

Quantity, Quality, the Antagonistic Element

Quality (in the sense we are using it) is a process. The sum total of the stages of development (quantity) of the process is the process. Thus, there cannot be a separation between quantity and quality. Every quantity is qualitative. And since life is specific, every quality is expressed quantitatively.

Growth, or motion, takes place in definite and indispensable stages. A change of environment allows the internal changes to happen. Each stage grows out of the preceding one and connects to it. Each stage has its set of internal contradictions that describe its motion inside the general qualitative contradiction that covers the process. Therefore, each stage of growth is both inner-connected and inter-connected.

At the various stages of quantitative development we see an increase of intensity and the changing of the forms of the contradiction. The final stages of the contradiction prepare the way for the introduction of the antagonistic element.

Contradiction does not grow into antagonism. Antagonism replaces contradiction. Engels gives many examples of this from nature in defining the transformation from one quality to another. "All qualitative differences in nature rest on

differences of chemical composition or on different quantities or forms of motion (energy) or, as is almost always the case, on both. Hence it is impossible to alter the quality of a body without addition or subtraction of matter or motion, *i.e.* without quantitative alteration of the body concerned." (*Dialectics of Nature*)

Contradiction, according to the dictionary, is "the action of speaking against or in opposition to an action, proposal, gain-saying; opposition." Antagonism, on the other hand, is "the mutual resistance or active opposition of two opposing forces, physical or mental; active opposition to a force." Internal contradictions are the basis of development — they excite growth. It takes antagonism to change to a new quality.

Marx states, "At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production." That certain stage begins with the introduction of qualitatively new productive forces. The new forces come from the application of science to industry. The contradiction between productive forces and relations is then replaced by antagonism.

Manufacturing was the highest and final stage of the manual labor