three) resulted in the penetration of esthetics into all dimensions of life, including the political and religious:

Il ramena toute activité spirituelle à l'esthétique, à l'art, à des théories des valeurs artistiques. Cette expansion de l'esthétique nous indique dès l'abord, une hypertrophie monstrueuse du Moi artistique. L'art, délivré de tous liens, paraît devoir se développer dans l'immense. On proclame qu'il est l'absolu; on réclame un art universel, et l'esprit, la religion, l'Église, la nation et l'État sont emportées par le torrent qui s'élance de l'esthétique, centre du monde.¹⁷⁵

Accordingly, Jacques Barzun believes that more than any other century, the romantic century held, that what was beautiful, i.e., pleasurable to the senses, was also held as socially and universally Good. According to him this new definition of reality was also attached to a radical form of art which sought new sources in nature and in the concrete material conditions of man. This new artistic theory questioned the traditional classical forms of art and sought the popular, or what had been considered vulgar to the enlightenment century, for inspiration. With this new source, romantic artistic sensibility would represents a turn away from the classical emphasis on reproduction to a kind of democratization of poiesis:

¹⁷⁵ Schmitt, Carl, Romantisme Politique, traduit par Pierre Linn. Paris: Librairie Valois, 1927, p.28.

As against the poetic diction and “noble” words, the romanticists admitted all words, especially the neglected host of common words; as against the exclusive use of a selected Graeco-Roman mythology, they took in the Celtic and Germanic; as against the uniform setting tone of classical tragedy, they studied and reproduced the real diversities known as “local color.”....As against the snobbish idea that the products of sophistication and refined living are the only topics worth treating, they began to treasure folk literature and folk music, and to draw subject matter of their art from every class and condition of men.¹⁷⁶

And:

The romanticist idealizes, not in the direction of a common norm, but in the direction of complete expressiveness.¹⁷⁷

Carl Schmitt's comments in *Romantisme Politique* (1928) also tend to support this understanding:

Quelle que soit la diversité des jugements sur l'art romantique, il semble que l'on puisse s'accorder là dessus : il n'est pas représentatif. Et c'est d'autant plus visible, que le romantisme s'est présenté avec la plus grande force comme un mouvement de rénovation artistique.¹⁷⁸

This radicalization and democratization of art also had its ethical and practical consequences, and according to Barzun, it is also because of this that the romantics were sensitive to concrete ethical and social issues:

By the equation romanticism=realism, I do not mean that there is no difference between romanticism and the artistic movement known after 1850 as Realism... What I am concerned with here is to show that the romanticists of the period 1790 to 1850 sought and found not a dream world into which to escape, but a real world in which to live.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego, p.83.

¹⁷⁷ Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego, p.101.

¹⁷⁸ Schmitt, Romantisme Politique, p.27.

¹⁷⁹ Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego, p.82.

And:

But as we have just seen, the issues that the romanticists fought for were larger than their personal selves. They were political, social, and esthetic issues.¹⁸⁰

According to Barzun they did this knowingly and effectively with the spirit of adventurers and enough for the aristocracy and the nobility to fear the movement as a “revolution.”¹⁸¹

Therefore, as we explained earlier, having its root in the sensual nature of agency romanticism recommended that society order itself on the basis of a new intersubjective order satisfying and pleasing the senses for all of humanity. By coupling these sensual and artistic requirements, socialism was born. More specifically, it is the moment that romantic expressive agency and its radicalization and democratization became tied to this social concern for the lot of the masses, revealed by this artistic extension into the popular, that romanticism became revolutionary, or at the very least transformative:

In this regard which I consider not only philosophically but politically important, for true democracy hangs upon it- the romanticists are not less “objective” than their critics. Though it is an ego, a mere subjective self, that does the recording, he is not only willing but able to record the feelings and perceptions of others; he is in effect a dramatist using his own self as a sensitive plate to catch whatever molecular or spiritual motion the outer world may supply.¹⁸²

And:

¹⁸⁰ Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego, p.118.

¹⁸¹ Barzun explains that as an answer to a statement about the very nature of romanticism from King Louis XIV’s Liancourt had to reply “No sire, it is a revolution.” Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego, p.84.

¹⁸² Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego, p. 97.

The very fact that romanticism puts value on both being and becoming, making process a part of the goal in life, should put us on guard against supposing that romantic life is (only) uniform sensation or the repetition of pleasures.¹⁸³

However, having united these two concerns, the problem remained of how the romantics could combine their artistic and almost anarchistic needs for unbridled creative, spiritual and sensual expression with the needs of society and the needs of their sentiments of compassion? In other words how did they conceive of new intersubjective structures for society? Barzun explains that in large part it is Rousseau's idea of *compassion* as a natural passion, developed in *L'Emile*, *La nouvelle Héloïse* and his other works such as *The Discourse On The Origin Of Inequality* and *The Social Contract*, by expounding a universal equality that inspired certain romantics to develop a broader perhaps more fraternal understanding of love. This in turn became the primary passion under which social transformation was justified and made possible:

Classical society makes love a much more exclusive object of interest, both in life and in art, than does romantic society with its wide and diverse interests. And it is of course impossible to exclude love from any definition of human experience. The only question worth considering is how that particular kind of experience shall be treated, individually, socially, and artistically.¹⁸⁴

We believe that, it is in part as a social answer to this typically romantic question, that Fourier's social project and its radical new intersubjectivity can be truly understood. Much like his challenge of hitherto existing materialisms Fourier also challenged hitherto existing definitions of love and eros. This in turn points to a romantic origin for his erotic

¹⁸³ Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego., p.128.

¹⁸⁴ Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego., p.126.

theory and challenge to monogamy so loved by Freudian and feminist critics alike. In turn we believe that it is the combination of his understanding of sensualist expressive agency with this universalization and yet de-transcendentalized of Christian love, originating from both his observations of physical and psychological human suffering and the possibility of a collective triumph over suffering, which reveals the profoundly psychological motivation behind Fourier's project.¹⁸⁵

Romantic striving may therefore be summed up as the effort to create something out of Experience individually acquired. It is this striving because human experience does not automatically dictate its own forms or point out its own values. That the task of man is to discover these for himself is shown by his possession of energies and desires. In other words, biological man, with passions and powers that will not let him stay idle, is a fact of nature.¹⁸⁶

Therefore, we believe that in time the ethical evolution of romanticism's radical esthetic perception of the world resulted in the construction of new conceptions of intersubjectivity and hence new political theories (not necessarily socialist) which were then stigmatized as utopian. Hence, the specificity of romantic socialism is the coming into

¹⁸⁵ We have already mentioned in chapter two in our section on Fourier's supposed a-historicism, the conditions he would have experienced and the shock he felt at the waste and penury before him. However, why is it that in front of so much suffering Fourier did not fall into despair? According to some including Beecher in Charles Fourier: The Utopian and his World, p.276, this could be explained by a particular experience in Liège Belgium, where Fourier saw miners, under the impulse of comradery for eighty buried workers, dig a passage in two days which would have normally taken them two weeks under the motivation of bad pay. For Fourier this was sufficient proof that the right combination of passions could result in social harmony and increased productivity. Later he would use this example to prove in which way *le phalanstère* would increase all production four fold compared to the existing organizations of work, and hence justify its profitability to those sceptics of *la haute société*, with the sufficient money to invest in such a social experiment.

¹⁸⁶ Barzun, Romanticism and the Modern Ego, p.132.

“being” of romanticism, i.e., the social extension or romantic esthetic theory. In this way political theorists became artists and artists became political theorists:

Les événements religieux, moraux, politiques ou scientifiques sont traités par le romantisme, comme des thèmes d’activité artistique ou de critique esthétique. Ils acquièrent sous cette lumière des contours fantastiques et des couleurs étranges.¹⁸⁷

Among these new esthetics and their new intersubjective constructions Fourier’s *phalanstère* is by far the most elaborate. We will refer to this tendency in Fourier’s thought from now on as his social estheticism.

a) Fourier’s intersubjectivity

Having shown the possible romantic origins of Fourier’s new social project, let us turn now to the consequences of his changed romantic expressive agency, i.e., his definition of its intersubjectivity. We will then proceed to the way in which this intersubjectivity has been applied by Fourier to the creation of new social structures in the *phalanstère*. Finally we will show in which way Fourier’s social project is imbued with romantic artistic notions, i.e., social estheticism.

Fourier’s new intersubjectivity and its social project has a dual romantic origin. As we mentioned before, it comes from an originally narrow romantic artistic notion of agency which Fourier extended and secondly, from a romantic social concern for the conditions of the masses. These are understood as either emanating from an extension of Rousseau’s social passions of *compassion* and *pitié*, and/or, as it is in the case of Fourier, from a concrete application of Christian Agape, understood as liberating the sensual and

¹⁸⁷ Schmitt, Romantisme Politique, p.29.

social passions, not confining them.

As we have seen while discussing the differences between Fourier and Helvétius's materialism, Fourier's agent is not atomistic because he possesses innate social passions which can be understood as leading to links of passionate attraction between men. In turn this passionate attraction is "given us by nature prior to any reflection" and is persistent "despite the opposition of reason, duty, prejudice, etc.." ¹⁸⁸

In turn Fourier believes that these innate and persistent social passions and generally passionate attraction naturally bring men toward three social goals: 1. Toward luxury, elegance, splendor, abundance, production, affluence, satisfaction, etc.. or the gratification of the five senses, 2. Toward the formation of groups and series of groups, the establishment of affective ties, 3. Toward the coordination of the passions, character traits, instincts, and consequently toward universal unity.

The first aim is attached to the complete fulfillment of the sensual passions attached to the five physical senses, whereas, more importantly for his theory of intersubjectivity, the second and third aims have more direct social consequences. As mentioned earlier in our discussion of his materialism the second aim results in the formation of *groupes* and *séries* which are of two kinds: 1. Major groups such as friendship and corporative structures, 2. Minor groups of love and family. The third aim, which also points to the heart of Fourier's intersubjective theory, tends to bring men toward the coordination of their passions, character traits, instincts and consequently

¹⁸⁸ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.47-51, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.216.

toward universal unity.

These social aims are directly linked to Fourier's definition of freedom. According to Fourier there are three types of freedom: 1. Simple physical freedom which is without social freedom, this is the most inferior kind of freedom because it is not active, i.e., does not give the individual access to passional social creative activity 2. Divergent Compound freedom in which there is both active physical and active social freedom. This freedom is found mainly in savage society and, though it allows for more freedom it does not allow for attractive work. 3. Convergent Compound or Bi-Compound freedom, this is the greatest form of freedom, and consists of active physical and social freedom linked with attractive productive work:

It presupposes unified adherence, the individual consent of every worker-man, woman and child-and their impassioned collaboration in the performance of work and in the maintenance of the established order. This sort of liberty is the destiny of man.¹⁸⁹

Therefore, man's passions and the very definition of human freedom is defined within Fourier as social.

But how is it that this social freedom is possible and is there not inherent in a passional understanding of man, a utilitarianism, or the possibility that the passions of the individual will conflict with those of other and the needs of society? This problem is solved by Fourier through the innate presence in man of mechanizing and distributive passions.

The mechanizing/distributive passions, i.e., the composite, the cabalist and the butterfly, in turn lead to a natural harmonizing between the individual and society through

¹⁸⁹ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier, Tome III, p.162-156, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.142.

the combination of the potentially conflictual sensual passions: 1. Taste, 2. Touch, 3. Sight, 4. Hearing, 5. Smell — with the four affective passions— 6. Friendship, 7. Ambition, 8. Love, 9. Familism. This harmonization is only possible due to the state of equilibrium created by the mechanizing/distributive passions:

Everyone would like to keep his passion in a state of equilibrium such that the expression of a single passion would facilitate the expression of all others. Under such conditions ambition and love would lead only to the formation of fruitful relationships and never to disappointment; gluttony would promote good health instead of ruining it; and in general people would acquire wealth and health in abandoning themselves blindly to their passions. This sort of equilibrium, which comes from an unthinking surrender to nature, is granted to the animals and denied to the civilized man, the barbarian and the savage. Passion benefits the animal, but it leads man to his ruin. ¹⁹⁰

This may seem impossible to the civilized man but this is mainly because of civilization's repressive influence through morality and social structures, especially incoherent industry and its organization of labour. It is because of these that the individual is incapable of abandoning himself totally to his mechanizing/distributive passions, and that he is in turn separated from other men. Man "is at a present state of war with himself...In civilization, ambition counteracts love, familism friendship and so on for each of the twelve passions."¹⁹¹ Fourier in turn makes a distinction in this civilization between internal and external repression. Internally, we must abandon ourselves along with others to our passion selves by challenging *la moralité des philosophes* which psychologically

¹⁹⁰ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.47-51, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier., p.217.

¹⁹¹ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.47-51, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier., p.217.

constrains the expression of our passions:

This is the origin of the science called morality which attempts to repress the passions. But to repress is not to coordinate, to harmonize. The aim is to achieve the spontaneous coordination of the passions without repressing any of them.¹⁹²

Externally, and if internal repression is to be overcome, the relationship between men must combine the interests of the individual to the interest of the mass.

At present the contrary occurs: the civilized mechanism is a war of each individual against the mass, a system in which it is to everyone's advantage to deceive the public. This is the external discord of the passions. The third goal of attraction is to put them in internal and external harmony with each other...¹⁹³

How this will be done defines Fourier's intersubjectivity which is usually referred to as *harmonie* or *unitéisme* which depends on the innate presence of the mechanizing/distributive passions in all men and our total submission to them:

These three passions have the particular function of forming an directing the series of groups which are the mainspring of societal harmony. Since these series cannot be formed in the civilized order, the three distributive passions have no use in civilization; they are very harmful and only serve to cause disorder.¹⁹⁴

Let us consider the definitions and intersubjective ramifications of two of these all important innate mechanizing and distributive passions: the cabalist and the composite. This will reveal what kind of relationship Fourier theorized in his new society. The third

¹⁹² Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.47-51, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.218.

¹⁹³ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.47-51, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.218.

¹⁹⁴ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome II, p.145-146, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.219.

mechanizing passion, that of the butterfly will be discussed later in the next section on Fourier's social project as evidence of the presence of romantic expressivism as we defined it earlier. By doing this we will also prove that this romantic trait is at the very center of Fourier's socialism as an ordering principle for his *phalanstère*.

The cabalist or partisan spirit is a kind of enthusiasm for rational calculation. If freed it is a healthy passion for social intrigue, a kind of mixing of this passion for rational calculation with personal ambition. In civilization it appears in its deformed state as a quest for dominance over others. However, in a controlled form as in harmony this passion leads to greater unity between men. This passion could almost be considered Machiavellian in nature, i.e., how can an individual calculate the complexity of social interactions so that the desires of his personal ambition come out on top? However, in Fourier this appears not as in *The Prince* as quest for power, but as a need to play and create in the midst of these complex social interactions. As we will see later there is no real power for groups to gain in the Fourierist system. In fact, what is sought by this activity is the enjoyment of the calculation itself, and the recognition by peers of the person's skill for intrigue. It does not lead to separation but to the formation of common ambition groups, or what Fourier will name combinations or parties. The competition between these groups for recognition is considered beneficial to society. Therefore, for Fourier it is possible to combine competitive passions with harmony. This is in part due to the strength of the next passion, the composite.

The composite is the opposite of the cabalist; it is an enthusiasm which excludes completely the use of reason. It is abandonment and complete seduction by the senses and

passions of the body and the soul. It is through the mechanizing passions a complete unity of the physical sensual desires and the affective social passions, mentioned above. In this way it serves for Fourier as the definition of complete happiness, i.e., the complete harmony between the individual passions and his social passions which are understood in civilization as being deformed. This unity is what radically redefines the relationships found in industry.

What is sought by these new relations, by their unity, and by convergent compound or bi- compound freedom is a return to a harmony of the soul by the end of passional sublimation, a kind of psychological healing and then a social explosion of creativity.¹⁹⁵ Therefore, we agree with Nicole Beaurain in *Charles Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir* (1975) that there is an attempt, albeit confused in Fourier social theory, to find an internal and external symbiosis: "L'homme de Fourier vit une symbiose avec lui-même, ses activités, ses plaisirs, ses oeuvres, les autres et le monde."¹⁹⁶

This symbiosis operates at three different levels: between man and himself (passional revelation/end of alienation), with other men (social harmony/end of harmful competition and separation) and with nature (universal unity/end of atheism). But this harmonization depends on a changed relationship between men. The relationship proposed between individuals in his *Nouveau monde amoureux et sociétaire* is far more intimate

¹⁹⁵ Malon, Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours., p.104.

¹⁹⁶ Beaurain, "Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier., p.231.

than that found in civilization:

Le phalanstère n'est donc pas simplement une coopérative de production et de consommation, c'est un lieu total, habité par un homme total qui a surmonté les séparations.¹⁹⁷

The realization of the individual's passions in turn depends in part on his relationship with others in social structures which free the passions. It is only through these relationships where passions must be identified, recognized, shared and encouraged that they can then be objectified and made to be transformative. Men, therefore, must consciously cease their repressive functions, duties, tendencies, roles and habits in civilization's repressive social structures and replace them with the passionate ones. A society is in turn solely judged in its capacity to free its members to love one another. For the individual other subjects become partners in the passionate transformation of the world. Hence there is a natural form of recognition in Fourier's system, of respect and encouragement of the passions of the other. In fact this goes beyond a simple respect or recognition and constitutes a symbiotic link with other subjects. This characterization of Fourier's intersubjectivity is also shared by Beaurain:

L'homme se fait et s'épanouit dans le travail, mais dans le travail passionnant et passionné. L'homme sans travail est un homme seul et le plaisir ne se trouve que dans la société: dans les liens sociaux. L'homme ne peut donner libre cours à ses passions que dans une société qui l'y encourage, ou le plein essor des passions est la condition du bonheur.¹⁹⁸

Therefore, in Fourier's social project man is re-integrated into the whole of the

¹⁹⁷ Beaurain, "Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier., p.219.

¹⁹⁸ Beaurain, "Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier., p.231.

species through socially passionate and creative work. It is through this kind of labour that the original holistic relationship between men, nature and God is reconstituted. Accordingly, the loving relationship with the other is essential in the subjective transformation of the world. It is by sharing our passions with others in concrete relationships through new organizations of labour, in the *groupes*, *series* and *phalanstères*, that our passions are, objectified, heightened, perfected and further developed: “In the theory of the passions the term group refers to a number of individuals who are united by a shared taste for the exercise of a particular function.”¹⁹⁹

This unity in turn begins a mechanism of passional interaction and evolution in which the individual’s transformative potential is increased. Therefore, the interaction of diverse personality types results in a dynamic exchange which passionately advances the members of such a society and eventually the whole species. This can even be a physical evolution, for example as we have mentioned before it is only with the reign of voluptuousness and guaranteeism that we can develop new physical senses. In this way the cycle is begun, passions are perpetuated, and the original creative strength of man in the state of nature can be partially reconstructed. This constitutes a social creation of genius, since genius as we discussed earlier is understood by Fourier, as in Blake, as the possession of strong passions. The increase in strength and number of these passions in turn must serve the productive needs of society, if the cycle initiated by the original exchange is not to be halted by a new separation between men: “When this mechanism is

¹⁹⁹ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.55-59, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.225.

put to the test, it will become clear that even the most ridiculed personalities, men like Molière's Harpagon, have an eminently useful social role to play."²⁰⁰ Fourier believes that in turn this passional link between individuals will result in greater productive capacities than in civilized capitalism. Because, as his experience in Liège, Belgium proved to him, when work and passion are united and made creative, there naturally results a greater productive capacity:

The calculus of the passionate series is going to establish a principle flattering to the whole human race: it will demonstrate that all tastes which are not harmful or annoying to others have a valuable function in the societary state. They will become useful as soon as they are developed in series —that is, according to a graduated scale in which each nuance of taste is presented by a group.²⁰¹

In conclusion, Fourier effectively points out in which way society and its structures affect the actual relationship between individual subjects as well as the relationships of these subjects to the objective world. He also understands to what degree that social relationships affects the degree at which the individual can know himself, i.e., his soul, his humanity and his natural undeformed passions. For Fourier much like Marx we are alienated from the natural unity of men, i.e., from our species being, or in Kropotkian terms from our mutual aid instincts and through this also from nature. Furthermore, with this understanding Fourier attempts to create a holistic social project where passional authenticity and the sharing of that authenticity is considered the greatest social good: "En

²⁰⁰ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.340-344, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier., p.223.

²⁰¹ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome III, p.19-25, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier., p.232.

Harmonie ma vie est Une et indivisible, parce que divisée à l'infini; c'est la vraie communauté, le monde de la transparence..."²⁰²

Furthermore, he links this social project of increased creativity to nature and the divine plan of God:

Cette nature, il doit la domestiquer et non la dominer despotiquement; il se doit d'en connaître les lois qui sont aussi le lois humaines, en user, en servir, mais jamais en abuser, de crainte de finir par la stériliser...Fourier est l'un de premiers avec Saint-Simon, à avoir prédit l'usure d'une nature qu'on s'est habitué à considérer au cours du temps comme inépuisable. Il s'élève violemment contre l'exploitation forcée et sauvage des civilisés. La nature ne demande qu'à servir l'homme mais humainement; l'humanité de l'homme doit s'étendre à la nature. Il en sera ainsi en Harmonie.²⁰³

And:

Pour que les passions soient bonnes, il faut pouvoir combiner. Cet ordre nouveau que Fourier veut fonder, c'est l'harmonie, réalisation du projet divin.²⁰⁴

Fourier's new intersubjectivity could be summed up as follows:

God/Nature's Universal Consciousness <--> senses/feeling/intuition/revelation/reason <-->
Subject <--> passions
Subject/passions <--> Subject/passions
Subjects/passions <--> Objects/Nature
Objects/Nature <--> God/Nature's Universal Consciousness

b) the papillonne as an ordering principle

But how is that this new holistic intersubjectivity concretely linked with the needs

²⁰² Beaurain, "Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier., p.223.

²⁰³ Beaurain, "Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier., p.237.

²⁰⁴ Beaurain, "Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier., p.210.

of Fourier's agency as a passional expressivism? Furthermore, which new social structures did he create for them? These will be the subjects of the next two sections.

Though it is safe to say that Fourier's expressivism is present in almost every facet of his work, the specific sensual agency of the individual and its expression is safeguarded by one key ordering or mechanizing passion, *la papillonne*. As we have seen before Fourier's social passions are numerous but of these social passions three mechanizing (those passions that bring and organize men together) passions are held in particular to serve as cohesion for society: *la cabaliste*, which is *intrigante*, *la papillonne* which is *alternante* and *la composite* which is *exaltante*. Furthermore, these mechanizing passions are so important to Fourier's system because they create, organize, ensure and in fact depend on Fourier's basic social and productive units, i.e., his *groupes* and *séries*:

These three passions have a single aim: to form series of groups, to graduate them, to contrast them in competition, to enmesh them.²⁰⁵

Though all of these passions are of great importance to his expressive sensualism *la papillonne* is the most important to the micro-level organization of a *phalanstère*. In this way it is also the passion which most radically challenges the organization of labour under the conditions of capitalism. It is defined by Fourier as:

The alternating or butterfly is the need of periodic change, contrasting situations, changes of scene, piquant incidents, novelties apt to create illusions, to stimulate both the senses and the soul. This need is felt with moderation every hour, and it is acutely felt every two hours. If it is not satisfied, a man falls into indifference and boredom. It is the passion which in the social mechanisms holds the highest rank among the twelve; it is the universal agent of transition. The complete expression of this passion gives

²⁰⁵ Fourier, *Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier*. Tome II, p.145-146, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, *The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier*, p.220.

rise to a form of happiness attributed to the Parisian sybarites: "the art of living so well and so fast," the variety of linking of pleasures, rapidity of movement.²⁰⁶

According to Beecher inherent in this definition is the necessity to give to all workers the choice of their own tasks, the chance to change jobs frequently on a daily basis, and the right to form spontaneous working groups where the basic passions would have free play, i.e., to be passionately expressive in their daily lives:

Fourier's theory of attractive labour was designed to reveal and utilize work instincts, which he believed were part of the psyche of every human being. At the same time it aimed to ensure that all the passions, and above all the mechanizing passions, would be satisfied in and through the experience of work.²⁰⁷

Let us consider this organization for the expression of the individual's relationship to his soul and in turn to the divine plan more concretely by exploring a *phalanstérien's* daily life.

Mondor's day would be divided in twenty one distinct sections chosen by him:

1. Sleep from 10:30 at night to 3:00 in the morning,
2. 3:30 rising preparations,
3. 4:00 Morning court, review of last night's adventures.
4. 4:30 Breakfast, followed by the industrial parade,
5. 5:30 Session with group of hunters
6. 7:00 Session with group of fishermen
7. 8:00 Lunch, Newspapers
8. 9:00 Session with a group of horticulturists, under tent
9. 10:00 Mass
10. 10:30 Session with a group of pheasant breeders
11. 11:30 Session at the library
12. 1:00 Dinner

²⁰⁶ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome II, p.145-146, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, p.220.

²⁰⁷ Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World., 289.

13. 2:30 Session with the greenhouse group
14. 4:00 Session with the group of exotic plant growers
15. 5:00 Session with the fish tank group
16. 6:00 Snack in the fields
17. 6:30 Session with the sheep raising group
18. 8:00 Session at exchange
19. 9:00 Supper, fifth meal
20. 9:30 Art exhibition, concert, dance, theater, receptions
21. Bed²⁰⁸

We see in this model that there is plenty of time for the fulfilling of the major components of the human soul as Fourier defines them, i.e., sensual enjoyment, including five meals, social enjoyment in the evenings, at meals and more importantly within the working *groupes*, and spiritual/intellectual pursuits at mass and in the library. Therefore, there is time for harmony with the self, the other, and the transcendent.

It is interesting to note the hectic nature of this organization as well as the little time allotted for sleep. Considering Beecher's comments this could come from Fourier's positivism, in that Fourier would have believed that the *phalanstère* would have by an improved diet, advanced hygiene, coupled with the varied work session, eliminated the possibility of work fatigue and disease and limited the need for sleep. It is clear that these characteristics depend on certain advances in medicine and food harvesting which depend on an advanced form of technology in the service of the people. The specific social structures of this model will be discussed later in the chapter.

c) Fourier inventor of new social rhythms

Essentially as can be seen by the above what the *papillonne*, the *composite* and the

²⁰⁸ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.68, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World, p. 283-282.

cabaliste result in and constitute is Fourier's creation of new industrial and agricultural rhythms for society in order to create a new framework permitting individual and social expressive sensualism. Pierre Ansart also believes that in this Fourier invented new social rhythms:

Saint-Simon, Fourier, Proudhon ont amplement médité sur ce point: ils ont, à des titres divers, pris appui sur une dénonciation des rythmes imposés dans la société oppressive pour montrer la nécessité d'inventer d'autres rythmes, fondés sur des principes différents et parcourus par une dynamique radicalement neuve.²⁰⁹

According to Ansart the above attempted in their own way to create new rhythms by criticizing the past and announcing the destruction of the present. In this way they participated in a form of apocalyptic messianic socialism. However, in our opinion only two of them are imbued with romantic social estheticism, i.e., as we mentioned in the introduction the two romantic socialists Fourier and Saint-Simon. We exclude Proudhon principally on the grounds that his Federalism, though inventing new social rhythms, does not do so on esthetic notions. In fact Proudhon refused categorically to be a creator of systems:

Others offer you the spectacle of genius wrestling Nature's secrets from her, and unfolding before you her sublime messages; you will find here only a series of experiments upon justice and right, a sort of verification of the weights and measures of your conscience. The operations shall be conducted under your very eyes, and you shall weigh the result. Nevertheless, I build no system. I ask an end to privilege, the abolition of slavery, equality of rights, and the reign of law. Justice, nothing else: that is the alpha and the omega of my argument: to others I leave the business

²⁰⁹ Ansart, "Les inventeurs des rythmes sociaux." Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. Vol.XCI, 38 année, juillet-décembre, 1991. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1991, p.230.

of governing the world.²¹⁰

However, in Saint-Simon's system, there is considerable room for artistic concerns. The artist, architect, musician, inventor, sculpture, painter, etc., will have the specific task of reorganizing society. They will be the inventors of the future. According to Saint-Simon after this period of invention will come the time for practical reason. Where the expression of these artists will be guarded by another group called "*la chambre*

²¹⁰ Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph, What is property? Or Inquiry Into the Principle of Right and of Government, (1840) in Fried, Albert, and Sanders, Ronald, Socialist Thought: A Documentary History. New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1964, p.203. The character of Proudhon's Federalism is strictly economic. The ideal community is an anarchy of competing businesses, corporations, communes, where the worker is an equal participant:

Loin d'imaginer une communauté rythmique, il conçoit le monde futur comme une indéfinie pluralité de rythmes sociaux différents, depuis les rythmes propres au travail paysan jusqu'aux rythmes modernes de la grande industrie. Ansart, les inventeurs de rythmes sociaux, p.238.

And:

Dans cette <<compagnie ouvrière>>, le travailleur aurait à gérer son temps et sa carrière au sein de cette communauté de travail. Au lieu de recevoir du capitaliste son programme de travail, il sera membre, à part entière, d'une communauté et participera aux décisions collectives et à l'établissement des règles internes. Il changera de poste de travail selon l'évolution de ses compétences, acquerra une formation selon ses vœux et selon la possibilité de l'entreprise. Ansart, les inventeurs de rythmes sociaux, p.238.

It is also interesting to note that, according to Ansart, Proudhon rejected Fourier's passionnal expressive agency and hence its *papillonne* as the basis on which to order society:

De 1840 à 1865, de la critique du vol propriétaire à la défense de la *capacité politique des classes ouvrières*, Proudhon n'a cessé de méditer, comme Fourier, mais à partir de tout autres principes, aux conditions de l'émancipation sociale. Mais si l'homme est aussi, pour lui, être de désirs et de passions, les passions individuelles ne sauraient, en aucune façon, constituer le principe fondamental d'un ordre de liberté. Pour lui, l'être humain est un être socialisé, engagé dans des relations qui sont, en premier lieu, des relations de travail et d'échange. Ansart, les inventeurs de rythmes sociaux, p.237.

de l'examen.” This chamber is filled with savants, mathematicians, and physicists, etc., who will ensure the feasibility and construction of these new artistic visions. After these times of imagination and examination will come the time of realization. The *chambre d'exécution* will in turn be filled with industrialists which will have the responsibility of organizing the creation of these collective projects. But Saint-Simon also leaves room for popular participation, albeit in a distant and after the fact way:

Cette respiration de l'action sera, d'autre part, soutenue par un imaginaire collectif participant à cette dynamique temporelle.²¹¹

The constant relationship between these four “chambers” is what Ansart considers to be evidence that Saint-Simon creates new social rhythms headed primarily for the future. It is interesting to note for our purposes that the importance of vision is left to the artists and other such inventors and visionaries. It is these people who will determine the look, feel and organization of the societies of the future and though the other three “chambers” do seem to have a role to play, they are secondary in its esthetic conceptualization.

Furthermore, the ethical guiding principle of these new visions in Saint-Simon's system is quite evidently also Christian love, understood in its concrete form with its social concern for the welfare of the masses:

Les dernières pages de Saint-Simon (Nouveau christianisme) renforcent cette nouvelle temporalité en accentuant la positivité du futur: l'action collective ne doit plus seulement viser l'amélioration des conditions matérielles, mais plus précisément <<diriger la société vers le grand but de l'amélioration la plus rapide possible du sort de la classe pauvre>>. En ce

²¹¹ Ansart, “Les inventeurs des rythmes sociaux.” Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, p.232.

sens, la nouvelle rythmique sociale retrouverait, de façon positive, l'aspiration de l'ancien christianisme et sa finalité humaniste: faire du temps le moyen de réaliser l'amélioration de tous et, tout d'abord, des plus pauvres.²¹²

Therefore, we find in the works of Saint-Simon much like in Fourier's both an attention to romantic expressivism and their social concerns, though in Saint-Simon's system the full individual right to expressive life seems to be limited to a chosen few.

However, differences exist both theoretically and practically between Fourier and Saint-Simon's systems. In fact, Fourier is more radical than Saint-Simon both in his criticism of his society and in his expressivism, because he breaks with what Ansart identifies as *l'évolutionisme* of Saint-Simon's economic thought, which is defined as a belief in the progressive nature and evolution of industry.²¹³ For Saint-Simon there is great social potential in the evolution of the means of production; it appears, as in Marx, as a positive social evolution bringing a greater number of men together socially. Whereas, for Fourier the great potential in industry is found only in the evolution of technology and the specialization of tasks, which if used properly should help men to change the nature of their work. There is no recognition of any social or moral, nor ontological or anthropological evolution in existing industrial society. Therefore, the difference between them would lie in part on the fact that Fourier judges his societies industry more harshly:

La critique de Fourier à l'égard de ladite civilisation (<<l'incohérence civilisée>>) se veut radicale, et dénonce ce que l'on pourrait appeler le

²¹² Ansart, "Les inventeurs des rythmes sociaux." Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, p.232.

²¹³ Ansart, "Les inventeurs des rythmes sociaux." Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, p.232.

développementalisme, ou l'évolutionnisme, de Saint-Simon.²¹⁴

But it must also be noted that the root of this difference is their views on the moral nature of labour. In this way Saint-Simon is more positive in his view of the potential for industry to accommodate new social advances. For Saint-Simon, as mentioned earlier, work is necessary against the seduction of the vices. Because of this moral view Saint-Simon keeps characteristics of wage labour in his system, whereas for Fourier labour is conceived as fundamentally expressive and the vices are understood as socially warped passions. For Fourier as we mentioned earlier the industrial organization of his society was absurd and its rhythms oppressive to the expression of the majority of individuals. In turn, Fourier's system is more radical in its romanticism and its social estheticism. There is no doubt that this comes from the differing role of reason in their teleologies, but the exploration of this difference is beyond the scope of this work.

Because of Fourier's more radical nature the need to replace the organization of labour in his society is felt more immediately in his system. This explains in part why Fourier left us with a more detailed social project than Saint-Simon. But we could also conjecture that Fourier was in fact acting as a social artist and had, as the younger social reformer, integrated more fully in his views, *la leçon romantique*. Therefore, the all important task of beginning the social project is filled by him and not left to others to establish the bare minimum for a new social structure. Because there is a greater separation between what exists and what he wants to create than in Saint-Simon's system

²¹⁴ Ansart, "Les inventeurs des rythmes sociaux." Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, p.232.

the need for a minimum basis for society is paramount:

Fourier écarte toute idée de continuité ou de transition entre l'Ancien et le Nouveau Monde. L'acte fondateur de la nouvelle association doit briser radicalement les rythmes asservissants de ladite civilisation et instaurer de tout autres rythmes qui seront conformes aux désirs et aux passions de tous les sociétaires.²¹⁵

As we have seen earlier when we discussed Fourier's definition of emancipation there is a social minimum needed in Fourier's system to ensure the concrete realization of expressivism. Whereas, in Saint-Simon's and it is interesting to note also in Marx's (who also leaves a large role for reason in his system) these characteristics were largely left for the future.

Therefore, for Fourier all hitherto existing societies including his own have been characterized by an absolute separation between "realms," i.e, the separation between the individual, his impulses, God, society and between society, men and God:

For example the civilization of Athens was an incomplete and tainted example of the second phase in that it lacked the pivotal attribute, the liberty of the working people. It was a bastard and falsified second phase, having as its pivot an attribute of barbarism. When one understands the obscurities of the social attributes, of which I am going to describe in eight orders, then it will be simple to dispel all illusions about social progress.²¹⁶

All of these realms are in turn dialectically link so that if one is separated from God's divine plan, one is also separated from himself and from other men, etc... This situation of the individual being at odds with God, himself and society, has existed

²¹⁵ Ansart, "Les inventeurs des rythmes sociaux." Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, p.234.

²¹⁶ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier. Tome VI, p.386-389, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World, p.192.

according to Fourier since man was cast out from the garden of Eden. Since then life has been characterized by repetitive and alienating tasks performed by an infinite amount of men throughout history. Both agriculture and industrial work as we have seen in chapter two are viewed negatively. Through this oppressive work men have become less “themselves”, i.e., have become less what God’s original intention was for them. They have become automatons, machines that are in the service of creation instead of in the process of completing it. This is shown quite subtly by the following quote Fourier chooses from Rousseau to describe his civilization’s current predicament:

Ce ne sont pas là des hommes, il y a quelques bouleversements dont nous ne savons pénétrer.²¹⁷

The first relationship , i.e., that between the individual and God is solved by his new theory of agency discussed earlier in chapter two and three. Whereas, the second relationship between man and his other men is solved by what he will call his *Nouveau Monde Industriel et Sociétaire: Invention du procédé d’industrie attrayante et naturelle distribuée en séries passionnées*. The combination of these two is what he will characterize as *la théorie de l’harmonie universelle*. These in turn serve as a reconciliation of these realms as well as for us as a reconciliation between romanticism’s expressivism and a branch of romanticism’s social concerns.

Ansart in turn shows that the specificity of Fourier’s project is that it attempts to reconcile social rhythms with individual passionate rhythms creating a greater harmony:

Le principe du Nouveau Monde pourra s’exprimer en termes de

²¹⁷ Rousseau in Fourier, *Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier*. Tome VI, title page.

conciliation des rythmes sociaux et des rythmes passionnels: il faut, si l'on veut créer un monde où le bonheur soit une réalité, inventer ou découvrir les moyens d'expression et de combinaison des passions.²¹⁸

However, two questions remain if our exploration of the romantic roots of Fourier's social theory are to be concluded. Where does this notion of social harmony come from and more importantly for our purposes what are the esthetic and romantic origins of these new social rhythms?

d) the analogy of the opera and its harmony

Spiritually we have seen throughout this paper that the idea of Fourier's new harmony is of Christian origin, specifically from an intimate mystical relationship between the human agent and his God, defined as a duty to create a practical social and divine project on earth. However, we have not shown in which way the origin of the solution emanates from romantic art proper. What is this root?

According to Nicole Beaurain in "Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir" (1975), the root of Fourier's vision is musical. According to her, Fourier's vision is operatic and would come from a particular tradition that is tied intimately to Fourier's cosmology. According to her, Fourier understood the cosmos similarly to the Greeks as a place in which the planets live, think, sing, and where every single planet has its character and voice. The cosmos is also a place of harmony of these voices. Man in turn is inserted in this understanding of the cosmos. Man therefore possesses for Fourier similar voices, characteristics and personalities to the planets

²¹⁸ Ansart, "Les inventeurs des rythmes sociaux." Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, p.234.

divinely created by a Christian god. This would be the metaphysical origin of his conception of harmony.

Philosophically Beaurain sees Fourier's roots in Mersenne and Leibnitz which had developed philosophical notions of harmony. However, according to Beaurain these are secondary to his musical inclinations. For Beaurain, it is really through the musical theory of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that this idea of harmony grows. In turn this period corresponds to the great evolution of music. For example in 1705 the physicist Sauveur discovers the harmonies contained in every sound and in 1733 Rameau publishes his treaty on harmonics. After this discovery of harmonies Beaurain explains that music is divided in two distinct traditions, the schools that compose melodies with separate notes and the schools that create harmonics between sounds and voices. This last tradition would have lead directly to the symphonies and grand operas of the composers such as Gluck, Mozart and Wagner.

According to Beaurain Fourier "*baigne dans cette ambiance de création musicale:*"

Fourier adorait l'opéra. En étudiant <<l'ordre combiné>> de l'avenir il cherche comment on produira suffisamment de flutes, de violons et d'orgues pour le monde entier.²¹⁹

Therefore, Fourier is greatly inspired by two major theories: Greek cosmogony and musical theory. The musical theory in turn is more important to the concrete realization of his social theory:

²¹⁹ Beaurain, "Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir." in Lefebvre, Actualité de Fourier, p.211.

La vie dans le phalanstère a quelque chose du grand Opéra de la fin du XVIIIème siècle, avec un corps de ballet, des chœurs, des solistes.²²⁰

Ansart supports this view when he explains that the root of Fourier's social vision is the theory of harmonies found in music and opera:

L'image de l'opéra, chère à Charles Fourier, <<image matérielle de toutes unités>>, exprime au mieux cette intégration harmonieuse et passionnelle: sur la scène se lient parfaitement les chants et les danses selon des <<ordonnances>> variées. Le Phalanstère est, en quelque sorte, une société faite de l'opéra, soumise aux ordres du régisseur.²²¹

It is the specific character of the opera as an artistic medium that serves as this analogy. For in opera we find a multiplicity of characters, i.e., what Fourier will call personality types of which his *phalanstère* is a grouping of 1620 or more comprising at least two sets of the 810 different kinds of personalities discovered by him, yet the opera is also the perfect harmony of choreographed, rhythm, movement, sound and speech between these same characters. Accordingly, Fourier believes that the opera unites all that is needed to satisfy the individual:

K. Intervention mesurée, de tous les âges et sexes.

1. *Chants* ou voix humaine mesurée

2. *Instruments* ou son artificiel mesuré.

3. *Poésie* ou parole mesurée.

4. *Geste* ou expression mesurée.

5. *Danse* ou marche mesurée.

6. *Gymnastique* ou mouvements mesurée.

7. *Peinture* ou {costumes et} ornements mesurés.

²²⁰ Beaurain, "Fourier: Ou la science fiction se fait opéra quand le travail devient plaisir." in Lefebvre, *Actualité de Fourier*, p.212.

²²¹ Ansart, "Les inventeurs des rythmes sociaux." *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, p.235.

X. Mécanisme ou distribution géométrique mesurée.²²²

And in turn every musical note and key fulfills a social passion within

men:

Do Amitié
Mi Amour
Sol Familisme
Si Ambition
Ré Cabaliste
Fa Papillonne
La Composite
Do H Unitéisme
Do B Favoritisme²²³

In this capacity opera also serves as a strong analogy for the actual nature of

Fourier's future society:

Aussi l'opéra sera t-il chéri des Harmoniens, à titre d'image du régime social qui fera leur bonheur. Chez nous (civilisation) il n'est qu'un tableau sans intérêt, sans analogie: notre système social n'établissant que le règne de toutes duplicités politiques et morales, quel charme peut nous offrir une image matérielle de toutes les unités, dont aucune, pas même celle de langage, ne nous est connue?²²⁴

But more importantly it will also serve social cohesion by educating and entertaining children and adults alike and reminding and guaranteeing in the members of society the importance of the harmonization of human activity:

L'Opéra, dans l'état sociétaire, va devenir une source de richesse et de moralité pour les individus de toutes les classes et de tous les âges,

²²² Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier: Théorie de l'unité universelle. Tome V, p.77.

²²³ Beecher, Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World, p.343.

²²⁴ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier: Théorie de l'unité universelle. Tome V, p.84.

principalement pour l'enfant, en le formant dans l'unité-mesurée, qui est pour lui {un gage de santé et} une sources de bénéfices en tous genres d'industrie.²²⁵

And finally by doing so opera also reveals itself as a divine art serving the plan of God revealed by the harmony found in all the cosmos:

L'opéra est donc l'assemblage de tous les accords matériels {du charme qui en résulte}, et l'ensemble actif de l'esprit de Dieu, ou l'esprit d'unité mesurée. Or, si l'éducation de l'enfant doit commencer par la culture du matériel, c'est en l'enrôlant de bonne heure à l'opéra, qu'on pourra le familiariser avec toutes les branches d'unité matérielle, d'ou il s'élèvera facilement aux unité spirituelles.²²⁶

In turn opera is the best analogy and method of uniting the three realms of the human soul in a new passional and creative harmony. In this way, through the passion of the *papillonne* and the operatic arts , romantic art, its agency and its social estheticism found its way into Fourier's social theory.

The organization of the *phalanstère* explained in the following and last section will reveal the concrete method of the realization of this harmonization, between the individual and his *papillonne* and the collective and the divinity.

2) The Esthetic Project and le phalanstère

All of Fourier's romantic concerns, i.e., expressive sensualism, creative agency, Christian love, social welfare, and inserting the individual into new more holistic and just social and esthetic society (collectivism), culminate with the creation of his *phalanstère*.

²²⁵ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier:Théorie de l'unité universelle. Tome V, p.75.

²²⁶ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes Charles Fourier:Théorie de l'unité universelle. Tome V, p.77-78.

As mentioned earlier in chapter two, all human beings share the same basic passional anatomy. However, it is the degree and extent to which specific individuals possess these twelve different passions which differ them from each other and constitute their unique personalities. According to Fourier there are only 810 different possible personalities. However, these appear more as loosely defined characteristics than as actual descriptions, and seem to serve more as a proof that there is a high number of personalities, in turn justifying through this plurality, the necessity of his passional theory of expressive labour, and its resulting stratified and specialized division of labour.

As we have seen earlier at a micro level, the individual's day is divided into parts in accordance with his or her²²⁷ passions and in accord with the *papillonne* as an ordering principle. Within this division are found the first social units identified by Fourier, i.e., the *groupes*. The *groupes* are characterized by two or more people sharing the same particular productive activity around a single passion. For example Mondor's day mentioned earlier, shows him participating in no less than eight of these *groupes*, corresponding to eight of his passions.

More than one of these *groupes*, or productive units, which share the same passion is called a *série passionnée*. Four hundred of these *séries passionnées*, numbering between 1,800 to 2,000 members, would constitute enough for a *phalanstère*.

Each *phalanstère* is based on a harmonious combination of these economic units, or *séries*. Which are in turn based on a harmonious combination of individuals, defined in our section on Fourier's theory of intersubjectivity. Examples could include: *Ménages*,

²²⁷ Women are considered equal participants in the *phalanstère*.

*Culture, Fabrique, Education, Science, Beaux Arts, etc.*²²⁸ Each of these *phalanstères* are in turn divided into separate *séries* and *groupes*. For example the *phalanstère* of *Culture* might have *séries* of: *Forests, Champs, Prairies, Everdure, Potagers, Parterres*, etc., found in it. In turn within these *séries*, *groupes* would be organized on the basis of tasks, or types of work specific to the type of plant or object they are cultivating or making and to the passions of each individual. For example within a *séries* of rose growers, there are some who would plant and others who would prune and again others who would breed, etc. Considering the above it seems clear to us that there is a progressive development, in Fourier's social theory, from the individual's passional expressivism to greater and greater economic units. The basis therefore, of the organisation of the *phalanstère* appears to be Fourier's passional romantic expressivism. This also shows to what extent Fourier's new social project is economic in nature.

Each *série* is governed by a "*conseil des directeurs*". These directors organize the *groupes* within the *séries* in ascending and descending order, in friendly competition or in harmony in accordance with the cabalist and composite mechanizing and distributive passions. In other words they establish a hierarchy between *séries* in order to ensure passional harmony or passional competition. This additionally serves the ultimate perfection of the object worked upon, e.g., a new species or colour of rose:

Depuis les nombreuses escouades adonnées aux fonctions minimales, aux variétés les plus légères, on remonte par les séries *d'espèce*, de *genre*, *d'ordre* et de *classe* jusqu'à la *Régence centrale*, formée par la réunion des sommités des différentes hiérarchies et qui est imprimé par l'ensemble des

²²⁸ Examples taken from Malon's Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours, p.105.

séries et des travaux et par le mouvement harmonique et convergent.²²⁹

The *régence centrale* in turn organizes the higher level of *séries* within a *phalanstère*. These *séries* either cooperate or compete with others in the *phalanstère* and so on between the *phalanstères* themselves. These *régences* and *directeurs* are elected by universal human suffrage and each *phalanstériens* has the right to participate as candidates. Control in turn is exercised on this structure by the members through this voice. But how is this structurally guaranteed? The way in which this will be guaranteed will also reveal the importance of the collective ownership of property and the just distribution of goods.

According to Malon millions of *phalanstères* will result in a macro level *harmonie universelle*, but only if they stay true to what Fourier defines as the following characteristics:

Richesse proportionnelle, Bonheur individuel, Règne de la justice, Unité d'action and Economie de ressorts.²³⁰

These characteristics are in turn guaranteed by the collective ownership and governing of the economy. In the formation of a *phalanstère* the collective ownership of land will be asserted by handing out a proportionate amount of shares to the amount originally owned. The land is then used in common by the productive advances of highly developed technology. In this way original ownership of property is kept, though the use

²²⁹ Malon, Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours., p.105.

²³⁰ Fourier in Malon, Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours., p.107.

of it is collectivized to ensure that everyone has access to the objective minimum necessary for the expression of their passional selves. The products directly resulting from the use of the land are divided as follows: 5/12 on the basis of work, 4/12 on the basis of original capital, and 3/12 on the basis of talent. It is interesting to note here that the greatest proportion is reserved for the amount worked, but that talent, defined here as “ceux qui se seront distingués dans les travaux par leur intelligence, leur activité et leur vigueur,” as a divine variable is also given its due proportion.²³¹ This in turn seems to work both, as an incentive to hard work and as a respect to the original divinely determined passionate natures of the members. In this way Fourier’s expressivism also appears as the basis of the definition of just distribution.

Furthermore, the distribution on the basis of capital serve to ensures the support of large industrialists and land owners, though its function and result is to effectively take away complete control over property from any one group or class. Nonetheless, capital is given 4/12 of the wealth produced. Distribution of the basis of work and talent therefore, are supposed to guarantee the proper control and just distribution over wealth by the majority of its members, resulting in the creation of a harmony between social classes. The governing structure is responsible for ensuring that this is applied fairly, while ensuring the right of individual’s to the passional organization of work. What is this governing structure?

Each *phalanstères* is ruled by a *régence centrale* comprising sixteen sovereigns

²³¹ Fourier in Malon, Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu’ à nos jours., p.107, in the footnote.

fourteen of which are elected and two of which are hereditary monarchs. This seems to be an effort on behalf of Fourier not to alienate the nobility, however no true discernable powers seem to be invested in the monarchs, and they seem to play a more symbolic role in the many festivals surrounding work and art. Certain monarchs are also named within the smaller *séries* but only for a limited term. Again this seems to be a detail which is supposed to permit the passion of the cabalist, as a rational calculation of ambition, to be expressed. Those possessing this passion strongly can compete in turn for these positions. More importantly, real power is invested in the fourteen sovereigns which are elected by their particular *séries*, to govern for them as kind of trade masters or presidents, usually bearing a title similar to their work, for example: *Le Haut Musicien*, or *La Haute Ouvrière*. The *régence centrale* therefore, is the representative body of a particular economic unit, i.e., of the *phalanstère*. This seems to imply that this election is on the basis of productive merit as a tradesman or worker and not on a political basis. Absent from this electoral process is the ambitious passion of the cabalist, as well as any idea of nationhood, race or culture. Culture is to be developed within the *phalanstère* and is linked to the productive activity of its individuals: "Le phalanstère et l'avéole sociale....le phalanstère s'élève au centre de la culture."²³² This is a professed universalism, away from civilized racial, cultural, and national separation between men. In fact, the nation state and its national based economy is eventually completely eschewed for trade between these small scale organizations. In turn, *phalanstères* trade internationally and beyond national

²³² Malon, Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours., p.104.

boundaries. Therefore, politics appear as in Marx as an economic superstructure, which simply and democratically manages the economy. The difference lies in the role of the superstructure. In the late Marx (as seen earlier) and the communist movement this superstructure manages the economy of the principles of the growth of productive forces, whereas for Fourier's it manages both on the principles of growth and on the principles of passionate attraction. Therefore, it aims to organize trade and production, while protecting the right of the individual to passionate and creative work. Therefore, its ultimate aim, is the elimination of the civilized alienation of every individual's passionate self.

Finally, it is because we all share, regardless of culture, race, gender or age, in this definition of passionate agency, that these organizations constitute a universal framework applicable to all of humanity. The result of this is the unity of these *phalanstères* internationally. This as Malon points would result in a form of international economic federation:

Il résulterait de cette organisation un gouvernement unitaire, centre des grandes industries exercées par les nations des différents continents; il serait le point culminant de la hiérarchie administrative, établie comme un réseau sur le monde entier; il dirigerait les armées industrielles, dont les immenses travaux auraient pour but d'opérer à la surface du globe de profondes modifications, comme le reboisement des chaînes de montagnes effritées, la conquête agricole des vastes déserts, l'établissement des routes de premier ordre irradiant de Constantinople, la capitale du Globe, aux capitales continentales et reliant celles-ci entre elles. Ce gouvernement central, par son administration unitaire, équilibrerait la production et la consommation des continents et présiderait aux échanges commerciaux de leurs denrées et produits respectifs. En un mot, il dirigerait toutes les affaires du globe, toutes les opérations d'ensemble; il en serait le Haut régulateur industriel.²³³

²³³ Malon, Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours., p.120.

It is by this international government, called la grande *hiérarchie sphérique* (*sphérique* refers to the sphere of planet earth), that the universal harmony between men, and the intersubjective esthetic model of the opera as a harmony, is internationalized. It is through obeying the principles of both this romantic passionate expressivism and its theory of intersubjectivity, i.e., by organizing its micro level social structures, the *groupes* and *séries passionnées*, *phalanstères* and its macro principles of justice through its structures, i.e., *conseil des directeurs*, *régence centrale* and *hiérarchie sphérique*, that harmony amongst men can reign.

The large scale modifications must in turn be harmonized with the universal conscience in order to complete *l'harmonie universelle*, in which men become re-integrated demi-gods and complete the work began by God, by changing the very *arôme* of the earth:

D'où résultera: la désinfection et le parfum des mers, par le fluide boréal, une rosée aromatique sur toutes les terres de la Couronne et un printemps perpétuel.²³⁴

Considering current ozone research Fourier was centuries ahead of his time in suggesting that this changing of human social productive activity to one of harmony with nature would change the scent of the earth and the melting of the ice caps. The changing of scent is really only a primitive description of the changing of gases, since gases are primarily smelt. It is safe to say, that, if the negative ecological impact of industrialization affects the ozone layer, than an increase of positive effects, beyond the original natural

²³⁴ Fourier in Malon, Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours, p.96.

state of the environment would also do the same. This is precisely what Fourier was promoting when he wanted to fertilize the desert climates and reforest mountain ranges made barren by exploitation. Though this is expressed by replacing the acrid smell of industry with the sweet smell of the *phalanstères*, it nonetheless remains a surprisingly prophetic ecological theory.

What this tends to suggest is that, other than the defending the individual's expressivism and its new intersubjectivity, through the creation of new economic and governing structures, there is also present in Fourier's social theory, a particular definition of beauty. Beauty is predominately understood as God's creation in its pristine natural form. In fact, the primary reason for choosing the country side, in which to place the *phalanstère*, was the perceived need to insert man into the presence of this beauty. This in turn aimed to re-insert man into nature, by redefining his relationship to nature and its divine plan. At every level of his system there is an attention to this esthetic. Having criticized romanticism for not having given enough attention to making the link between the beautiful, the real and the good, Fourier will compensate by dedicating long passages and descriptions to the esthetic nature of his social project:

Ce bien-être, ce beau de civilisation, s'allie chez les harmoniens avec le bon, avec les charmes de l'industrie productive.²³⁵

The following passage will serve as an example of the degree to which Fourier was willing to go to ensure the expression of the notions of beauty in his social project. At the same time this will serve along with the analogy of the opera as final evidence of his social

²³⁵ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier: Théorie de l'unité universelle. Tome V, p.498.

estheticism:

Les rues galleries sont une méthode de communication interne qui suffirait seule à faire dédaigner les palais et les belles villes de civilisation. Quiconque aura vu les rues galleries d'une Phalange, envisagera le plus beau palais civilisé comme un lieu d'exil, un manoir d'idiots qui, en 3000 ans d'études sur l'architecture, n'ont pas encore appris à se loger sainement et commodément; ils n'ont su spéculer que sur le luxe simple, sans avoir eu aucune idée du composé {ou collectif}...Ceux qui ont vu la galerie du Louvre ou Musée de Paris peuvent la considérer comme modèle d'une rue galerie d'Harmonie... Ainsi les coutumes et la politique d'Harmonie tendent à reporter sur l'industrie productive tout l'éclat, tout l'appui du luxe qui aujourd'hui ne s'attache qu'aux fonctions improductives, et laisse les cultures et ateliers dans la plus dégoûtante misère... Alors chacun, au lieu d'employer son superflu à construire des châteaux individuels qui seraient inutiles en Harmonie dépensera en bâtisse de beaux ateliers, beaux belvédères, beaux hangars pour ses sectes favorites. Cet effet général dans le mécanisme des séries passionnels donne au luxe une direction productive. Le luxe, d'Harmonie se porte sur le travail utile, sur les sciences, sur les arts et notamment sur la cuisine.²³⁶

Finally, and to close this second part of this thesis by giving Fourier the last word so to say, let us consider the general advantages that he believed such a holistic and harmonious organization of society would bring about:

Produit quadruplé, économie de ressorts, climatures restaurées, travail attrayant, instruction attrayante, accord des intérêts, éclosions et respects des vocations, équilibre et bonne direction des passions, défrichement, assainissement et embellissement de tout le globe, manutention méthodique et intégrale, le vice rendu nuisible et par conséquent extirpé, toutes les maladies bientôt vaincues, la nature humaine assainie, le bonheur général, l'harmonie universelle, etc.²³⁷

²³⁶ Fourier, Oeuvres Complètes de Charles Fourier: Théorie de l'unité universelle. Tome V, p.546.

²³⁷ Fourier in Malon, Histoire du socialisme depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours, p.123.

3) Conclusion to Part Two

In part two we have essentially indicated what we think is the romantic nature of Fourier's system. At first we outlined what we thought to be Fourier's expressivism and secondly what we understood as Fourier's intersubjectivity and social theory. In the first instance we showed that his agency came from an expressive notion born with Rousseau with what Taylor called romanticism's return to *Nature as source*. We also discovered that this nature for Fourier was defined as God's divine social plan mediated through man's passionate soul. According to Fourier this plan was first applied by him to human social interaction, through the discovery of theory of passionate attraction. In turn this showed, unlike Taylor, that Fourier extended this expressivism to man's basic transformative activity by proposing passionate and attractive labour as the privileged transformative activity of men. Men had according to Fourier a basic duty to the realization of God's plans which entails an intimate mystical relationship with God in order to create a new order based on a new organization of labour permitting his passions to be expressed. In the second instance we showed that this theory of agency, borrowed from the romantics, logically resulted in an esthetic theory of social transformation and a new passion intersubjective relationship between men. We then explored in which way this social transformation defined a new non- utilitarian and holistic intersubjectivity, in which the harmony of men and their authentic expression of the passions, defined as the soul was attached to a passional organization of work. This new authentic intersubjectivity aimed to unite men back with their natural passions, with other men, with nature and with God.

Furthermore, we also found the presence of romantic social estheticism in the

character of Fourier's new social institutions. We also concluded with Ansart and Beaurain that romantic musical theory and specifically romantic opera, served as Fourier's esthetic analogy for his new society. Additionally we highlighted, according to this dual understanding of Fourier's social project and with the help of Malon's description of Fourier's economic and political structures, what we thought were the salient points which showed in which way its organization served both his expressive and his new intersubjectivity. We concluded from this that individual control (property, and democracy) and esthetic considerations rank highly in his social project.

Finally, we have also showed, secondarily, that the major difference between Saint-Simon (like Marx) and Fourier was the role of reason in their thought and the degree that this role effected the way they broke with the existing economic framework of their society, and the relationship with nature implied therein.

In doing the above we believe we have discovered that what lies behind Fourier's theory, and that of the other early socialist figure of Saint-Simon, is a radically different conception of human agency and society, which profoundly questions the enlightenment notions, capitalism increasingly instrumental notions, and scientific socialism notions of agency by creating a different, non-instrumental intersubjective passionate relationship between men and nature. Because of this, there seems to us to be a great social, ecological and spiritual potential in his theory.

4) General conclusion

We began this exploration of Fourier by declaring that Fourier's system participated in romanticism in three important and different ways, in its: sensualism,

expressivism and collectivism. We also held that Fourier's philosophy could be understood as a radical romanticism, by being a synthesis of the economic, political and esthetic concerns of the romantic century.

It has not been a simple task to identify Fourier's romanticism. In part, because Fourier is at the same time as being romantic also an impressive innovator. For example, with our discussion on his sensualism we discovered that though he was a sensualist, his theory was also unique in its Newtonian deistic sensual materialism. Though, we must also add that the origin of this materialism can be found in the Rousseauian naturalist argument, i.e., in the passions as opposed to reason, which makes it, at least in its justification, a romantic theory. The same can be said for his expressivism. Though we discovered that it was undeniably Rousseauian in origin, Fourier extended this originally narrow artistic conception, to labour. By doing this he distanced himself from the artistic language of the romantics while retaining their emphasis on creativity. However, in his collectivism, Fourier shows himself much more of a romantic than in the two preceding criteria. His understanding of man as possessing alienated social passions is a direct link with Rousseau. Also, his concern for a concrete form of Christian love is also typically romantic. The intersubjective insertion of the individual into an esthetic whole also participates in the romantic need to reinsert the individual into his community understood as emanating, after Sayre and Lowy, from the experience of disenfranchisement of the post-revolutionary period and its economic transformations.

What precisely are we left with after this exploration? In our opinion we now have important indications of the links between romanticism as a *Weltanschauung* and early

socialism. Though it is true that Fourier develops his own theory, the basis on which he does so are all romantic traits: 1. An understanding of man as non-rational, passionate, sensual and creative, 2. The need to permit man to create on the basis of this understanding, 3. The need to understand man as being part of a community. We do not feel that having linked his sensualism to God and Newton, or having extended expressivism to include labour, contradicts romanticism proper. In fact, while Fourier adopted a scientific (Newtonian) and transcendental (Christian deistic) language in order to prove the existence of divine passions, he was nonetheless primarily defending an extended passional form of romantic expressivism. Additionally, when he extended this expressivism to include labour the result was, not a rational econo-logos, borrowed from the classical liberals, but the extension of that expressivism to basic human activity and welfare. It can be further conjectured that if Fourier sought an objective economic science away from the passional expression of the individual then he would have constructed a very different and probably much less romantic social project.

What precisely stands as proof of this romantic link? We believe that we have found four major indications: 1. Fourier's subjective theory is both sensual and social and breaks with the earlier enlightenment notions of atomistic strictly rational materialism, 2. This materialism clearly inserts itself into the romantic century by its passional expressivism, which also mainly understood a non-rational understanding of agency, 3. His argument for endowing man with social passions is Rousseauian in origin, and, 4. His social project re-inserts his agent into a holistic and esthetic social and metaphysical project with direct links to romantic artistic notions.

The first of our indications was ascertained through a comparison with Marx and Helvétius, in which we found that it was through a form of deism that Fourier comes back to a more active subjectivity than the French materialists. The second and third of our indications was revealed by comparisons with Taylor and Rousseau, in which we found that Fourier adopts a Rousseauian language of rights by justifying the innate presence of social passions in the state of nature, while at the same time extending them in number and in scope. We also showed, through this comparison with Taylor, that Fourier's expressivism is not a strictly artistic romanticism, but an expressive romanticism applied to the very transformative activity of man, i.e., work understood as creative and passionate. In the fourth and last indication we revealed in which way Fourier himself applies this romantic expressivism to human intersubjectivity. We found with this exploration that Fourier's subject is symbiotically linked to other subjects, and that the social relationship in part conditions the subjects relationship of transformation to the objective world. We also found that it is through socialized passionate work in *groupes*, *séries* and *phalanstères*, as well as the collective ownership of property and the democratic control of these through the *conseil des directeurs*, *régence centrale*, *hiérarchie sphérique*, that the natural innate passions as a subjectivity can be actualized developed and harmonized with nature. We also showed the presence in this social project of a social estheticism also borrowed from the romantics, in which the good is to be harmonized with the beautiful. This is evident by Fourier's analogy of the opera, its harmonies and the importance given to it in his new social structures. As well as the re-insertion of man into the natural understanding of beauty in the countryside.

Because of these indications we believe it is safe to conclude that Fourier's theory is a socialist extension of the three main characteristics of romanticism chosen for this thesis. We also believe, having explored Fourier's world and his reaction to its disenfranchisement and industrial and agricultural penury and passional sublimation, that his thought stands as a general reflection of the political, artistic and economic concerns for the romantic century. Furthermore, we believe to have indicated sufficiently after Lukacs, that Fourier's thought is revolutionary because of the degree that it challenges, on a romantic basis and by proposing a non-organic future socialist solution, the civilized incoherent (in the passional sense) organization of industry and the separation between men found within it. Lastly, we believe we have shown that it is better to characterize Fourier's theory, not as utopian in the Marxist sense, as Sayre and Lowy do, but as a romantic socialism. Because, unlike the Marxist accusation, Fourier understood with his own theory of romantic agency, the movement of history and the distinction between necessary and creative labour. This, we believe to have shown, implied for him a new more integrated relationship between man and nature, a relationship largely ignored by later Marxists.

Let us turn to the questions that have led us to this thesis. First we asked whether after this work it would be possible to find a key to solving the problems of hitherto existing socialisms? It is clear that questioning the distinction between necessary and creative spheres, as we did through Fourier, is an essential key to any future forms of socialism. For it is under this rationally contrived relationship, between the individual and his labour and nature, felt as a division, which will be perpetuated the relationship of

separation between man and nature under capitalism and socialism alike. It is also clear, after Bender, that this distinction is at the heart of a “dépassement” of dialectical materialism. Therefore, Fourier also permits us to see, by a close inspection of his thought, that there is a relationship between the capitalist means of production and rational agency. In part, albeit at times not very clear, Fourier knew that in order to question the basis of the actual capitalist relations of production and power, he had to question the importance of enlightenment reason epistemologically, as well as its atomistic utilitarian and instrumental ethics. In other words, to question the separated relationships of men in civilisation Fourier attacked its basis. Hence his debt to Rousseau as a creator of a language of the passions. It is only, according to Fourier, and generally the romantics, by endowing man with something other than reason as a simple calculation of pain and pleasure, that equality can be defended. Because, if as Locke said, all human beings possess reason, they do not possess it to the same degree. This in turn justifies a form of artificial equality on the basis of a natural inequality, in that the persons who exercises this reason with the utmost economic instrumentality justifiably has a greater status. Might still makes right, but this time in exclusion of Hobbes’ use of force.

Therefore, if the negative impacts of the incoherence of the capitalist means of production are to be corrected, perhaps a non-rational, in the classical liberal and French materialist sense of agency must be developed and defended. It is therefore possible that it is the degree that late Marxism and its communist movement accepted this rational agency and the relationship of necessity implied herein with nature, that has perpetuated alienating divisions of labour in “existing socialist countries.” It might be argued that there

was and is no exploitation in “real socialist countries,” but it can hardly be argued, after this exploration of Fourier that there is and was no alienation. The collective control of the means of production, no matter how democratic or undemocratic, does not automatically result in the abolition of individual alienation. After this exploration of Fourier it seems clear to us, that if socialism will result in a lessening or disappearance of alienation in the future, it must de-emphasize if not eschew entirely the relationship of necessity towards nature. Because this relationship also justifies necessary alienating industrial *technai*. The same can be said for social democracy and its new form of collaborationism called the Third Way in which there is an increasing concession made to capitalism in its economic and ethical theory.

Second, we asked whether after completing this thesis we might be able to shed historical light on hitherto existing socialisms, including that of Marxism? It seems clear that after this exploration of Fourier, that Taylor is right to point out in *Hegel* that “the Marxian synthesis between Enlightenment science and expressive fulfilment is in the end not viable.”²³⁸ However, we tend to agree with Bender that the major problem lies more in the way in which Marx was pulled away from his romanticism to economic and scientific notions borrowed from the enlightenment by later exponents such as Engels and Plekhanov.

Also, unlike Taylor, we agreed with Moggach that this is not present essentially in the thought of Marx, but results later in the development of scientific socialism. But, it is nonetheless the early Marx of 1844, which is more amiable to Fourier’s understanding of

²³⁸ Taylor, Charles, *Hegel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975, p.554.

agency, because he retains in his early works a form of romanticism, mainly inherited by the young Hegelian understanding of Hegel and Fichte. In turn we have hoped by this exploration of Fourier's thought to have revealed the fact that socialism generally is imbued with romanticism. We have primarily shown this for Fourier, but we have also hinted to this for Saint-Simon as well. We feel this points to the possibility that other non-Marxian socialisms, such as anarchism, share the same or perhaps other characteristics of romanticism.

Third, we asked whether after this exploration it would be possible to find new characteristics of future socialist theories? It also seems clear to us after having explored Fourier's understanding of a new relationship between man and nature that there is a common basis between environmentalism and socialism that can be found in Fourier's romanticism. It is through environmental ethics and the elaboration of new relationships with nature, understood as linked with a social understanding of human agency, that capitalism's unbridled exploitation of nature and of man can be profoundly questioned at the same time. Perhaps if this common ground were further explored it could theoretically help re-invigorate both movements which seem to us at first glance to be both in situations of decline or appropriation?

In our closing remarks we would like to say, though it was never the intention of this thesis to offer a criticism but just a re-interpretation of Fourier's importance, that what is less convincing for us is the solution that Fourier proposes to unite this expressivist sensualist philosophy of labour with the social esthetic project of the romantics. Though no doubt well intentioned this theory seems to us to have an Achilles' heel, in that Fourier

establishes a dependance between expressive labour and social harmony. There is evidently between these components, a fragility. If one of these components, take for example expressivism, is held as foremost in a given society than how is it possible to stop labour from ceasing its all important social function, and serving the whimsical absurdities of bourgeois culture and capitalism, or another form of hedonistic atomistic individualism. In other words there does not seem to us to be any practical safeguards against this inherent potential in his system other than the guidance of the *conseil des directeurs*?

If however the reproductive social nature of labour predominates, then a necessary relationship to certain forms of labour, and probably a work ethic or moral code must also predominate no matter how passionate it may try to be, and in turn the alienation of man from his diverse passions and their objectification may occur. It seems incoherent to defend the expression of man's passions while at the same time prescribing what they are. Hence the reason why the relationship between both components of labour, i.e., the social and expressivist, seem to us to be *symbiotic* in nature. In turn it is not clear that the very detailed model or *oeuvre sociale*, can ensure this balance, or has a sufficient inherent flexibility to do so. Because of this it is perhaps right to conclude that the advantages of being specific about the passional nature of the human being and trying to create a world of concrete expressivism, may be outweighed by their potential to serve as a new "labour ethic" in which certain passions are imposed because the true Fourierist nature of Man has been discovered. It is again not clear that there are enough mechanisms to ensure that Fourier's social theory, as a link between the beautiful and the good, does not result in a form of totalitarianism. Therefore, it seems to us that the debate hinges on

the role of the governing bodies (*Régences*) and their grounding in a true democratic process.

But at the same time we have discovered with Fourier the importance of understanding Man as a creator. It seems to us that romantic socialism above all else starts with a form of individualism, and in this way is amiable to a form of modern democracy. Perhaps it is this romantic individualism which was forgotten by the late Marx and his descendants which made the state so important in “existing socialisms”. On the contrary to “existing socialisms” Fourier’s theory shares with the master Epicurus a retreat into the private. This retreat from the public to the private also represents a retreat from the political community into an economic one and explains Fourier’s social project, which above all did try to serve, in the conditions of post-revolutionary France total freedom of the individual from a form of economic tyranny.

But paradoxically the romantics, and especially the romantic socialists and Fourier, were much more concerned with building something new, than in restraining the individual human and collective potential. It is also clear to us, after having read Fourier, that what this project reveals to the twenty first century reader far outweighs any possible totalitarian potential in his social project. Perhaps, in true Fourierist fashion, our social evolution would be better served if this was the fault of many of our artists and moral philosophers today? Is it not time, after the experiences of the twentieth century, to rebuild again?

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