

Socialism: Utopian & Scientific

Frederick Engels

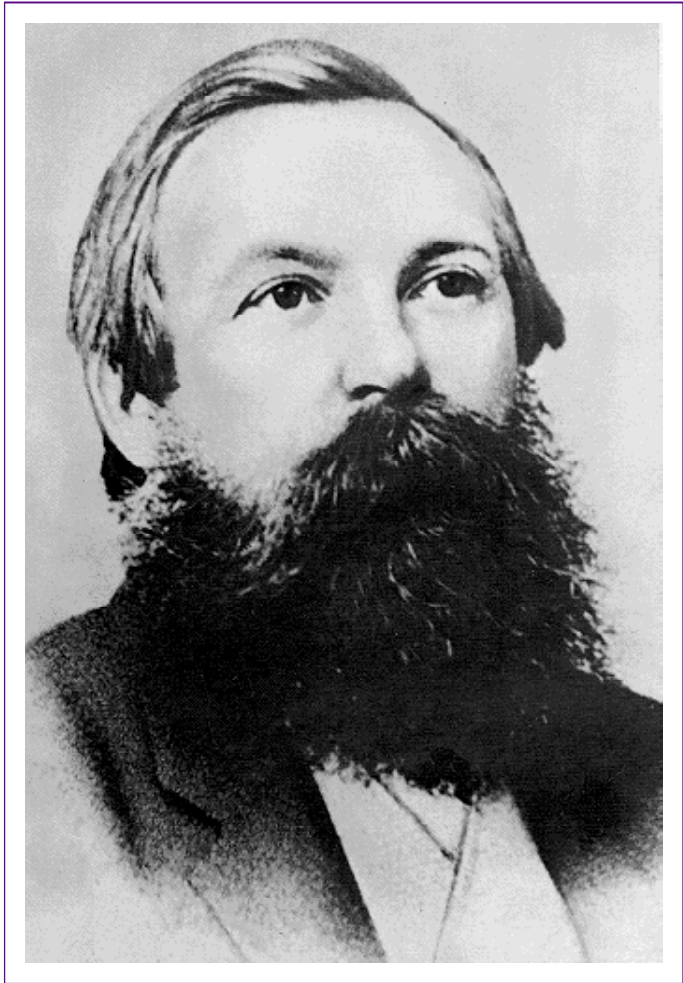
Resistance Books 1999

ISBN 0909196 86 9

Published by Resistance Books, resistancebooks.com

Contents

Introduction by Doug Lorimer	7
1. Polemical origin of Engels' book	7
2. Thomas More's <i>Utopia</i>	8
3. The Enlightenment philosophers	10
4. Mably and Morelly	10
5. Hegel's philosophy	12
6. The Young Hegelians	13
7. Ludwig Feuerbach	14
8. Evolution of Engels' views	16
9. Marx's rejection of utopian socialism	17
10. Marx's turn toward materialism	18
11. Marx's critique of Hegel's idealism	19
12. Marx's identification of the proletariat as the agent of human emancipation	21
13. Engel's turn toward proletarian socialism	23
14. The critique of 'critical criticism'	26
15. Marx's analysis of the revolutionary role of the proletariat	29
16. Engels' Condition of the Working Class in England	31
17. Marx's Theses on Feuerbach	34
18. Historical materialism and revolutionary practice	36
Special Introduction to the English Edition of 1892 by Frederick Engels	39
Socialism: Utopian and Scientific by Frederick Engels	59
I [The French Revolution and utopian socialism]	59
II [Hegelian dialectics]	72
III [The materialist conception of history and scientific socialism]	79
Notes	97



Frederick Engels (1862)

Introduction

By Doug Lorimer

1. Polemical origin of Engels' book

This book by Frederick Engels explains the origins of the modern socialist movement. It is probably the most influential work expounding the basic ideas of Marxism, other than the *Communist Manifesto*.

As Engels himself explains in his introduction to the first English edition, published in 1892, it was drawn from three chapters of his 1878 book *Anti-Dühring*, a polemic against the views of Eugen Dühring, a professor at Berlin University. In his lectures and numerous writings which flooded the book market after 1869, Dühring claimed to be the originator of a “revolution in science” which superseded Marxism.

Dühring's views had a strong influence on many of the university intellectuals who had joined the United Socialist Workers Party of Germany (USAP) in the 1870s. The USAP had been formed as a result of a fusion in May 1875 between the pro-Marxist Socialist Workers Party (SAP) led by Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel — the so-called “Eisenachers” (after the town of Eisenach where the SAP had its founding congress in August 1869) — and the reformist General Association of German Workers (ADAV), founded in 1863 by Ferdinand Lassalle. Among those in the USAP who gave enthusiastic support to Dühring's views was Eduard Bernstein who, after Engels' death in 1895, would emerge as the chief advocate of a reformist “revision” of Marxism.

The vacillation of the USAP leaders in the face of the ideological challenge mounted by Dühring led Engels, at Marx's urging, to provide a popular exposition of their common approach to philosophy, political economy and socialism in opposition to those of Dühring.

In polemicising against Dühring's attempt to create a “new” socialist doctrine out of an eclectic mixture of mechanical materialism, vulgar evolutionism and bourgeois positivist sociology, Engels explained the philosophical basis of Marxian socialism and

Doug Lorimer (1953-2013) was a longtime leader of the Democratic Socialist Party,

how it differed from the mode of thinking of previous socialist thinkers.

2. Thomas More's *Utopia*

Spontaneous protest against exploitation of masses of poor people had long ago produced ideal pictures of a more equitable social system. The first and one of the most famous of these had been Thomas More's book *A Fruitful and Pleasant Worke of the Best State of a Publique Weale, and of the Newe Yle Called Utopia*, published in 1516.

Sir Thomas More was the grandson of London artisans, the son of a lawyer and a lawyer himself. In 1529 he became Lord Chancellor under Henry VIII, an insidious and unrestrained autocrat. In defiance of the king, More defended his political and religious convictions, was accused of high treason and beheaded on July 6, 1535.

More lived at a time when capitalist relations and the formation of the basic capitalist classes — the bourgeoisie and the proletariat — were emerging within feudal society. It was a time of primitive accumulation of capital, when feudal economies were being increasingly drawn into market (commodity-money) relations and when rich merchants were becoming businessmen. They subjugated the free artisans economically and founded the first manufacturing workshops employing wage labour. The peasant masses were losing their land and were being driven from it by the landlords at a rate exceeding that of the development of merchant's and manufacturer's capital which was thus unable to employ all these poverty-stricken and hungry people, deprived of all means of subsistence.

More not only sympathised with these wretched people, but tried to find a way out of the situation. He put forward an ideal model of society in his *Utopia*, which took the form of a travelogue to an unknown land, and which fitted the mood of that time of great geographical discoveries. The book's central character, Raphael Hythloday, an old sailor and philosopher, tells of his many voyages and of the state he visited on "Utopia Island". Naturally, Hythloday expressed More's political and social ideas.

In the first part of *Utopia*, More criticised the social order in England, and Europe more generally. Raphael Hythloday denounced absolute monarchy: sovereigns conduct aggressive foreign policy and wage wars that ruin not only the countries against which they are fighting, but the people of their own country as well. Hythloday detected new social evils stemming from the penetration of merchant's and manufacturer's capital into feudal relations.

The transition of landowners' economic activity from farming to sheep-breeding in pursuit of money-profits ruined peasants and deprived them of land, which went for expanding pastures. Hythloday says: "Your sheep, which are naturally mild and

easily kept in order, may be said now to devour men, and unpeople, not only villages, but towns ...”

Instead of restraining the arbitrary power of the rich, the state comes down, with the weight of the law, upon the poor, who are deprived of the chance to work and are forced into vagrancy and theft. More was close to realising the state’s exploitative and class nature in his description of the state as a body of the conspiracy of the rich against the poor. He regarded the supremacy of private property as the cause of all social evils. According to More, only the complete elimination of private property could pave the way for a just social order.

The economic system of Utopia, Hythloday relates, is based on families of craftsmen engaged in social production. Children who want to join a different trade from their parents, join another family. State officials control the work of the craftsman’s family shop; the family hands all the goods it produces to the state for distribution according to needs. There is no private commerce or money. There is no rural population in Utopia, with everyone living in small townships which have their own territory for agriculture. During the agricultural season, the inhabitants of each town work on the farms and later return to the towns to their chief occupation.

The political system in Utopia is based on a federation of towns. The lower category of officials (syphogrants) are elected by the heads of the families, while the higher officials, who constitute the Senate, are elected by the syphogrants. The Senate is the supreme state body. It takes stock of all the goods produced and, in case of need (crop failure in certain regions, etc.), redistributes the products. The land in Utopia is common property and the state conducts foreign trade.

The democratic educational system presented in Utopia by More contrasted sharply with the situation in the 16th century. In Utopia, all children of both sexes receive a public upbringing that includes an education and a practical training in trades and farming.

In his *Utopia* Thomas More bequeathed to future generations the first integrated scheme of a socialist society, with all the inherently limited features reflecting the level of economic development of early 16th century England. He was able, at the inception of bourgeois society, and by observing its very first steps, to view its social evils and to set against them the principles of social equality. The creator of this scheme of “the best possible” society also understood, better than anyone else of his time, that in the prevailing economic conditions, it could not be put into practice, and that socialism was still a dream.

3. The Enlightenment philosophers

The great French bourgeois-democratic revolution which took place at the end of the 18th century was preceded by an ideological revolution, known as the Enlightenment, which saw a revival of materialist philosophy — i.e., the view that thinking is the product of material being — through such thinkers as Jean Jacques Rousseau, Denis Diderot, Paul Henri Holbach, and Claude Helvetius. Between 1751 and 1780 these thinkers collaborated in the publication of the *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et de métiers*, through which they sought to give a systematic summary of the scientific achievements of the time (and hence they were also known as the Encyclopaedists).

The materialists of the Enlightenment were the most consistent fighters against feudal ideology. They came out against the Catholic Church's interference in science, declaring themselves to be the defenders of social progress, criticised despotism and advocated the emancipation of humanity from political and social oppression.

In their 1845 work *The Holy Family*, Marx and Engels observed that the philosophical ideas of the Enlighteners that all people were equal by nature and that a person's happiness depended on reason and a justly organised society, had a major influence on the development of socialist and communist ideas. Thus, Rousseau, who was against feudal and all other types of big property, stood for the establishment of a social order without rich or poor. He advanced a petty-bourgeois utopian theory of the equal distribution of property among all members of society. He contended that small-scale private property, based on personal labour, would be the foundation of this new social system. He failed to see that it was impossible to do away with social inequality on the basis of private property, no matter in what form it existed.

The views of Rousseau and the other Enlighteners did not actually exceed those of bourgeois society. In one ideological form or another they expressed the interests and aspirations of the rising French bourgeoisie. At the same time, their progressive ideas paved the way for the elaboration of and dissemination of utopian socialist and communist ideas, such as those of Mably and Morelly.

4. Mably & Morelly

Gabriel Bonnet de Mably (1709-1785), a priest from an aristocratic family, was greatly influenced by the Enlightenment's theory of the "natural rights of man". The bourgeois representatives of the Enlightenment used this theory to criticise feudalism and affirm the "naturalness" of the bourgeois system that was to replace it. Mably used the theory to advance his own theory of "natural communism", arguing that even a more just distribution of private property would in time lead to the division of society into rich

and poor. He held that nature had intended all people to be equal, that it had provided them with the same organs and needs and bestowed on them the riches of the Earth for common use.

Like More before him, Mably did not see any grounds in the surrounding reality for building his ideal society of “natural communism”, since once common property had been divided among them, people could not revert to their “natural” conditions of existence. He thus came to the conclusion that it was impossible to achieve a communistic society and that all that could be accomplished was to try to carry out reforms designed to equalise the distribution of private property.

The dates of birth and death of the French utopian communist Morelly are unknown; indeed, it may be that Morelly was a pen name for the real author. His main work *La Code de la nature* (1755) was a treatise which substantiated the principles of a society where collective ownership dominates. According to Morelly, the history of humanity began with unconscious communism, when people led a natural life, following the “code of nature”. This natural communism disintegrated with the invention of private property as a result of people’s lack of reason. He formulated the basic principles of a communistic system in the form of three basic laws: (1) the abolition of private property; (2) the right of every person to live and to work; (3) the duty of all citizens to work for the common good and in accordance with their ability.

Morelly viewed the future socialistic society as a centralised economic commune covering the whole country, developing upon the basis of a single economic plan regulating the production and distribution of material wealth. Like Thomas More, he presented distribution according to the individual’s needs as the general rule, but his ideal society had laws prohibiting luxury and calling for moderation in consumption. In More’s *Utopia* the family, headed by the father, was the production unit, but in Morelly’s social utopia it was the workshop, headed by the foreman. These two very different approaches reflected two different stages in the development of production: the artisan and the manufactory stages.

Morelly believed that, sooner or later, the fruits of education would make it possible to bring into being this socialistic society, through reform from above. He was unable to supply a social basis for his theory; his faith in its realisation was based merely on the power of reason.

This was also the fundamental characteristic of the three great utopian socialists of the early 19th century — Claude Henri Saint Simon (1760-1825), Charles Fourier (1772-1837), and Robert Owen (1771-1858). What made them “utopians” was that, like Thomas More, they could not see in the society which surrounded them any inherent motive forces that could effect the change in social conditions they desired. They

believed that it could only be introduced by peaceful reforms from above by enlightened rulers or bourgeois philanthropists. All of them were therefore opposed to social change through revolutionary political struggle. To transform socialism from utopian schemes into a practical movement required the development of a scientific theory of social development. This was the great contribution of Marx and Engels to socialist thought.

5. Hegel's philosophy

Marx and Engels did not begin their political lives as socialists, but as revolutionary democrats under the influence of the views of the German philosopher Georg Hegel.

Hegel's philosophy was a reflection of the historical changes that had taken place in Europe at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, namely, the overturning of feudal social relations under the impact of the 1789-93 French Revolution. These social changes, together with rapid advances in the natural sciences, dealt a heavy blow to the old, metaphysical mode of thought which regarded all things as isolated from each other and devoid of internal contradictoriness. Later, Engels wrote:

But precisely therein lay the true significance and revolutionary character of the Hegelian philosophy ... that it once for all dealt the death blow to the finality of all products of human thought and action.¹

Hegel's great achievement was the first systematic elaboration of the dialectical method. His philosophy presented the world as a totality in the process of continuous development, of ascent from the lower to the higher, from the simple to the complex. In Hegel's view, development proceeds through the conflict and resolution of internal contradictions, which result in the transition to a new stage, or the "elimination" (*Aufhebung*) of the old contradictions and the emergence of new ones, intrinsic to the new quality. Development was seen as a unity of continuity and discontinuity, of gradual quantitative changes leading to breaks in gradual development, to abrupt transitions to the new quality. Hegel applied this principle mainly to the history of human society. He saw world history as a law-governed process of development.

However, Hegel's dialectic had an idealist philosophical basis, for he declared that the underlying basis of all things was the "absolute idea" (i.e., ideas existing *prior to* and *separate from* any thinking material beings), to whose self-development he reduced the whole process of dialectical movement. According to Hegel, Engels wrote later, "the absolute idea ... 'alienates', that is, transforms, itself into nature and comes to itself again later in the mind, that is, in thought and in history".² The development of the absolute idea culminates in Hegel's philosophy in the form of the absolute truth. This enshrinement of his own philosophical *system* as the ultimate development in

human thought and in all development in general, was in fundamental contradiction with the dialectical *method* he himself propounded, wherein he insisted that all phenomena should be viewed as in continuous movement and unceasing change.

The limitations of Hegel's philosophy were most glaring in his political views, for he declared the summit of society's development to be the constitutional monarchy, whose only task was to make some "improvements" in the Prussian state by adapting it to the needs of the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie. This sacrificed the objective revolutionary content of Hegel's dialectical method to the needs of a conservative metaphysical system.

The contradiction between Hegel's dialectical method and his metaphysical system was a reflection of the inconsistent and equivocal outlook of the German capitalists, who strove to escape the fetters of feudal social relations but shunned revolutionary ways of doing this, preferring to compromise with the semi-feudal landowning nobility.

6. The Young Hegelians

In the 1830s a split developed between the adherents of Hegel, who had died in 1831. Some of them began to take a militant stance in defence of religion. These right-wing Hegelians read Christian orthodoxy into Hegel's philosophy — regarding the absolute idea as a philosophical expression for God (which, indeed, it was) — and regarded his philosophical system as a vindication of the existing political order as a whole.

The left-wing group, known as the Young Hegelians — among them David Strauss, the Bauer brothers (Bruno and Edgar), Arnold Ruge and Ludwig Feuerbach — strove to draw radical-democratic conclusions from Hegel's philosophy. The Young Hegelians rejected the conservative-religious interpretation of this philosophy and criticised the dogmas of Christianity, and religion in general. This was first done by David Strauss in his two-volume *Life of Jesus* (published in 1835 and 1836), which treated the Gospels as a collection of spontaneous myths expressing the hopes and aspirations of the early Christian communities. By contrast, Bruno Bauer believed the Gospels to be the product of a deliberate mythogenesis, reflecting a stage in the development of humanity's self-consciousness, a stage that humanity was bound to overcome in the subsequent development of its consciousness. Bauer carried the critique of religion and the Gospels farther than Strauss, casting doubt not only on the alleged divine origin but the very existence of Jesus Christ, and connecting the origins of Christianity with the psychological-intellectual life and philosophical trends of antiquity.

This controversy between the Young Hegelians and the orthodox champions of religion was theological in form but had a definite political content: one of the main pillars of the Prussian absolutist monarchy was being undermined by the denial of

religion as divine revelation, and the insistence that it was a product of the human spirit. By putting forward the principle of transforming reality through criticism, the Young Hegelians had moved away from the critique of religion towards a critique of the politics and ideology of Prussian absolutism, and it is this that made their philosophy the philosophy of the German radical-democratic petty-bourgeoisie.

Idealism was the Young Hegelians' fundamental weakness. In contrast to Hegel, they inclined to subjectivist views of history and underestimated people's practical activity, especially mass action, by pinning their faith in the omnipotence of theoretical criticism and believing that only critical thinking by outstanding personalities could assure the progress of humanity's self-consciousness and, consequently, all progress in general.

Marx came to know the Young Hegelians while he was a student at Berlin University in 1837-1841, and his sympathies were at once aroused by their bold criticism of religious and philosophical dogmas, by the radicalism of the political convictions of many of them, their stand for freedom of conscience, of the press and so on. He soon became one of the intellectual leaders of this club. In 1841, after Marx had received his doctorate of philosophy, Moses Hess, a prominent Young Hegelian, wrote to a friend:

... you can definitely look forward to meeting the greatest, perhaps the *only real* philosopher now living ... Dr. Marx, as my idol is called — he is still a young man (he is at most twenty-four years old) — will give medieval religion and philosophy their last push. He combines the most profound philosophical earnestness with the most biting wit. Think of Rousseau, Voltaire, Holbach, Lessing, Heine and Hegel fused into one — I say *fused*, not just lumped together — and you have Dr. Marx.³

7. Ludwig Feuerbach

The year Marx graduated with a doctorate of philosophy, an important event occurred in Germany's ideological life — the publication of Ludwig Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*, which had a powerful liberating effect on the leading minds of the day. In a sense, Feuerbach was the first philosopher to overcome, within limits, the idealism of the Young Hegelians. His book was a materialist critique of religion and proclaimed that nature existed independently of the human mind, and was the basis on which humans, themselves products of nature, had emerged. He declared that there was nothing outside nature and humanity, and that the supreme beings created by people's religious imagination were merely fantastic reflections of humanity's own essence. The concept of God embodied all the qualities which, while not characteristic of individuals, belonged to human beings as a whole, to humanity as a "species-being", as he himself put it. Consequently, humanity had to repossess its human essence, which

it had alienated in the concept of God.

Even at that time some of Feuerbach's ideas conflicted with those the young Marx was working out for himself. Marx could not accept Feuerbach's contemplative approach and saw philosophy as an active factor in the fight for human freedom, while Feuerbach's underestimation of the dialectical method clashed with Marx's profound understanding of its revolutionary role. On the whole, however, Marx welcomed Feuerbach's book as one which helped to widen the cognitive horizons of science. Marx was also attracted to Feuerbach because of his own ideas about the human origins of religion, which had been expressed in his doctoral thesis.

At the time Marx, like many of the Young Hegelians, saw *The Essence of Christianity* chiefly as a manifesto of radical atheism, as a much more consistent refutation of religious superstition than was say, Strauss' book. But being on the whole still an idealist, he was still not aware of its materialist content. He realised, however, that Feuerbach's ideas were a substantial advance in understanding real human relations. They added to Marx's conviction that the critique of religion was a stage in the critical comprehension of the existing world order and a form of struggle for human emancipation from spiritual and other fetters. Subsequently, Marx wrote in this context, having Feuerbach's philosophy chiefly in mind:

The criticism of religion ends with the teaching that *man is the highest being for man*, hence with *the categorical imperative to overthrow all relations* in which man is a debased, enslaved, forsaken, despicable being.⁴

Consequently, the young Marx saw Feuerbach as an outstanding representative of advanced philosophy, whose ideas were a concentration of the "most subtle, valuable and invisible juices" of its people and its time.⁵ Open and bold defence of these ideas against the attacks of conservatives and obscurantists, and their further development, became one of the main tasks he set himself.

With his doctoral thesis complete, Marx intended to join Bruno Bauer in teaching philosophy at Bonn University. However, his hopes of obtaining a professorship did not materialise. King Frederick William IV, whose assent to the Prussian throne in 1840 had given opposition circles hopes of a liberal government policy, soon made it clear that there was not going to be any constitutional reforms. Criticism of the Prussian monarchy, however moderate, was ruthlessly suppressed. Bruno Bauer was dismissed from Bonn University.

The most radically-minded Young Hegelians — with Marx, Bruno Bauer and Arnold Ruge in the lead — had to turn to radical-democratic politics because of the mounting government reprisals and collapse of their illusions about an "enlightened monarch" introducing a liberal-democratic constitution of his own accord. Marx threw

himself with youthful fervour into the midst of the struggle for democratic liberties against Prussian absolutism, joining the editorial board of the opposition daily *Rheinische Zeitung*, which started publication in Cologne in January 1842. It was while he was working on this paper that Marx first met Engels.

8. Evolution of Engels' views

Frederick Engels had been born two years earlier than Marx, also in the Rhine Province of Prussia. His father was a textile manufacturer who had raised his children in accordance with strict bourgeois rules and orthodox Christian beliefs. Young Engels was not allowed to complete his high-school learning and was sent to Bremen to become a businessman. Working as a clerk, he devoted his leisure hours to studying history, philosophy, literature and foreign languages. The progressive ideas of the day, above all the writings of the Young Hegelians, helped him to discard the religious views impressed upon him at home. These ideas, combined with the hard facts of life as he gained knowledge of the working people's exploitation in his family's business, impelled him toward revolutionary-democratic politics. His first journalistic work, entitled "Letter from Wuppertal" and printed in 1839, gave a picture of the harsh oppression of the workers by their capitalist masters, concealed by the guise of sanctimony.

From the latter half of September 1841 to mid-August 1842 Engels did military service as a volunteer in an artillery unit stationed in Berlin, then the capital of Prussia. This gave him an opportunity to attend lectures at Berlin University. He joined the Young Hegelians, whose views he largely shared at the time, and took an active part in the ideological struggle then going on in Germany. Like Marx, he was profoundly influenced by Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*. Later he wrote: "One must himself have experienced the liberating effect of this book to get an idea of it."⁶

While in Berlin, Engels wrote a number of polemical philosophical works. They were very popular, and very few of his readers realised that the author was not a trained philosopher but a young army volunteer and a non-matriculated student.

In November 1842 Engels called in at the offices of the *Rheinische Zeitung* on his way to Manchester to work in the office of a company in which his father was a partner. Marx, who had become the paper's editor in October 1842, enlisted him as the journal's correspondent in England.

9. Marx's rejection of utopian socialism

The day after Marx assumed the editorship of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, the paper carried his article, "Communism and the Augsburg *Allgemeine Zeitung*", in which he

responded to charges of communist propaganda made against his paper by the reactionary *Allgemeine Zeitung*. Marx wrote that the issue of communism was acquiring tremendous importance for advanced European countries, above all England and France. Moreover, he was beginning to see the close connection between communist ideas and the struggles of the propertyless working people. He wrote:

The estate that today owns nothing *demands* to share in the wealth of the middle classes is a fact which is ... obvious to anyone in Manchester, Paris and Lyons.⁷

There were good reasons why he mentioned these three cities: Manchester was a centre of the Chartist movement, and Paris and Lyons had been the scenes of proletarian uprisings. In 1831 and 1834, the Lyons weavers had fought on the barricades and inscribed on their banners the motto: "Live working or die fighting!" Marx criticised the existing doctrines of socialism and communism as dogmatic and as efforts to reveal to the world an absolute truth. He wrote:

The *Rheinische Zeitung* ... does not admit that communist ideas in their present form possess even *theoretical clarity*, and therefore can still less desire their *practical realisation*, or even consider it possible.⁸

Throughout his life Marx, true to the dialectical method he had learned from Hegel, refrained from prescribing dogmatic recipes for changing reality, but made a consistent and profound study of its contradictions so as to find ways of resolving them. As the young Marx grappled with the contradictions of both Hegel's philosophy and social conditions in Prussia he began to appreciate the rational elements in the theories of previous socialist thinkers and put them to creative use in working out his own theory of scientific socialism.

Marx rejected the socialist and communist theories that existed at this time because they had nothing to say about the question that most concerned him — the revolutionary political struggle for democracy. The question of a democratic revolution — its character, its causes and motive forces — was the overriding one for Marx. During this period he was not merely making ardent pronouncements in defence of the common people's interests and against the semi-feudal, absolutist Prussian state oppressing them — as in his October 25-November 3, 1842 article on the Rhine Province Assembly's "Debates on the Law on Thefts of Wood". He was gradually coming to realise that the actions of people belonging to social classes were determined by objective factors, and that their private interests depended on their objective position within the economic structure of society. Marx was gaining a clearer view of the main line of his quest, namely, uncovering the nature of the objective relations "which determine the actions of private persons and individual authorities".⁹

10. Marx's turn toward materialism

As an editor of a political newspaper, Marx had been confronted with economic questions and had come to realise not only the inadequacy of his knowledge in this field but also the primary role they had to play in social life and politics. Marx set his mind to discovering the force which was capable of changing the existing political system in Prussia. How true his course was can be seen from a letter to Arnold Ruge which he wrote some six weeks after the closure of the *Rheinische Zeitung* by its bourgeois financiers on March 31, 1843. He wrote:

The system of industry and trade, of ownership and exploitation of the people, however, leads ever more rapidly than the increase in population to a rupture within present-day society, a rupture which the old system is not able to heal.¹⁰

His work on the paper also gave him much experience in another sphere relating to the state. He came to realise that the state was by no means the embodiment of “universal reason”, the embodiment of the universal which rose above individual private interests, as Hegel had maintained. Consequently, pending the start of publication of a new revolutionary journal, Marx retired to his study room, as he put it, to make a critical review of Hegel’s idealistic conception of society and the state, and the identification of the real motive forces behind the social process and of ways and means to bring about the world’s revolutionary transformation in the interests of human emancipation from political and social oppression.

One work which was of great help to Marx in his critique of Hegel’s idealism was Ludwig Feuerbach’s *Preliminary Theses for a Reformation of Philosophy* which was published in Switzerland in early 1843. In it Feuerbach argued that thinking sprang from being, from material existence and not the other way round as Hegel had asserted. Feuerbach showed Hegel’s philosophy to be the last refuge of theology: he applied to idealistic philosophy the method he had used in his critique of religion, emphasising that one only needed to “turn speculative philosophy upside down” to obtain the real relation between thinking and being.

Marx used this approach in the manuscript of his *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law*. In a letter to Ruge which he wrote some time after the publication of Feuerbach’s critique of Hegelian philosophy, Marx observed:

Feuerbach’s aphorism seem to me incorrect only in one respect, that he refers too much to nature and too little to politics. That, however, is the only alliance by which philosophy can become truth.¹¹

Here we find the incipient distinction between their views, which Marx was to spell out in April 1845 in his *Theses on Feuerbach*. Feuerbach saw humanity in the light of an abstract humanism, as a being chiefly natural and instinctive; that was the narrow

anthropological principle he applied to philosophical questions. Even at this time Marx saw humanity as above all a social being, a product of historically developed social relations.

It was natural, therefore, that the relationship between the state and “civil society” was the central problem in Marx’s manuscript. At the time “civil society” was the term used to designate the sphere of private, chiefly material, interests and their attendant social relations. The widely accepted idea of civil society as a sphere in which individuals confronted each other as closed, hostile entities reflected a characteristic feature of human relations under capitalism. A correct view of the nature of civil society and its relation to the state marked an important step forward in the development of a scientific, materialist view of the existing social order, and gave a clue to the understanding of the main causes behind the historical process as a whole.

11. Marx’s critique of Hegel’s idealism

Hegel had declared that the state was at a higher stage of development than civil society and determined it. Marx took the opposite view, namely, that civil society was a prerequisite of the state. Probing for the connection between the essence of the state and the nature of concrete social relations, Marx came to the conclusion that private property played the definitive role with respect to the political system. He wrote: “The political constitution at its highest point is ... the *constitution of private property*.”¹² Although he still saw private ownership of productive resources mainly in legal terms, his line in explaining political institutions was already clearly materialist.

Marx concentrated his criticism on Hegel’s political views, especially his apology for the Prussian bureaucracy and the monarchy. As he criticised Hegel, Marx put forward his own idea of democracy. He saw democracy as the people’s self-determination, with the people’s interests constituting its fundamental law. He asserted that only in a democracy would the people cease to be a plaything in the hands of forces they had themselves created — the political institutions — and become their masters. Only then would the state cease to stand in opposition to the people and become a “particular *form of existence* of the people”.¹³ Marx referred to the French, who had come to realise “recently ... that in true democracy the *political state is annihilated*”.¹⁴ He undoubtedly had in mind the utopian socialist Saint-Simon and his idea of a future society in which the government of people would give way to the administration of things, of goods and services. Consequently, the urge to see democracy as real, instead of nominal, rule of the people made it necessary for Marx to seek a social system under which this could be realised, thus carrying him another step towards socialism.

The materialist elements in Marx's outlook acquired concreteness with his deepening critique of the idealist approach of Hegel, who "does not develop his thinking from the object, but expounds the object in accordance with a thinking that is cut and dried — already formed and fixed in the abstract sphere of logic".¹⁵ Marx cited the evidence of Hegel to draw the conclusion that idealism inevitably led to religion and mysticism. He laid bare the connection between Hegel's idealistic philosophy and his conservative politics, and showed how in his system the Prussian monarchy, a concrete historical fact, was transformed into a stage in the development of the "absolute idea". Hegel similarly wrapped up in mystery the other attributes of the semi-feudal state, among them the system of estates and the bureaucracy.

His work on the critique of Hegel's philosophy of law impelled Marx to look upon history itself for the facts to refute Hegel's idealist constructions. Through the entire manuscript of his *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* runs the materialist tendency of starting from an analysis of concrete reality instead of abstract premises, from the "logic of the matter" and not the "matter of logic". He was aware that only a serious study of the history of society could help to decide on the relationship between civil society and the state. Consequently, in the summer (mostly July and August) of 1843, parallel with his work on the manuscript, Marx made a fundamental study of the history of England, France, Germany, the United States, Italy and Sweden and with particular emphasis on the Great French Revolution. In his notebooks he traced the dependence of the bourgeoisie's policies on the economic factor, on property relations. His grouping of extracts from various historians was such that it tended to stress the inability of the bourgeois-democratic revolution to provide genuine equality, arising not from the establishment of a nominal equality of all before the law but from a radical change in property relations.

As he studied history he also searched for the way to advance to a social system worthy to be called a truly human society. The fact that he had discovered the limited nature of past revolutions likewise carried Marx outside the framework of revolutionary democratism toward socialist conclusions.

In a letter to Ruge in September 1843, Marx outlined his plans for a journal to be published in Paris. Its main line, he held, should be relentless criticism of the existing world order. Marx did not regard criticism as an aim in itself, but as a means of working out a new world outlook to guide revolutionary political practice. He wrote that "nothing prevents us from making criticism of politics, participation in politics, and therefore *real* struggles, the starting point of our criticism, and from identifying our criticism with them".¹⁶ It was here that Marx first formulated the most important idea of the unity of theory and practice.

12. Marx's identification of the proletariat as the agent of human emancipation

The first double issue (Nos. 1 and 2) of the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher* appeared at the end of February 1844. It carried two articles by Marx — “On the Jewish Question” and “Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law. Introduction”, the latter article having been written in Paris in December 1843 and January 1844. In the first article Marx criticised Bruno Bauer, who in his treatises adopted an idealistic approach to the emancipation of the Jews in Germany, who were deprived of political rights. Bauer saw the solution in the emancipation of the Jews from religion. Marx proved this to be untenable. He showed that the problem of Jewish emancipation from oppression was part of the larger problem of humanity’s emancipation from the burden of political and *social* oppression.

Marx understood political emancipation as the people’s release from feudal fetters and the establishment of formal democratic freedoms in the course of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. While attaching much importance to political emancipation, Marx saw its limitations. He wrote: *Political* emancipation is, of course, a big step forward. True, it is not the final form of human emancipation in general, but it is the final form of human emancipation *within* the hitherto existing world order.¹⁷ Its limits sprang from the existence of private property, which the bourgeois revolution tended to safeguard as a sacrosanct social institution.

Marx made a profound materialistic analysis of the basic bourgeois freedoms, which had been achieved through political emancipation, and which the ideologists of the bourgeoisie had declared to be an expression of humanity’s natural rights. He showed these “rights of man” to be above all else the rights of members of “civil society”, that is, the rights of the bourgeois citizen. Freedom in bourgeois terms was essentially freedom for the individual bourgeois to dispose of his private property at his own discretion, while the individual’s right to security was essentially the right of the bourgeois proprietor to immunity of his person and, above all, his property. Consequently, political emancipation, or political revolution — Marx used both these terms to denote the bourgeois revolution — was humanity’s emancipation as a member of civil society, as an “egoistic man ... separated from other men and from the community”.¹⁸

In contrast to political emancipation, Marx put forward the idea of human emancipation — people’s deliverance from the vices of contemporary civil society, the elimination of real social inequality and the creation of social conditions in which social solidarity would predominate over egoism and mutual hostility between individuals. Still largely employing Feuerbach’s terminology, but in a new meaning, Marx wrote

that “only when man has recognised and organised his *forces propres*’ [own powers] as *social* powers, and consequently no longer separates social power from himself in the shape of *political* power, only then will human emancipation have been accomplished”.¹⁹

This reasoning is essentially the first outline of the idea of socialist revolution which works a radical change in the very foundation of “civil society” and establishes a truly human society. The influence of Feuerbach’s anthropologism is still evident here not only in the terminology used but also in the somewhat abstract approach to the question of human emancipation. By contrast, the criticism of political emancipation, of the limitations of bourgeois revolution, is already stated in concrete terms. Nevertheless, Marx’s article, “On the Jewish Question”, formulated the essence of the distinction between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution, and simultaneously advanced the idea that the latter would historically follow on from the former. Marx’s second article gave the answer as to who was to carry out human emancipation, by overcoming the limitations of political emancipation.

Marx’s study of earlier revolutions had led him to conclude that in all social revolutions one social class strives to act as the emancipator of all society, while looking to its own specific conditions and pursuing its own goals. However, it may undertake to do so only when objectively “its demands and rights are truly the rights and demands of society itself”.²⁰ The class that can carry through the emancipation of all people must be the class which is in contradiction with the whole of modern society, the class which consequently cannot emancipate itself without liberating the whole of society.

Marx’s second article formulated another key thesis: that without the imbuing of the masses with a scientific theory of social revolution there could not be a revolutionary transformation of society. “The weapon of criticism”, he wrote, “cannot, of course, replace the criticism of weapons, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses”.²¹

Marx saw the proletariat — the class of propertyless wage-workers — as the social force which was to put the conclusions of revolutionary theory to real use and translate them into life. “As philosophy finds its *material* weapons in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its *spiritual* weapons in philosophy.”²²

Marx’s idea of the proletarian class’s role in world history as the destroyer of capitalist society and the creator of a new, socialist society marked the starting point in the transformation of utopian socialism into scientific socialism. From that point on, the development of Marx’s materialist conception of history went hand in hand with the formulation of scientific socialism, with the theory of proletarian revolution.

13. Engel's turn toward proletarian socialism

The names of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels are found together in the contents of the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher*, an apparent coincidence which is highly symbolic, for Engels had arrived at similar conclusions as Marx.

During the two years that Engels spent in England, he learned a great deal from studies in his spare time about English political economy and the writings of English socialists, notably Robert Owen. There, too, he found Chartism, Europe's most advanced working-class movement. Many years later he himself recalled that it was in Manchester that he had realised the crucial role in social life of economic relations constituting the basis of class contradictions and the struggle among political parties. Like Marx, Engels had also come to see the proletariat as the social force capable of revolutionising society.

These elements of the new outlook were reflected in Engels' articles of the period, in particular those in the Owenist *New Moral World*. But the strongest evidence of his development of a materialist dialectics and of socialism comes from his articles published in the *Jahrbucher*: "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy" and *The Conditions of England. Past and Present* by Thomas Carlyle".

Many years later, in the preface to his 1859 *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*, Marx described Engels' "Outline" in the *Jahrbucher* as "a brilliant sketch on the criticism of economic categories".²³ Engels started his analysis by recognising the objective economic laws of capitalist production described by Adam Smith and his school of political economy. But this school produced an inadequate and one-sided analysis of these laws because it took them for granted. This kind of science "ought to be called *private* economy, for its public connections exist only for the sake of private property".²⁴ Consequently, without denying the scientific nature of classical political economy, Engels showed its organic connection with the interests of the capitalist class.

The main content of the article was a socialist critique of bourgeois political economy and private property, its actual basis. "The productive power at mankind's disposal is immense", Engels wrote.²⁵ What then hampers the eradication of poverty and hunger? It is private property. The latter has converted the worker into a commodity whose production depends on demand. "All this drives us to the abolition of this degradation of mankind through the abolition of private property, competition and the opposing interests."²⁶

Engels' "Outline of a Critique of Political Economy" made a great impression on Marx, leading him to begin a more serious study of political economy. During the early months of 1844 Marx made a series of extracts from the works of English and

French economists. These extracts and Marx's critical notes were later published in the Soviet Union in 1932 under the title *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*. While primarily a study of political economy they also contained a fundamental critique of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in which Marx reworked Hegel's dialectics along materialist lines.

Engels' second article in the *Jahrbucher* was a review of Thomas Carlyle's 1843 book *Past and Present*, in which Carlyle criticised capitalism from the point of view of defending the "harmony" of social life under feudal social relations. Carlyle accused the capitalists of having plunged England into unprecedented impoverishment, degradation and moral evil. Capitalism has destroyed the religious spirit and the patriarchal relations of the Middle Ages, but what did it give the people in return? The Gospel of Mammon, the making of money. Exposing bourgeois democracy, Carlyle had written that the "notion that a man's liberty consists in giving his vote at election-hustings, and saying, 'Behold, now I too have my twenty-thousandth part of a Talker in our National Palaver [Parliament]; will not all the goods be good to me?' — is one of pleasantest".²⁷ Engels quoted this and other extracts from Carlyle's book and wrote:

This is the condition of England, according to Carlyle. An idle land-owning aristocracy which "have not yet learned even to sit still and do no mischief", and a working aristocracy submerged in Mammonism, who, when they ought to be collectively leaders of labour, "captains of industry", are just a gang of industrial buccaneers and pirates ... Everywhere chaos, disorder, anarchy, dissolution of the old ties of society, everywhere intellectual insipidity, frivolity, and debility. — That is the condition of England. Thus far, if we discount a few expressions that have derived from Carlyle's particular standpoint, we must allow the truth of all he says.²⁸

Engels found Carlyle's criticism of capitalism valuable because it "strikes a human chord, presents human relations and shows traces of a human point of view".²⁹ But Carlyle's class standpoint made it impossible for him to take a revolutionary and scientific approach to the question of how to do away with capitalist oppression. He held that the social evils produced by the development of capitalism were not rooted in capitalism itself but in atheism and the "materialistic" self-seeking allegedly connected with it. Carlyle's solution — a new religion based on the cult of labour — was a reactionary utopia because, Engels wrote, religion merely sanctifies the social evils engendered by capitalism. Engels wrote:

The question has previously always been: what is God? and German philosophy [i.e., Feuerbach] has answered the question in this sense: God is man. Man has only to understand himself, to take himself as the measure of all aspects of life, to judge according to his being, to organise the world in a truly human manner according to the

demands of his own nature, and he will have solved the riddle of our time.”³⁰

Had Engels confined himself to this general humanistic approach, he would have, in effect, not gone beyond the framework of Feuerbach’s theory. But this article is of outstanding importance precisely because it says that it is up to the emancipation movement of the working class “to organise the world in a truly human manner”. Engels castigates the self-seeking and the blind acceptance of prejudices by England’s ruling classes who turn their backs on all real progress. Only the workers “are really respectable, for all their roughness and for all their moral degradation. It is from them that England’s salvation will come, they still comprise flexible material; they have no education, but no prejudices either, they still have the strength for a great national deed — they still have future”.³¹

The working class, wrote Engels, has put forward, through its social leaders, the socialists, the task of destroying capitalism. It is true that the socialists do not yet have a sound theoretical grasp of social life and are inclined to narrow empiricism and practicalism. But they are “the only party in England which has a future, relatively weak though they may be. Democracy, Chartism must soon be victorious, and then the mass of the English workers will have the choice only between starvation and socialism”.³²

Engels concluded his article with a promise to get down soon to a more detailed study of social conditions in England, for “the condition of England is of immense importance for history and for all other countries; for as regards social matters England is of course far in advance of all other countries”.³³

14. The critique of ‘critical criticism’

By the beginning of 1844, both Marx and Engels, working independently of each other and studying the socio-economic situation and literature that were largely different, advanced from dialectical idealism and petty-bourgeois revolutionary-democratism to dialectical materialism and proletarian-socialism. However, they had yet to elaborate the fundamental principles of a dialectical materialist conception of history and thus give a scientific basis for their revolutionary proletarian-socialism.

At the end of August 1844, Marx had a visit in Paris from Engels, who was returning from England to Germany. During his 10-day stay, the two men found that their views were identical in every aspect of theory and practice. They agreed to write a polemical work directed against the Young Hegelians.

There were several considerations behind the need for them to make a public criticism of the Young Hegelians. They realised that they could work out a dialectical materialist theory of history and a scientific socialism only by defining the differences

between non-proletarian ideological trends and their own. Meanwhile, the Young Hegelians, especially those in Berlin, who were grouped around the Bauer brothers, had undergone a marked change: they had renounced their democratic convictions, which had made them ideologists of the radical bourgeoisie, and had moved to the right on many issues. They were no longer allies in the fight against the Prussian state, but a group of anarchist-minded intellectuals, who scorned “the mass” as being passive and an obstacle to progress.

In the monthly *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, published by Bruno Bauer in 1843 and 1844, the Young Hegelians publicly repudiated their past revolutionary-democratic attitudes. Its eighth issue carried Bruno Bauer’s article, “The Year 1842”, in which he renounced the “radicalism of 1842” as “expressed in the *Rheinische Zeitung*”. In a clear allusion to Marx and Engels, Bauer spurned the views of those who “believe that they have found something new in socialism”. He flaunted his contempt for politics, asserting that “Critical Criticism” had ceased to be political.

Objectively the reactionary social implications of their philosophy lay in their subjectivist view that the resolution of any contradictions in the mind was identical with their resolution in reality. Marx wrote that they had learned “to convert *real objective* chains that exist *outside me* into *merely me*”.³⁴ Marx and Engels were faced with the task of exposing the Young Hegelians’ sham radicalism and countering their “Critical Criticism” with their own materialist conceptions and socialist views. The manuscript in which this was accomplished was completed at the end of November 1844. It was published in Frankfurt-am-Main at the end of February 1845 under the title, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism. Against Bruno Bauer and Co.*

This was primarily a philosophical work, containing a consistent materialist interpretation of some of the most important philosophical problems, and a militant attack on the philosophical opponents of Marx and Engels’ new outlook. A large part of it was a critique of the Young Hegelians’ subjective idealism, which in its worse and frequently caricatured form embodied all the defects of classical German idealism from Kant to Hegel, so the critique essential applied to idealism as a whole, to its methods and its distorted dialectics. Ridiculing the Young Hegelians’ worship of self-consciousness, Marx and Engels wrote:

The Critical Critic ... cannot by any means entertain the thought that there is a world in which *consciousness* and *being* are distinct; a world which continues to exist when I merely abolish its existence in thought.³⁵

In *The Holy Family* Marx exposed the epistemological roots of idealism, notably the treatment of concrete, individual things as forms in which general concepts exist. The idealist philosopher, Marx wrote ironically, “performs a *miracle* by producing the

real *natural objects*, the apple, the pear, etc., out of the unreal *creation of the mind* ‘the Fruit’”.³⁶ For the idealist philosopher, the cognition of things through an identification in them of the general becomes “an act of creation” of these things by consciousness.

The Holy Family gave the first materialist analysis of the history of philosophy from the 17th to the first half of the 18th century, presented as a struggle between materialism and idealism, the two main trends in philosophy, with special emphasis on the intrinsic connection between materialist ideas and those of utopian socialism, and also between the advance of materialism and the advance of natural science.

While recognising the great progressive importance of materialism in the history of philosophy, Marx and Engels did not identify their own views with those of the earlier materialists, which were metaphysical and mechanistic. *The Holy Family* treated dialectics as an inherent property of the objective processes in the development of the material world, which was reflected in human thinking. This is why it analysed social phenomena in their dialectical motion, where their intrinsic contradictions are the source, and their resolution the prerequisite for a revolutionary transition to a new quality.

The elaboration of a number of basic propositions of the materialist view of history then being developed by Marx was central to the content of the book. In contrast to the Young Hegelians’ presentation of logical categories as something that had an existence of their own and dominated people’s acts, Marx clearly said history was nothing but “human activity”. He wrote: “‘History’ is not, as it were, a person agent, using man as a means to achieve *its own* aims; history is *nothing but* the activity of man pursuing his aims.”³⁷

Marx also gained a more profound understanding of the relation between “civil society” and the state in the process of polemicising against the Young Hegelians’ view that the “general state system” was needed to “hold together the individual self-seeking atoms” — a metaphysical conception of society that forms the foundation of bourgeois sociology. Marx wrote:

Speaking exactly and in the prosaic sense, the members of civil society are not *atoms*. The *specific property* of the atom is that it has *no* properties and is therefore not connected with beings outside it by any relationship determined by its own *natural necessity*. The atom *has no needs*, it is *self-sufficient*; the world outside it is an absolute *vacuum*, i.e., is contentless, senseless, meaningless, just because the atom has *all fullness* in itself. The egoistic individual in civil society may in his non-sensuous imagination and lifeless abstraction inflate himself into an *atom*, i.e., into an unrelated, self-sufficient, wantless, *absolutely full*, blessed being. Unblessed *sensuous reality* does not bother about his imagination, each of his senses compels him to believe in the existence of the

world and of individuals outside him, and even his *profane* stomach reminds him every day that the world *outside* him is not *empty*, but is what really *fills*. Every activity and property of his being, every one of his vital urges, becomes a *need*, a *necessity*, which his *self-seeking* transforms into seeking for other things and human beings outside him. But since the need of one individual has no self-evident meaning for another egoistic individual capable of satisfying that need, and therefore no direct connection with its satisfaction, each individual has to create this connection; it thus becomes the intermediary between the need of another and the objects of this need. Therefore it is *natural necessity*, the *essential human properties* however estranged they may seem to be, and *interest* that hold the members of civil society together; *civil*, not *political* life is their *real* tie. It is therefore not the *state* that holds the *atoms* of civil society together, but the fact that they are *atoms* only in *imagination*, in the *heaven* of their fancy, but in *reality* being tremendously different from atoms, in other words, not *divine egoists*, but *egoistic human beings*. Only *political superstition* still imagines today that civil life must be held together by the state, whereas in reality, on the contrary, the state is held together by civil life.³⁸

In order to make the vague concept of “civil society” more specific Marx sought to define the main factor determining society as a whole. He already perceived it to be the production of material goods, and saw production relations as the social relations between individuals which take shape in the process of production. These relations express both “the *objective being of man*” and “at the same time the *existence of man for other men*, his *human relation to other men*, the *social behaviour of man to man*”.³⁹

Marx saw material production as the basis of humanity’s history, which was a step forward from his 1844 *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*. No historical period could be understood, he wrote in *The Holy Family*, “without knowing, for example, the industry of that period, the immediate mode of production of life itself”.⁴⁰

15. Marx’s analysis of the revolutionary role of the proletariat

In the *Holy Family* Marx applied Hegel’s dialectical conception of the unity and conflict of opposites to the antagonistic contradiction between poverty and wealth in capitalist society to refute the Bauer brothers’ claim that Hegel’s dialectical method required the recognition that these two concepts formed a “single whole” which could not be separated because it could not be ascertained which was the negative and which the positive pole of this antithesis. He did this by shifting the whole argument from the realm of the abstract idea of “poverty” as “non-wealth” to the concrete social

embodiment of “non-wealth” in bourgeois society: the proletariat. Marx wrote:

Proletariat and wealth are opposites: as such they form a single whole. They are both creations of the world of private property. The question of exactly what place each occupies in the antithesis. It is not sufficient to declare them two sides of a single whole.

Private property as private property, as wealth, is compelled to maintain *itself*, and thereby its opposite, the proletariat, in *existence*. That is the *positive* side of the antithesis, self-satisfied private property.

The proletariat, on the contrary, is compelled as proletariat to abolish itself and thereby its opposite, private property, which determines its existence, and which makes it proletariat. It is the *negative* side of the antithesis, its restlessness within its very self, dissolved and self-dissolving private property.

The propertied class and the class of the proletariat present the same human self-estrangement. But the former class feels at ease and strengthened in this self-estrangement, it recognises estrangement as *its own power* and has in it the *semblance* of a human existence. The latter feels annihilated in estrangement; it sees in it its own powerlessness and the reality of an inhuman existence. It is, to use an expression of Hegel, in its abasement the *indignation* at that abasement, an indignation to which it is necessarily driven by the contradiction between its human *nature* and its condition of life, which is the outright, resolute and comprehensive negation of that nature.

Within this antithesis the private property-owner is therefore the *conservative* side, the proletarian the *destructive* side. From the former arises the action of preserving the antithesis, from the latter the action of annihilating it ...

When the proletariat is victorious, it by no means becomes the absolute side of society, for it is victorious only by abolishing itself and its opposite. Then the proletariat disappears as well as its opposite which determines it, private property.

When socialist writers ascribe this world-historic role to the proletariat, it is not at all, as Critical Criticism pretends to believe, because they regard the proletarians as *gods*. Rather the contrary. Since in the fully-formed proletariat the abstraction of all humanity, even of the *semblance* of humanity, is practically complete; since the conditions of life of the proletariat sum up all the conditions of life of society today in their most inhuman form; since man has lost himself in the proletariat, yet at the same time has not only gained theoretical consciousness of that loss, but through urgent, no longer removable, no longer disguisable, absolutely imperative *need* — the practical expression of *necessity* — is driven directly to revolt against this inhumanity, it follows that the proletariat can and must emancipate itself. But it cannot emancipate itself without abolishing the conditions of its own life. It cannot abolish the conditions of its

own life without abolishing *all* the inhuman conditions of life of society today which are summed up in its own situation. Not in vain does it go through the stern but steeling school of *labour*. It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat, at the moment *regards* as its aim. It is a question of *what the proletariat is*, and what, in accordance with this *being*, it will historically be compelled to do. Its aim and historical action is visibly and irrevocably foreshadowed in its own life situation as well as in the whole organisation of bourgeois society today.⁴¹

This passage is one of the most pregnant in whole of the writings of Marx. Most notable is that in it Marx formulates a conception of the coming into being of socialism that transcended all previous concepts: socialism is the outcome of the proletariat's class struggle against capitalism. But this class struggle does not arise from the *statistical average* of all its individual empirical relations to *the capitalists*, but from the proletariat's *objective*, dynamical relation to the *organisation* of bourgeois society. Here Marx emphasises and contrasts the dialectical distinction between what the proletariat *is*, and what it will be *compelled to do* if it is to emancipate itself, and what the proletariat at any given moment *thinks* itself to be, at that moment *wants* to do.

The old, metaphysical, materialism that formed the philosophical world outlook of the utopian socialists sought to explain society from the *individual* and find a personal, and a subjective, origin for class conflicts. The utopian socialists shared the 18th century materialists' conception of society as a mere *aggregation* of individuals, of unit-atoms. Hence they believed that the social order could be rearranged by *reason* acting from *above* — by some powerful ruler using his governmental authority to reorganise his kingdom on the lines of a preconceived new plan, or by some wealthy philanthropist advancing the wealth to permit a sample social utopia to be set going, or by sufficient people of "good will" compelling the proletarians to set up such utopias. Marx's new, dialectical, materialism explained the *individual* and the *class* from society as an *objective*, dialectically developing, historical *fact* based on an *antagonistic unity* of oppressor and oppressed classes. From this conception of bourgeois society he explained that the classless socialist society could only be brought into being by the coming to power of the *self-emancipation movement* of the *oppressed class*.

Lenin later wrote that *The Holy Family* contained "Marx's view — already almost fully developed — concerning the revolutionary role of the proletariat".⁴²

16. Engels' Condition of the Working Class in England

The Holy Family appeared in print the same month that the French government, under pressure from the Prussian authorities, forced Marx to leave Paris. He arrived in Brussels in early February 1845. At the time, Belgium was one of most economically

developed countries in Europe. Manufactory had given way to large-scale machine production. The conditions of the Belgian proletariat — the working day was up to 14 hours and wages were a pittance — provided a wealth of facts for analysis of the social contradictions inherent in capitalism. In early April 1845 Engels arrived in Brussels from Barmen. A month later Engels' book *The Condition of the Working Class in England* was published in Leipzig.

Present-day bourgeois ideologists claim that the principles of Marxian socialism are based on a speculative construction of world history. Engels' book refutes all such claims. It shows that Marx and Engels developed their theoretical conclusions on the basis of an analysis and summing up of concrete social facts. When working on his book, Engels made a study of a vast array of data brought together by other researchers and visited the homes of English workers to learn at first hand about their living conditions, attended workers' meetings to find out about their working conditions, and took part in the Chartist movement.

His concrete social study was not, of course, confined to a description and systematisation of the facts. He drew important theoretical conclusions, whose significance went well beyond the conjunctural historical situation which provided the factual basis for his study. His main conclusion was that the working class was capable not only of destroying the capitalist system, but also of building a classless, socialist society.

In his book Engels refuted the naive utopian socialist idea that the bourgeoisie could be persuaded to support the socialist transformation of social relations. Socialism, Engels demonstrated, was incompatible with the interests of the capitalists. He regarded the working-class movement as a necessary expression of the antagonistic contradiction between the main classes of capitalist society, and emphasised the proletarian character of the Chartist movement, but added that the Chartists were as yet unaware of the need for a social revolution — confining their aims to achieving universal manhood suffrage.

In England, Engels explained, socialism was virtually unconnected with the working-class movement, and those who advocated socialism did not advocate an implacable class struggle:

English Socialism arose with Owen, a manufacturer, and proceeds therefore with great consideration toward the bourgeoisie and great injustice toward the proletariat in its methods, although it culminates in demanding the abolition of the class antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat.

The Socialists are thoroughly tame and peaceable, accept our existing order, bad as it is, so far as to reject all other methods but that of winning public opinion.⁴³

This was the reason that at this time both Marx and Engels did not call themselves socialists, but communists. The latter term was generally associated with those who advocated the achievement of a classless society through revolutionary means.

The English socialists, Engels explained, lacked the historical approach to social life, which is why they did not connect the transition to socialism with definite, historically formed social conditions. They complained of the hatred of the workers for the capitalists, and failed to understand that this hatred for those who exploited and oppressed them impelled the workers to advance.

The English socialists, Engels wrote “acknowledge only a psychological development, a development of man in the abstract, out of all relation to the Past, whereas the whole world rests upon the Past, the individual man included”.⁴⁴ How could English socialism overcome its limitations? To do this it would have to purge itself of its bourgeois elements and merge with the working-class movement. This process, Engels stated, had already begun, with many of the Chartist leaders having become socialists. Further development of this process will produce *proletarian* socialism, whose historical necessity is determined by the antagonistic character of capitalist social relations and the advance of philosophical and social thought. Only proletarian socialism, Engels argued, would make the English working class master of its own country.

Engels showed the development of the objective conditions for the proletariat’s class organisation and demonstrated how the progress of capitalist production induced the proletariat to unite into a single powerful army, which once imbued with proletarian socialism, would carry out a socialist revolution. He argued that “the war of the poor against the rich now carried on in detail and indirectly will become direct and universal. It is too late for a peaceful solution. The classes are divided more and more sharply, the spirit of resistance penetrates the workers, the bitterness intensifies, the guerilla skirmishes become concentrated in more important battles, and soon a slight impulse will suffice to set the avalanche in motion”.⁴⁵

Such are the basic ideas of Engels’ book. It is not free of imprecise and incorrect propositions, which were mainly due to the fact that Marxian economic theory was still embryonic. Engels, like Marx before the early 1850s, assumed that capitalism had already worked out its potentialities, as the cyclical crises of over-production of commodities seemed to indicate, while the growing impoverishment of the proletariat appeared to be a certain sign that the bourgeoisie was losing its footing.

Engels noted correctly that socialist theory had nothing to do with the cult of violence, and regarded the revolutionary use of armed force only as a means which the proletariat was forced to use against the violence resorted to by the ruling bourgeoisie.

But he asserted that the doctrine of communism rose above the struggle between capital and wage-labour, and defended the interests of humanity as a whole — a conclusion that contradicted the whole thrust of his book. In a preface to the book which he wrote in 1892 for the first British edition, Engels repudiated this view:

... the dictum that Communism is not a mere party doctrine of the working-class, but a theory compassing the emancipation of society at large, including the capitalist class, from its present narrow conditions ... is true enough in the abstract, but absolutely useless, and sometimes worse, in practice. So long as the wealthy classes not only do not feel the want of any emancipation, but strenuously oppose the self-emancipation of the working class, so long the social revolution will have to be prepared and fought out by the working class alone. The French bourgeois of 1789, too, declared the emancipation of the bourgeoisie to be the emancipation of the whole human race; but the nobility and clergy would not see it; the proposition — though for the time being, with respect to feudalism, an abstract historical truth — soon became a mere sentimentalism, and disappeared from view altogether in the fire of the revolutionary struggle. And today, the very people who, from the “impartiality” of their superior standpoint, preach to the workers a Socialism soaring high above their class interests and class struggles, and tending to reconcile in a higher humanity the interests of both the contending classes — these people are either neophytes, who have still to learn a great deal, or they are the worst enemies of the workers — wolves in sheep’s clothing.⁴⁶

17. Marx’s ‘Theses on Feuerbach’

Shortly before Engels’ book was printed, Marx had come to the conclusion that the two of them needed to develop in detail the philosophical foundation for scientific socialism. When Engels came to Brussels in April 1845, Marx was able to give him a general outline of his new, materialist conception of history set out in the form of eleven short “Theses on Feuerbach”. They were, Engels later wrote, “the first document in which is deposited the brilliant germ of the new world outlook”.⁴⁷

Their central idea is the decisive role of revolutionising material practice in the life of society. Marx affirmed that practice is the point of departure, the basis, the criterion and the purpose of any cognition, including consequently philosophical cognition.

Some philosophers before Marx had sensed and even declared that practice was the criterion and purpose of knowledge, but the real role of practice in social life and the process of cognition and its importance as a category of philosophy could be truly understood only from the standpoint of the interests of the working class, the consistently revolutionary class standpoint. The introduction of the category of practice into the theory of knowledge marked a real revolution in epistemology, and one of the

main elements behind the revolution in philosophy effected by Marx.

Proceeding from the new outlook, Marx criticised the old materialism for being contemplative, and idealism for reducing practice to purely theoretical activity. This is not to say that Marx strove to rise above both materialism and idealism, but he firmly declared his outlook to be a new materialism.

In contrast to idealist philosophers, Marx emphasised that purely theoretical criticism is not enough to change reality; it is essential to have practical-critical, revolutionary, activity; it is essential to change not only thinking but also being. Only in the process of revolutionary practice do people change both the surrounding reality and themselves.

In contrast to Feuerbach's metaphysical and unhistorical concepts of the human being as an abstract, isolated individual, Marx formulated another key principle of dialectical materialism, namely, that the essence of the human being is the ensemble of all the social relations. Human beings exist in society, are a product of society, and not just of society in the abstract, but in every instance, a definite form of society.

Marx saw consistent materialism, materialism applied to society, as the way to overcome religion. Pre-Marxian materialists, Feuerbach in particular, had reduced religion to its secular basis and had subjected it to profound criticism. Therein lay their historical achievement. But it was Marx who showed that religion sprang from the contradictions of this secular basis, from social antagonisms, and that in order to eliminate religion it was necessary to revolutionise existing society.

Marx had already formulated this view a year earlier in his *Jahrbucher* article "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Introduction". In that article, he had written:

The basis of irreligious criticism is: *Man makes religion*, religion does not make man. In other words, religion is the self-consciousness and self-feeling of man who has either not yet found himself or has already lost himself again. But *man* is no abstract being squatting outside the world. Man is *the world of man*, the state, society. This state, this society, produce religion, *an inverted world-consciousness*, because they are an *inverted world*. Religion is the general theory of that world, its encyclopaedic compendium, its logic in a popular form, its spiritualistic *point d'honneur*, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn completion, its universal ground for consolation and justification. It is *the fantastic realisation* of the human essence because the *human essence* has no true reality. The struggle against religion is therefore mediately the fight against *the world*, of which religion is the spiritual *aroma*.

Religious distress is at the same time the *expression* of real distress and the *protest* against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless

world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the *opium* of the people.

The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is required for their *real* happiness. The demand to give up the illusions about the existing state of affairs is the *demand to give up a state of affairs which needs illusions*.⁴⁸

The earlier materialism had been contemplative and metaphysical, seeing people as passive recipients of information from the external world and as essentially unit-atoms, isolated from nature and society. In his “Theses on Feuerbach” Marx contrasted contemplation with revolutionary practice, and the old materialism with the new, dialectical, materialism as the philosophical foundation of scientific socialism. The final thesis contained the classic formulation of the principle of the new outlook: “The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it.”⁴⁹

18. Historical materialism & revolutionary practice

The new outlook, whose fundamental principles Marx had formulated with such brevity in the eleven “Theses on Feuerbach”, was elaborated by Marx and Engels in a new work, *The German Ideology*, which they jointly wrote between November 1845 and April 1846.

Before they began writing this work, however, the two men travelled to England to make a study of English writings, mainly economic, which were not available in Brussels, and of the socio-economic conditions of this, the most developed capitalist country of the time.

By the autumn of 1845, Marx and Engels had evolved a concrete plan for publishing a new philosophical work. This was to be a two-volume critique of German ideology — German philosophy as represented by Feuerbach (who had earlier that summer declared himself to be a “communist”), Bauer and other exponents of vulgarised subjectivist interpretations of Hegel, as well as the exponents of “true socialism” — a petty-bourgeois utopian socialist doctrine then becoming popular among German intellectuals.

The most important section of *The German Ideology* from the theoretical point of view was the first, introductory chapter (“I. Feuerbach. Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlooks”). Here Marx and Engels elaborated their views directly, whereas in the other chapters this was done mostly by criticising their opponents. The preface, which remained uncompleted, gave a more or less systematic exposition of the dialectical materialist conception of history and of the theory of scientific socialism. It presented these in three parts: the premises, the concept and the conclusions.

In contrast to the German idealists, who followed Hegel in claiming that their

philosophy made do without premises, for all premises were supposedly dogmatic, Marx and Engels gave a consistently materialist and dialectical answer to the cardinal question of philosophy: what should be the point of departure in constructing a scientific theory of history? They admitted that they started from definite premises — in no sense dogmatic and speculative, but real — and went on to state them. These premises were the existence of real individual human beings, their activity and the material conditions of their activity, which are simultaneously the premises of history itself.

Overcoming the inconsistency of earlier materialism, which took the metaphysical view that nature was immutable, Marx and Engels showed that the natural conditions in which human beings lived and acted were also historical, and drew a distinction between the natural conditions which humans find in existence and those which are created by humans' own productive activity. In existing society the material environment itself becomes the product of human historical activity.

A definite natural environment is the objective material condition for the existence and development of human society, and human beings' own physical make-up determines their attitude to the natural environment. However, Marx and Engels did not concentrate on these two prerequisites of history but on human activity as the decisive factor behind the historical process.

There are two sides to this activity: production (humans' active relation to nature, their influence on it) and social intercourse (humans' relations to one another, principally in the process of production). While production and intercourse react upon each other, production is the decisive factor. This is because the first premise of all human history is that humans must be in a position to live, which means that they need food, water, clothes and dwellings. This is why the first historical act is the production of the means to satisfy these needs. The whole of life in a given society is dependent on and determined by production and by the ways in which the individuals in that society relate to each other to carry out production, with the latter being determined by the productive forces (the instruments, raw materials, sources of motive power and the working people, with their knowledge and skills) that are employed in production. The materialist conception of history was summed up in these words:

This conception of history thus relies on expounding the real process of production — starting from the material production of life itself — and comprehending the form of intercourse connected with and created by this mode of production, i.e., civil society in its various stage, as the basis of all history; describing in its action as the state, and also explaining how all the different theoretical products and forms of consciousness, religion, philosophy, morality, etc., etc., arise from it, and tracing the process of their formation from that basis; thus the whole thing can, of course, be depicted in its totality (and

therefore, too, the reciprocal action of these various sides to one another). It has not, like the idealist view of history, to look for a category in every period, but remains constantly on the real *ground* of history; it does not explain practice from the idea but explains the formation of ideas from material practice, and accordingly it comes to the conclusion ... that not criticism but revolution is the driving force of history, also of religion, of philosophy and all other kinds of theory.⁵⁰

The main conclusion from the materialist view of history was that the proletarian-socialist revolution is historically necessary. In *The German Ideology* the theory of scientific socialism appears as a corollary of historical materialism, of a scientific theory of social development.

In contrast to the utopians, who saw socialism as an abstract plan for a future social idyll, Marx and Engels saw it as a law-governed result of objective historical development. “Communism”, they declared in *The German Ideology*, “is for us not a *state of affairs* which is to be established, an *ideal* to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things”.⁵¹

Less than two years after this was written, Marx and Engels produced the first work in which scientific socialism — *Marxism* — constituted itself as an organised revolutionary movement — the *Communist Manifesto*. ■

Special Introduction to the English Edition of 1892

The present little book is, originally, part of a larger whole. About 1875, Dr. E. Dühring, *privatdocent*^{*} at Berlin University, suddenly and rather clamorously announced his conversion to socialism, and presented the German public not only with an elaborate socialist theory, but also with a complete practical plan for the reorganisation of society. As a matter of course, he fell foul of his predecessors; above all, he honoured Marx by pouring out upon him the full vials of his wrath.

This took place about the same time when the two sections of the Socialist Party in Germany — Eisenachers and Lasselleans — had just effected their fusion, and thus obtained not only an immense increase of strength, but, was what more, the faculty of employing the whole of this strength against the common enemy. The Socialist Party in Germany was fast becoming a power. But, to make it a power, the first condition was that the newly-conquered unity should not be imperilled. And Dr. Dühring openly proceeded to form around himself a sect, the nucleus of a future separate party. It thus became necessary to take up the gauntlet thrown down to us, and to fight out the struggle, whether we liked it or not.

This, however, though it might not be an over-difficult, was evidently a long-winded business. As is well-known, we Germans are of a terribly ponderous *Gründlichkeit*,[§] radical profundity or profound radicality, whatever you may like to call it. Whenever anyone of us expounds what he considers a new doctrine, he has first to elaborate it into an all-comprising system. He has to prove that both the first principles of logic and the fundamental laws of the universe had existed from all eternity for no other purpose than to ultimately lead to this newly-discovered, crowning theory. And Dr. Dühring, in this respect, was quite up to the national mark. Nothing less than a complete *System of Philosophy*, mental, moral, natural, and historical; a complete *System of Political Economy and Socialism*; and, finally, a *Critical History of Political Economy* — three big volumes in octavo, heavy extrinsically and intrinsically, three army-corps of arguments mobilised against all previous philosophers and

economists in general, and against Marx in particular — in fact, an attempt at a complete “revolution in science” — these were what I should have to tackle. I had to treat of all and every possible subject, from concepts of time and space to Bimetallism;¹ from the eternity of matter and motion, to the perishable nature of moral ideas; from Darwin’s natural selection to the education of youth in a future society. Anyhow, the systematic comprehensiveness of my opponent gave me the opportunity of developing, in opposition to him, and in a more connected form than had previously been done, the views held by Marx and myself on this great variety of subjects. And that was the principal reason which made me undertake this otherwise ungrateful task.

My reply was first published in a series of articles in the Leipzig *Vorwärts*,² the chief organ of the Socialist Party, and later on as a book: *Herrn Eugen Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft* (*Mr. E. Dühring’s Revolution in Science*), a second edition of which appeared in Zurich, 1886.

At the request of my friend, Paul Lafargue,³ now representative of Lille in the French Chamber of Deputies, I arranged three chapters of this book as a pamphlet, which he translated and published in 1880, under the title: *Socialisme utopique et socialisme scientifique*. From this French text, a Polish and a Spanish edition were prepared. In 1883, our German friends brought out the pamphlet in the original language. Italian, Russian, Danish, Dutch, and Romanian translations, based upon the German text, have since been published. Thus, with the present English edition, this little book circulates in 10 languages. I am not aware that any other socialist work, not even our *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, or Marx’s *Capital*, has been so often translated. In Germany, it has had four editions of about 20,000 copies in all.

The appendix, “The Mark”,⁴ was written with the intention of spreading among the German Socialist Party some elementary knowledge of the history and development of landed property in Germany. This seemed all the more necessary at a time when the assimilation by that party of the working people of the towns was in a fair way of completion, and when the agricultural labourers and peasants had to be taken in hand. This appendix has been included in the translation, as the original forms of tenure of land common to all Teutonic tribes, and the history of their decay, are even less known in England and in Germany. I have left the text as it stands in the original, without alluding to the hypothesis recently started by Maxim Kovalevsky, according to which the partition of the arable and meadow lands among the members of the Mark was preceded by their being cultivated for joint-account by a large patriarchal family

* Lecturer.

§ Literally, fundamental-ness.

community, embracing several generations (as exemplified by the still existing South Slavonian Zadruga), and that the partition, later on, took place when the community had increased, so as to become too unwieldy for joint-account management. Kovalevsky is probably quite right, but the matter is still *sub judice*.*

The economic terms used in this work, as far as they are new, agree with those used in the English edition of Marx's *Capital*. We call "production of commodities" that economic phase where articles are produced not only for the use of the producers, but also for the purpose of exchange; that is, *as commodities*, not as use values. This phase extends from the first beginnings of production for exchange down to our present time; it attains its full development under capitalist production only, that is, under conditions where the capitalist, the owner of the means of production, employs, for wages, labourers, people deprived of all means of production except their own labour-power, and pockets the excess of the selling price of the products over his outlay. We divide the history of industrial production since the Middle Ages into three periods: (1) handicraft, small master-craftsman with a few journeymen and apprentices, where each labourer produces a complete article; (2) manufacture, where greater numbers of workmen, grouped in one large establishment, produce the complete article on the principle of division of labour, each workman performing only one partial operation, so that the product is complete only after having passed successively through the hands of all; (3) modern industry, where the product is produced by machinery driven by power, and where the work of the labourer is limited to superintending and correcting the performance of the mechanical agent.

I am perfectly aware that the contents of this work will meet with objection from a considerable portion of the British public. But, if we Continentals had taken the slightest notice of the prejudices of British "respectability", we should be even worse off than we are. This book defends what we call "historical materialism", and the word materialism grates upon the ears of the immense majority of British readers. "Agnosticism" might be tolerated, but materialism is utterly inadmissible.

And, yet, the original home of all modern materialism, from the 17th century onwards, is England.

Materialism is the natural-born son of Great Britain. Already the British schoolman, Duns Scotus,⁵ asked, "whether it was impossible for the matter to think?"

In order to effect this miracle, he took refuge in God's omnipotence — i.e., he made theology preach materialism. Moreover, he was a nominalist. Nominalism, the first form of materialism, is chiefly found among the English schoolmen.⁶

The real progenitor of English materialism is Bacon.⁷ To him, natural philosophy is the only true philosophy, and physics based upon the experience of the senses is the

chiefest part of natural philosophy. Anaxagoras and his homoiomeria⁸, Democritus and his atoms,⁹ he often quotes as his authorities. According to him, the senses are infallible and the source of all knowledge. All science is based on experience, and consists in subjecting the data furnished by the senses to a rational method of investigation. Induction, analysis, comparison, observation, experiment, are the principal forms of such a rational method. Among the qualities inherent in matter, motion is the first and foremost, not only in the form of mechanical and mathematical motion, but chiefly in the form of an impulse, a vital spirit, a tension — or a “qual”, to use a term of Jakob Böhme’s* — of matter.

In Bacon, its first creator, materialism still occludes within itself the germs of a many-sided development. On the one hand, matter, surrounded by a sensuous, poetic glamor, seems to attract man’s whole entity by winning smiles. On the other, the aphoristically formulated doctrine pullulates with inconsistencies imported from theology.

In its further evolution, materialism becomes one-sided. Hobbes¹⁰ is the man who systematises Baconian materialism. Knowledge based upon the senses loses its poetic blossom, it passes into the abstract experience of the mathematician; geometry is proclaimed as the queen of sciences. Materialism takes to misanthropy. If it is to overcome its opponent, misanthropic, flashless spiritualism, and that on the latter’s own ground, materialism has to chastise its own flesh and turn ascetic. Thus, from a sensual, it passes into an intellectual, entity; but thus, too, it evolves all the consistency, regardless of consequences, characteristic of the intellect.

Hobbes, as Bacon’s continuator, argues thus: if all human knowledge is furnished by the senses, then our concepts and ideas are but the phantoms, divested of their sensual forms, of the real world. Philosophy can but give names to these phantoms. One name may be applied to more than one of them. There may even be names of names. It would imply a contradiction if, on the one hand, we maintained that all ideas had their origin in the world of sensation, and, on the other, that a word was more than a word; that, besides the beings known to us by our senses, beings which are one and all individuals, there existed also beings of a general, not individual, nature. An unbodily substance is the same absurdity as an unbodily body. Body, being, substance, are but different terms for the same reality. *It is impossible to separate thought from matter that thinks.* This matter is the substratum of all changes going on in the world. The word infinite is meaningless, unless it states that our mind is capable of performing an endless process of addition. Only material things being perceptible to us, we cannot

* *Sub judice* — under consideration.

know anything about the existence of God. My own existence alone is certain. Every human passion is a mechanical movement, which has a beginning and an end. The objects of impulse are what we call good. Man is subject to the same laws as nature. Power and freedom are identical.

Hobbes had systematised Bacon, without, however, furnishing a proof for Bacon's fundamental principle, the origin of all human knowledge from the world of sensation. It was Locke¹¹ who, in his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, supplied this proof.

Hobbes had shattered the theistic prejudices of Baconian materialism; Collins, Dodwell, Coward, Hartley, Priestley,¹² similarly shattered the last theological bars that still hemmed in Locke's sensationalism. At all events, for practical materialists, Deism¹³ is but an easy-going way of getting rid of religion.*

Thus Karl Marx wrote about the British origin of modern materialism. If Englishmen nowadays do not exactly relish the compliment he paid their ancestors, more's the pity. It is none the less undeniable that Bacon, Hobbes, and Locke are the fathers of that brilliant school of French materialism which made the 18th century, in spite of all battles on land and sea won over Frenchmen by Germans and Englishmen, a pre-eminently French century, even before that crowning French Revolution, the results of which we outsiders, in England as well as Germany, are still trying to acclimatise.

There is no denying it. About the middle of this century, what struck every cultivated foreigner who set up his residence in England, was what he was then bound to consider the religious bigotry and stupidity of the English respectable middle-class.¹⁴ We, at that time, were all materialists, or, at least, very advanced free-thinkers, and to us it appeared inconceivable that almost all educated people in England should believe in all sorts of impossible miracles, and that even geologists like Buckland and Mantell should contort the facts of their science so as not to clash too much with the myths of the book of Genesis; while, in order to find people who dared to use their own intellectual faculties with regard to religious matters, you had to go amongst the uneducated, the "great unwashed", as they were then called, the working people, especially the Owenite socialists.

But England has been "civilised" since then. The exhibition of 1851¹⁵ sounded the knell of English insular exclusiveness. England became gradually internationalised, in

* "Qual" is a philosophical play upon words. Qual literally means torture, a pain which drives to action of some kind; at the same time the mystic Böhme puts into the German word something of the meaning of the Latin *qualitas*; his "qual" was the activating principle arising from, and promoting in its turn, the spontaneous development of the thing, relation, or person subject to it, in contradistinction to a pain inflicted from without. — *Note by Engels to the English edition.*

diet, in manners, in ideas; so much so that I begin to wish that some English manners and customs had made as much headway on the Continent as other Continental habits have made here. Anyhow, the introduction and spread of salad-oil (before 1851 known only to the aristocracy) has been accompanied by a fatal spread of Continental scepticism in matters religious, and it has come to this, that agnosticism, though not yet considered “the thing” quite as much as the Church of England, is yet very nearly on a par, as far as respectability goes, with Baptism, and decidedly ranks above the Salvation Army. And I cannot help believing that under those circumstances it will be consoling to many who sincerely regret and condemn this progress of infidelity to learn that these “new-fangled notions” are not of foreign origin, are not “made in Germany”, like so many other articles of daily use, but are undoubtedly Old English, and that their British originators 200 years ago went a good deal further than their descendants now dare to venture.

What, indeed, is agnosticism but, to use an expressive Lancashire term, “shamefaced” materialism? The agnostic’s conception of Nature is materialistic throughout. The entire natural world is governed by law, and absolutely excludes the intervention of action from without. But, he adds, we have no means either of ascertaining or of disproving the existence of some Supreme Being beyond the known universe. Now, this might hold good at the time when Laplace,¹⁶ to Napoleon’s question, why, in the great astronomer’s *Mécanique céleste*, the Creator was not even mentioned, proudly replied: “*Je n’avais pas besoin de cette hypothèse.*”^{*} But, nowadays, in our evolutionary conception of the universe, there is absolutely no room for either a Creator or a Ruler; and to talk of a Supreme Being shut out from the whole existing world, implies a contradiction in terms, and, as it seems to me, a gratuitous insult to the feelings of religious people.

Again, our agnostic admits that all our knowledge is based upon the information imparted to us by our senses. But, he adds, how do we know that our senses give us correct representations of the objects we perceive through them? And he proceeds to inform us that, whenever we speak of objects, or their qualities, of which he cannot know anything for certain, but merely the impressions which they have produced on his senses. Now, this line of reasoning seems undoubtedly hard to beat by mere argumentation. But before there was argumentation, there was action. *In Anfang war die Tat.*^{*} And human action had solved the difficulty long before human ingenuity

^{*} Marx and Engels, *Die heilige Familie*, Frankfurt a. M., 1845, pp. 201-04 [See Marx and Engels, *The Holy Family*, Chapter VI, 3. Absolute Criticism’s Third Campaign, (d), Moscow, 1956]

invented it. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. From the moment we turn to our own use these objects, according to the qualities we perceive in them, we put to an infallible test the correctness or otherwise of our sense-perception. If these perceptions have been wrong, then our estimate of the use to which an object can be turned must also be wrong, and our attempt must fail. But, if we succeed in accomplishing our aim, if we find that the object does agree with our idea of it, and does answer the purpose we intended it for, then that is proof positive that our perceptions of it and of its qualities, *so far*, agree with reality outside ourselves. And, whenever we find ourselves face-to-face with a failure, then we generally are not long in making out the cause that made us fail; we find that the perception upon which we acted was either incomplete and superficial, or combined with the results of other perceptions in a way not warranted by them — what we call defective reasoning. So long as we take care to train our senses properly, and to keep our action within the limits prescribed by perceptions properly made and properly used, so long we shall find that the result of our action proves the conformity of our perceptions with the objective nature of the things perceived. Not in one single instance, so far, have we been led to the conclusion that our sense-perceptions, scientifically controlled, induce in our minds ideas respecting the outer world that are, by their very nature, at variance with reality, or that there is an inherent incompatibility between the outer world and our sense-perceptions of it.

But then come the Neo-Kantian¹⁷ agnostics and say: We may correctly perceive the qualities of a thing, but we cannot by any sensible or mental process grasp the thing-in-itself. This “thing-in-itself” is beyond our ken. To this Hegel, long since, has replied: If you know all the qualities of a thing, you know the thing itself; nothing remains but the fact that the said thing exists without us; and, when your senses have taught you that fact, you have grasped the last remnant of the thing-in-itself, Kant’s celebrated unknowable *Ding an sich*. To which it may be added that in Kant’s time our knowledge of natural objects was indeed so fragmentary that he might well suspect, behind the little we knew about each of them, a mysterious “thing-in-itself”. But one after another these ungraspable things have been grasped, analysed, and, what is more, *reproduced* by the giant progress of science; and what we can produce we certainly cannot consider as unknowable. To the chemistry of the first half of this century, organic substances were such mysterious object; now we learn to build them up one after another from their chemical elements without the aid of organic processes. Modern chemists declare that as soon as the chemical constitution of no-matter-what body is known, it can be built up from its elements. We are still far from knowing the

* “I had no need of this hypothesis.”

constitution of the highest organic substances, the albuminous bodies;¹⁸ but there is no reason why we should not, if only after centuries, arrive at the knowledge and, armed with it, produce artificial albumen. But, if we arrive at that, we shall at the same time have produced organic life, for life, from its lowest to its highest forms, is but the normal mode of existence of albuminous bodies.

As soon, however, as our agnostic has made these formal mental reservations, he talks and acts as the rank materialist he at bottom is. He may say that, as far as *we* know, matter and motion, or as it is now called, energy, can neither be created nor destroyed, but that we have no proof of their not having been created at some time or other. But if you try to use this admission against him in any particular case, he will quickly put you out of court. If he admits the possibility of spiritualism *in abstracto*, he will have none of it *in concreto*. As far as we know and can know, he will tell you there is no Creator and no Ruler of the universe; as far as we are concerned, matter and energy can neither be created nor annihilated; for us, mind is a mode of energy, a function of the brain; all we know is that the material world is governed by immutable laws, and so forth. Thus, as far as he is a scientific man, as far as he *knows* anything, he is a materialist; outside his science, in spheres about which he knows nothing, he translates his ignorance into Greek and calls it agnosticism.

At all events, one thing seems clear: even if I was an agnostic, it is evident that I could not describe the conception of history sketched out in this little book as “historical agnosticism”. Religious people would laugh at me, agnostics would indignantly ask, was I making fun of them? And, thus, I hope even British respectability will not be overshocked if I use, in English as well as in so many other languages, the term “historical materialism”, to designate that view of the course of history which seeks the ultimate cause and the great moving power of all important historic events in the economic development of society, in the changes in the modes of production and exchange, in the consequent division of society into distinct classes, and in the struggles of these classes against one another.

This indulgence will, perhaps, be accorded to me all the sooner if I show that historical materialism may be of advantage even to British respectability. I have mentioned the fact that, about 40 or 50 years ago, any cultivated foreigner settling in England was struck by what he was then bound to consider the religious bigotry and stupidity of the English respectable middle-class. I am now going to prove that the respectable English middle class of that time was not quite as stupid as it looked to the intelligent foreigner. Its religious leanings can be explained.

* “In the beginning was the deed.” From Goethe’s *Faust*, Part I, Scene III.

When Europe emerged from the Middle Ages, the rising middle class of the towns constituted its revolutionary element. It had conquered a recognised position within medieval feudal organisation, but this position, also, had become too narrow for its expansive power. The development of the middle-class, the *bourgeoisie*, became incompatible with the maintenance of the feudal system; the feudal system, therefore, had to fall.

But the great international centre of feudalism was the Roman Catholic Church. It united the whole of feudalised Western Europe, in spite of all internal wars, into one grand political system, opposed as much to the schismatic Greeks as to the Mohammedan countries. It had organised its own hierarchy on the feudal model, and, lastly, it was itself by far the most powerful feudal lord, holding, as it did, fully one-third of the soil of the Catholic world. Before profane feudalism could be successfully attacked in each country and in detail, this, its sacred central organisation, had to be destroyed.

Moreover, parallel with the rise of the middle class went on the great revival of science; astronomy, mechanics, physics, anatomy, physiology were again cultivated. And the bourgeoisie, for the development of its industrial production, required a science which ascertained the physical properties of natural objects and the modes of action of the forces of Nature. Now up to then science had but been the humble handmaid of the Church, had not been allowed to overlap the limits set by faith, and for that reason had been no science at all. Science rebelled against the Church; the bourgeoisie could not do without science, and, therefore, had to join in the rebellion.

The above, though touching but two of the points where the rising middle class was bound to come into collision with the established religion, will be sufficient to show, first, that the class most directly interested in the struggle against the pretensions of the Roman Church was the bourgeoisie; and second, that every struggle against feudalism, at that time, had to take on a religious disguise, had to be directed against the Church in the first instance. But if the universities and the traders of the cities started the cry, it was sure to find, and did find, a strong echo in the masses of the country people, the peasants, who everywhere had to struggle for their very existence with their feudal lords, spiritual and temporal.

The long fight of the bourgeoisie against feudalism culminated in three great, decisive battles.

The first was what is called the Protestant Reformation in Germany. The war cry raised against the Church, by Luther,¹⁹ was responded to by two insurrections of a political nature; first, that of the lower nobility under Franz von Sickingen (1523), then the great Peasants' War, 1525. Both were defeated, chiefly in consequence of the

indecision of the parties most interested, the burghers of the towns — an indecision into the causes of which we cannot here enter. From that moment, the struggle degenerated into a fight between the local princes and the central power, and ended by blotting out Germany, for 200 years, from the politically active nations of Europe. The Lutheran Reformation produced a new creed indeed, a religion adapted to absolute monarchy. No sooner were the peasants of North-East Germany converted to Lutheranism than they were from freemen reduced to serfs.

But where Luther failed, Calvin²⁰ won the day. Calvin's creed was one fit for the boldest of the bourgeoisie of his time. His predestination doctrine was the religious expression of the fact that in the commercial world of competition success or failure does not depend upon a man's activity or cleverness, but upon circumstances uncontrollable by him. It is not of him that willeth or of him that runneth, but of the mercy of unknown superior economic powers; and this was especially true at a period of economic revolution, when all old commercial routes and centres were replaced by new ones, when India and America were opened to the world, and when even the most sacred economic articles of faith — the value of gold and silver — began to totter and to break down. Calvin's church constitution was thoroughly democratic and republican; and where the Kingdom of God was republicanised, could the kingdoms of this world remain subject to monarchs, bishops, and lords? While German Lutheranism became a willing tool in the hands of princes, Calvinism founded a republic in Holland, and active republican parties in England, and, above all, Scotland.

In Calvinism, the second great bourgeois upheaval found its doctrine ready cut and dried. This upheaval took place in England. The middle class of the towns brought it on, and the yeomanry²¹ of the country districts fought it out. Curiously enough, in all the three great bourgeois risings, the peasantry furnishes the army that has to do the fighting; and the peasantry is just the class that, the victory once gained, is most surely ruined by the economic consequences of that victory. A hundred years after Cromwell,²² the yeomanry of England had almost disappeared. Anyhow, had it not been for that yeomanry and for the *plebian* element in the towns, the bourgeoisie alone would never have fought the matter out to the bitter end, and would never have brought Charles I²³ to the scaffold. In order to secure even those conquests of the bourgeoisie that were ripe for gathering at the time, the revolution had to be carried considerably further — exactly as in 1793 in France and 1848 in Germany. This seems, in fact, to be one of the laws of evolution of bourgeois society.

Well, upon this excess of revolutionary activity there necessarily followed the inevitable reaction which, in its turn, went beyond the point where it might have maintained itself. After a series of oscillations, the new centre of gravity was at last

attained and became a new starting-point. The grand period of English history, known to respectability under the name of “the Great Rebellion”, and the struggles succeeding it, were brought to a close by the comparatively puny events entitled by liberal historians “the Glorious Revolution”.²⁴

The new starting-point was a compromise between the rising middle class and the ex-feudal landowners. The latter, though called, as now, the aristocracy, had been long since on the way which led them to become what Louis Philippe²⁵ in France became at a much later period: “The first bourgeois of the kingdom”. Fortunately for England, the old feudal barons had killed one another during the War of the Roses.²⁶ Their successors, though mostly scions of the old families, had been so much out of the direct line of descent that they constituted quite a new body, with habits and tendencies far more bourgeois than feudal. They fully understood the value of money, and at once began to increase their rents by turning hundreds of small farmers out and replacing them with sheep. Henry VIII,²⁷ while squandering the Church lands, created fresh bourgeois landlords by wholesale; the innumerable confiscation of estates, regranted to absolute or relative upstarts, and continued during the whole of the 17th century, had the same result. Consequently, ever since Henry VII,²⁸ the English “aristocracy”, far from counteracting the development of industrial production, had, on the contrary, sought to indirectly profit thereby; and there had always been a section of the great landowners willing, from economical or political reasons, to cooperate with the leading men of the financial and industrial bourgeoisie. The compromise of 1689 was, therefore, easily accomplished. The political spoils of “pelf and place” were left to the great landowning families, provided the economic interests of the financial, manufacturing, and commercial middle class were sufficiently attended to. And these economic interests were at that time powerful enough to determine the general policy of the nation. There might be squabbles about matters of detail, but, on the whole, the aristocratic oligarchy knew too well that its own economic prosperity was irretrievably bound up with that of the industrial and commercial middle class.

From that time, the bourgeoisie was a humble, but still a recognised, component of the ruling classes of England. With the rest of them, it had a common interest in keeping in subjection the great working mass of the nation. The merchant or manufacturer himself stood in the position of master, or, as it was until lately called, of “natural superior” to his clerks, his work-people, his domestic servants. His interest was to get as much and as good work out of them as he could; for this end, they had to be trained to proper submission. He was himself religious; his religion had supplied the standard under which he had fought the king and the lords; he was not long in discovering the opportunities this same religion offered him for working upon the

minds of his natural inferiors, and making them submissive to the behests of the masters it had pleased God to place over them. In short, the English bourgeoisie now had to take a part in keeping down the “lower orders”, the great producing mass of the nation, and one of the means employed for that purpose was the influence of religion.

There was another factor that contributed to strengthen the religious leanings of the bourgeoisie. That was the rise of materialism in England. This new doctrine not only shocked the pious feelings of the middle class; it announced itself as a philosophy only fit for scholars and cultivated men of the world, in contrast to religion, which was good enough for the uneducated masses, including the bourgeoisie. With Hobbes, it stepped on the stage as a defender of royal prerogative and omnipotence; it called upon absolute monarchy to keep down that *puer robustus sed malitiosus** — to wit, the people. Similarly, with the successors of Hobbes, with Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, etc., the new deistic form of materialism remained an aristocratic, esoteric doctrine, and, therefore, hateful to the middle class both for its religious heresy and for its anti-bourgeois political connections. Accordingly, in opposition to the materialism and deism of the aristocracy, those Protestant sects which had furnished the flag and the fighting contingent against the Stuarts continued to furnish the main strength of the progressive middle class, and form even today the backbone of “the Great Liberal Party”.

In the meantime, materialism passed from England to France, where it met and coalesced with another materialistic school of philosophers, a branch of Cartesianism.²⁹ In France, too, it remained at first an exclusively aristocratic doctrine. But, soon, its revolutionary character asserted itself. The French materialists did not limit their criticism to matters of religious belief; they extended it to whatever scientific tradition or political institution they met with; and to prove the claim of their doctrine to universal application, they took the shortest cut, and boldly applied it to all subjects of knowledge in the giant work after which they were named — the *Encyclopédie*. Thus, in one or the other of its two forms — avowed materialism or deism — it became the creed of the whole cultured youth of France; so much so that, when the Great Revolution broke out, the doctrine hatched by English Royalists gave a theoretical flag to French Republicans and Terrorists,³⁰ and furnished the text for the Declaration of the Rights of Man.³¹

The Great French Revolution was the third uprising of the bourgeoisie, but the first that had entirely cast off the religious cloak, and was fought out on undisguised political lines; it was the first, too, that was really fought out up to the destruction of one of the combatants, the aristocracy, and the complete triumph of the other, the bourgeoisie. In England, the continuity of pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary

institutions, and the compromise between landlords and capitalists, found its expression in the continuity of judicial precedents and in the religious preservation of the feudal forms of the law. In France, the revolution constituted a complete breach with the traditions of the past; it cleared out the very last vestiges of feudalism, and created in the *Code Civil*³² a masterly adaptation of the old Roman law — that almost perfect expression of the juridical relations corresponding to the economic stage called by Marx the production of commodities — to modern capitalist conditions; so masterly that this French revolutionary code still serves as a model for reforms of the law of property in all other countries, not excepting England. Let us, however, not forget that if English law continues to express the economic relations of capitalist society in that barbarous feudal language which corresponds to the thing expressed, just as English spelling corresponds to English pronunciation — “*vous écrivez Londres et vous prononcez Constantinople*”,* said a Frenchman — that same English law is the only one which has preserved through ages, and transmitted to America and the Colonies, the best part of that old Germanic personal freedom, local self-government, and independence from all interference (but that of the law courts), which on the Continent has been lost during the period of absolute monarchy, and has nowhere been as yet fully recovered.

To return to our British bourgeois. The French Revolution gave him a splendid opportunity, with the help of the Continental monarchies, to destroy French maritime commerce, to annex French colonies, and to crush the last French pretensions to maritime rivalry. That was one reason why he fought it. Another was that the ways of this revolution went very much against his grain. Not only its “execrable” terrorism, but the very attempt to carry bourgeois rule to extremes. What should the British bourgeois do without his aristocracy, that taught him manners, such as they were, and invented fashions for him — that furnished officers for the army, which kept order at home, and the navy, which conquered colonial possessions and new markets abroad? There was, indeed, a progressive minority of the bourgeoisie, that minority whose interests were not so well attended to under the compromise; this section, composed chiefly of the less wealthy middle class, did sympathise with the revolution, but it was powerless in Parliament.

Thus, if materialism became the creed of the French Revolution, the God-fearing English bourgeois held all the faster to his religion. Had not the reign of terror in Paris proved what was the upshot, if the religious instincts of the masses were lost? The more materialism spread from France to neighbouring countries, and was reinforced by similar doctrinal currents, notably by German philosophy, the more, in fact,

* “Robust but malicious boy.” From Hobbes’ preface to his book, *On the Citizen* (1642).

materialism and free thought generally became, on the Continent, the necessary qualifications of a cultivated man, the more stubbornly the English middle class stuck to its manifold religious creeds. These creeds might differ from one another, but they were, all of them, distinctly religious, Christian creeds.

While the revolution ensured the political triumph of the bourgeoisie in France, in England Watt, Arkwright, Cartwright,³³ and others, initiated an industrial revolution, which completely shifted the centre of gravity of economic power. The wealth of the bourgeoisie increased considerably faster than that of the landed aristocracy. Within the bourgeoisie itself, the financial aristocracy, the bankers, etc., were more and more pushed into the background by the manufacturers. The compromise of 1689, even after the gradual changes it had undergone in favour of the bourgeoisie, no longer corresponded to the relative position of the parties to it. The character of these parties, too, had changed; the bourgeoisie of 1830 was very different from that of the preceding century. The political power still left to the aristocracy, and used by them to resist the pretensions of the new industrial bourgeoisie, became incompatible with the new economic interests. A fresh struggle with the aristocracy was necessary; it could end only in a victory of the new economic power. First, the Reform Act was pushed through, in spite of all resistance, under the impulse of the French Revolution of 1830.³⁴ It gave to the bourgeoisie a recognised and powerful place in Parliament. Then the Repeal of the Corn Laws,³⁵ which settled, once and for all, the supremacy of the bourgeoisie, and especially of its most active portion, the manufacturers, over the landed aristocracy. This was the greatest victory of the bourgeoisie; it was, however, also the last it gained in its own exclusive interest. Whatever triumphs it obtained later on, it had to share with a new social power — first its ally, but soon its rival.

The industrial revolution had created a class of large manufacturing capitalists, but also a class — and a far more numerous one — of manufacturing workpeople. This class gradually increased in numbers, in proportion as the industrial revolution seized upon one branch of manufacture after another, and in the same proportion it increased its power. This power it proved as early as 1824, by forcing a reluctant Parliament to repeal the acts forbidding combinations of workmen.³⁶ During the Reform agitation, the workingmen constituted the radical wing of the Reform party; the Act of 1832 having excluded them from the suffrage, they formulated their demands in the People's Charter,³⁷ and constituted themselves, in opposition to the great bourgeois Anti-Corn Law party,³⁸ into an independent party, the Chartists, the first working-men's party of modern times.

* "You write London, but pronounce Constantinople."

Then came the Continental revolutions of February and March 1848, in which the working people played such a prominent part, and, at least in Paris, put forward demands which were certainly inadmissible from the point of view of capitalist society. And then came the general reaction. First, the defeat of the Chartists on April 10, 1848;³⁹ then the crushing of the Paris workingmen's insurrection in June of the same year;⁴⁰ then the disasters of 1849 in Italy, Hungary, South Germany, and at last the victory of Louis Bonaparte over Paris, December 2, 1851.⁴¹ For a time, at least, the bugbear of working-class pretensions was put down, but at what cost! If the British bourgeois had been convinced before of the necessity of maintaining the common people in a religious mood, how much more must he feel that necessity after all these experiences? Regardless of the sneers of his Continental compeers, he continued to spend thousands and tens of thousands, year after year, upon the evangelisation of the lower orders; not content with his own native religious machinery, he appealed to Brother Jonathan,⁴² the greatest organiser in existence of religion as a trade, and imported from America revivalism, Moody and Sankey, and the like;⁴³ and, finally, he accepted the dangerous aid of the Salvation Army, which revives the propaganda of early Christianity, appeals to the poor as the elect, fights capitalism in a religious way, and thus fosters an element of early Christian class antagonism, which one day may become troublesome to the well-to-do people who now find the ready money for it.

It seems a law of historical development that the bourgeoisie can in no European country get hold of political power — at least for any length of time — in the same exclusive way in which the feudal aristocracy kept hold of it during the Middle Ages. Even in France, where feudalism was completely extinguished, the bourgeoisie as a whole has held full possession of the government for very short periods only. During Louis Philippe's reign, 1830-48, a very small portion of the bourgeoisie ruled the kingdom; by far the larger part were excluded from the suffrage by the high qualification. Under the Second Republic, 1848-51, the whole bourgeoisie ruled but for three years only; their incapacity brought on the Second Empire. It is only now, in the Third Republic, that the bourgeoisie as a whole have kept possession of the helm for more than 20 years; and they are already showing lively signs of decadence. A durable reign of the bourgeoisie has been possible only in countries like America, where feudalism was unknown, and society at the very beginning started from a bourgeois basis. And even in France and America, the successors of the bourgeoisie, the working people, are already knocking at the door.

In England, the bourgeoisie never held undivided sway. Even the victory of 1832 left the landed aristocracy in almost exclusive possession of all the leading government offices. The meekness with which the middle class submitted to this remained

inconceivable to me until the great liberal manufacturer, Mr. W. A. Forster, in a public speech, implored the young men of Bradford to learn French, as a means to get on in the world, and quoted from his own experience how sheepish he looked when, as a cabinet minister, he had to move in society where French was, at least, as necessary as English! The fact was, the English middle class of that time were, as a rule, quite uneducated upstarts, and could not help leaving to the aristocracy those superior government places where other qualifications were required than mere insular narrowness and insular conceit, seasoned by business sharpness.* Even now the endless newspaper debates about middle-class education show that the English middle class does not yet consider itself good enough for the best education, and looks to something more modest. Thus, even after the repeal of the Corn Laws, it appeared a matter of course that the men who had carried the day — the Cobdens, Brights, Forsters, etc. — should remain excluded from a share in the official government of the country, until 20 years afterwards a new Reform Act⁴⁴ opened to them the door of the cabinet. The English bourgeoisie are, up to the present day, so deeply penetrated by a sense of their social inferiority that they keep up, at their own expense and that of the nation, an ornamental caste of drones to represent the nation worthily at all state functions; and they consider themselves highly honoured whenever one of themselves is found worthy of admission into this select and privileged body, manufactured, after all, by themselves.

The industrial and commercial middle class had, therefore, not yet succeeded in driving the landed aristocracy completely from political power when another competitor, the working class, appeared on the stage. The reaction after the Chartist movement and the Continental revolutions, as well as the unparalleled extension of English trade from 1848-66 (ascribed vulgarly to Free Trade alone, but due far more to the colossal development of railways, ocean steamers, and means of intercourse generally), had again driven the working class into the dependency of the Liberal Party, of which they formed, as in pre-Chartist times, the radical wing. Their claims to the franchise, however, gradually became irresistible; while the Whig leaders of the Liberals “funkt”, Disraeli⁴⁵ showed his superiority by making the Tories seize the favourable moment and introduce household suffrage in the boroughs, along with a redistribution of seats. Then followed the ballot; then, in 1884, the extension of household suffrage to the counties and a fresh redistribution of seats, by which electoral districts were, to some extent, equalised. All these measures considerably increased the electoral power of the working class, so much so that in at least 150 to 200 constituencies that class now furnished the majority of the voters. But parliamentary government is a capital school for teaching respect for tradition; if the middle class look with awe and veneration upon what Lord John Manners playfully called “our old nobility”, the mass of the

working people then looked up with respect and deference to what used to be designated as “their betters”, the middle-class. Indeed, the British workman, some 15 years ago, was the model workman, whose respectful regard for the position of his master, and whose self-restraining modesty in claiming rights for himself, consoled our German economists of the *Katheders-Socialist* school⁴⁶ for the incurable communistic and revolutionary tendencies of their own working-men at home.

But the English middle class — good men of business as they are — saw farther than the German professors. They had shared their powers but reluctantly with the working class. They had learnt, during the Chartist years, what that *puer robustus sed militiosus*, the people, is capable of. And since that time, they had been compelled to incorporate the better part of the People’s Charter in the Statutes of the United Kingdom. Now, if ever, the people must be kept in order by moral means, and the first and foremost of all moral means of action upon the masses is and remains — religion. Hence the parsons’ majorities on the school boards, hence the increasing self-taxation of the bourgeoisie for the support of all sorts of revivalism, from ritualism to the Salvation Army.

And now came the triumph of British respectability over the free thought and religious laxity of the Continental bourgeois. The workmen of France and Germany had become rebellious. They were thoroughly infected with socialism, and, for very good reasons, were not at all particular as to the legality of the means by which to secure their own ascendancy. The *puer robustus*, here, turned from day-to-day more *militiosus*. Nothing remained to the French and German bourgeoisie as a last resource but to silently drop their free thought, as a youngster, when sea-sickness creeps upon him, quietly drops the burning cigar he brought swaggeringly on board; one-by-one, the scoffers turned pious in outward behaviour, spoke with respect of the Church, its dogmas and rites, and even conformed with the latter as far as could not be helped. French bourgeois dined *maigre* * on Fridays, and German ones say out long Protestant sermons in their pews on Sundays. They had come to grief with materialism. “Die

* And even in business matters, the conceit of national chauvinism is but a sorry adviser. Up to quite recently, the average English manufacturer considered it derogatory for an Englishman to speak any language but his own, and felt rather proud than otherwise of the fact that “poor devils” of foreigners settled in England took off his hands the trouble of disposing of his products abroad. He never noticed that these foreigners, mostly Germans, thus got command of a very large part of British foreign trade, imports and exports, and that the direct foreign trade of Englishmen became limited, almost entirely, to the colonies, China, the United States and South America. Nor did he notice that these Germans traded with other Germans abroad, who

Religion muss dem Volk erhalten werden” — religion must be kept alive for the people — that was the only and the last means to save society from utter ruin. Unfortunately for themselves, they did not find this out until they had done their level best to break up religion for ever. And now it was the turn of the British bourgeoisie to sneer and to say: “Why, you fools, I could have told you that 200 years ago!”

However, I am afraid neither the religious stolidity of the British, nor the *post festum*[§] conversion of the Continental bourgeois will stem the rising Proletarian tide. Tradition is a great retarding force, is the *vis inertiae*^{*} of history, but, being merely passive, is sure to be broken down; and thus religion will be no lasting safeguard to capitalist society. If our juridical, philosophical, and religious ideas are the more or less remote offshoots of the economical relations prevailing in a given society, such ideas cannot, in the long run, withstand the effects of a complete change in these relations. And, unless we believe in supernatural revelation, we must admit that no religious tenets will ever suffice to prop up a tottering society.

In fact, in England too, the working people have begun to move again. They are, no doubt, shackled by traditions of various kinds. Bourgeois traditions, such as the widespread belief that there can be but two parties, Conservatives and Liberals, and that the working class must work out its salvation by and through the great Liberal Party. Working-men’s traditions, inherited from their first tentative efforts at independent action, such as the exclusion, from ever so many old trade unions, of all applicants who have not gone through a regular apprenticeship; which means the breeding, by every such union, of its own blacklegs.[§] But, for all that, the English working-class is moving, as even Professor Brentano⁴⁷ has sorrowfully had to report to his brother Katheder-Socialists. It moves, like all things in England, with a slow and measured step, with hesitation here, with more or less unfruitful, tentative attempts there; it moves now and then with an over-cautious mistrust of the name of socialism, while it gradually absorbs the substance; and the movement spreads and seizes one layer of the workers after another. It has now shaken out of their torpor the unskilled labourers of the East End of London, and we all know what a splendid impulse these

gradually organised a complete network of commercial colonies all over the world. But when Germany, about 40 years ago, seriously began manufacturing for export, this network served her admirably in her transformation, in so short a time, from a corn-exporting into a first-rate manufacturing country. Then, about 10 years ago, the British manufacturer got frightened, and asked his ambassadors and consuls how it was that he could no longer keep his customers together. The unanimous answer was: (1) You don’t learn your customer’s language but expect him to speak your own; (2) You don’t even try to suit your customer’s wants, habits, and tastes, but expect him to conform to your English ones. — *Note by Engels.*

fresh forces have given it in return. And if the pace of the movement is not up to the impatience of some people, let them not forget that it is the working class which keeps alive the finest qualities of the English character, and that, if a step in advance is once gained in England, it is, as a rule, never lost afterwards. If the sons of the old Chartists, for reasons unexplained above, were not quite up to the mark, the grandsons bid fair to be worthy of their forefathers.

But the triumph of the European working class does not depend upon England alone. It can only be secured by the co-operation of, at least, England, France, and Germany. In both the latter countries, the working-class movement is well ahead of England. In Germany, it is even within measurable distance of success. The progress it has there made during the last 25 years is unparalleled. It advances with ever-increasing velocity. If the German middle class have shown themselves lamentably deficient in political capacity, discipline, courage, energy, and perseverance, the German working class have given ample proof of all these qualities. Four hundred years ago, Germany was the starting-point of the first upheaval of the European middle class; as things are now, is it outside the limits of possibility that Germany will be the scene, too, of the first great victory of the European proletariat?

F. Engels

April 20, 1892

* Without meat.

§ After the event.

Socialism: Utopian & Scientific

I [The French Revolution & utopian socialism]

Modern socialism is, in its essence, the direct product of the recognition, on the one hand, of the class antagonisms existing in the society of today between proprietors and non-proprietors, between capitalists and wage-workers; on the other hand, of the anarchy existing in production. But, in its theoretical form, modern socialism originally appears ostensibly as a more logical extension of the principles laid down by the great French philosophers of the 18th century. Like every new theory, modern socialism had, at first, to connect itself with the intellectual stock-in-trade ready to its hand, however deeply its roots lay in material economic facts.

The great men, who in France prepared men's minds for the coming revolution, were themselves extreme revolutionists. They recognised no external authority of any kind whatever. Religion, natural science, society, political institutions — everything was subjected to the most unsparing criticism: everything must justify its existence before the judgment-seat of reason or give up existence. Reason became the sole measure of everything. It was the time when, as Hegel says, the world stood upon its head;* first in the sense that the human head, and the principles arrived at by its thought, claimed to be the basis of all human action and association; but by and by, also, in the wider sense that the reality which was in contradiction to these principles had, in fact, to be turned upside down. Every form of society and government then existing, every old traditional notion, was flung into the lumber-room as irrational; the world had hitherto allowed itself to be led solely by prejudices; everything in the past

* Inertia.

§ Scabs.

deserved only pity and contempt. Now, for the first time, appeared the light of day, the kingdom of reason; henceforth superstition, injustice, privilege, oppression, were to be superseded by eternal truth, eternal Right, equality based on Nature and the inalienable rights of man.

We know today that this kingdom of reason was nothing more than the idealised kingdom of the bourgeoisie; that this eternal Right found its realisation in bourgeois justice; that this equality reduced itself to bourgeois equality before the law; that bourgeois property was proclaimed as one of the essential rights of man; and that the government of reason, the *Contrat Social* of Rousseau,¹ came into being, and only could come into being, as a democratic bourgeois republic. The great thinkers of the 18th century could, no more than their predecessors, go beyond the limits imposed upon them by their epoch.

But, side by side with the antagonisms of the feudal nobility and the burghers, who claimed to represent all the rest of society, was the general antagonism of exploiters and exploited, of rich idlers and poor workers. It was this very circumstance that made it possible for the representatives of the bourgeoisie to put themselves forward as representing not one special class, but the whole of suffering humanity. Still further. From its origin the bourgeoisie was saddled with its antithesis: capitalists cannot exist without wage-workers, and, in the same proportion as the mediaeval burgher of the guild developed into the modern bourgeois, the guild journeyman and the day-labourer, outside the guilds, developed into the proletariat. And although, upon the whole, the bourgeoisie, in their struggle with the nobility, could claim to represent at the same time the interests of the different working classes of that period, yet in every great bourgeois movement there were independent outbursts of that class which was the forerunner, more or less developed, of the modern proletariat. For example, at the time of the German Reformation and the Peasants' War, the Anabaptists and Thomas Munzer;³ in the great English Revolution, the Levellers;⁴ in the great French Revolution, Babeuf.⁵

These were theoretical enunciations, corresponding with these revolutionary uprisings of a class not yet developed; in the 16th and 17th centuries, Utopian pictures of ideal social conditions; in the 18th century, actual communistic theories (Morelly and Mably). The demand for equality was no longer limited to political rights; it was extended also to the social conditions of individuals. It was not simply class privileges that were to be abolished, but class distinctions themselves. A communism, ascetic, denouncing all the pleasures of life, Spartan, was the first form of the new teaching. Then came the three great Utopians: Saint-Simon, to whom the middle-class movement, side by side with the proletariat, still had a certain significance, Fourier

and Owen, who in the country where capitalist production was most developed, and under the influence of the antagonisms begotten of this, worked out his proposals for the removal of class distinction systematically and in direct relation to French materialism.

One thing is common to all three. Not one of them appears as a representative of the interests of that proletariat which historical development had, in the meantime, 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.

For, to our three social reformers, the bourgeois world, based upon the principles of these philosophers, is quite as irrational and unjust, and, therefore, finds its way to the dust-hole quite as readily as feudalism and all the earlier stages of society. If pure reason and justice have not, hitherto, ruled the world, this has been the case only because men have not rightly understood them. What was wanted was the individual man of genius, who has now arisen and who understands the truth. That he has now arisen, that the truth has now been clearly understood, is not an inevitable event, following of necessity in the chains of historical development, but a mere happy accident. He might just as well have been born 500 years earlier, and might then have spared humanity 500 years of error, strife, and suffering.

We saw how the French philosophers of the 18th century, the forerunners of the Revolution, appealed to reason as the sole judge of all that is. A rational government, rational society, were to be founded; everything that ran counter to eternal reasons was to be remorselessly done away with. We saw also that this eternal reason was in reality nothing but the idealised understanding of the 18th century citizen, just then evolving into the bourgeois. The French Revolution had realised this rational society and government.

But the new order of things, rational enough as compared with earlier conditions, turned out to be by no means absolutely rational. The state based upon reason completely collapsed. Rousseau's *Contrat Social* had found its realisation in the Reign

* This is the passage on the French Revolution: "Thought, the concept of law, *all at once* made itself felt, and against this the old scaffolding of wrong could make no stand. In this conception of law, therefore, a constitution has now been established, and henceforth everything must be based upon this. Since the sun had been in the firmament, and the planets circled around him, the sight had never been seen of man standing upon his head — *i.e.*, on the Idea — and building reality after this image. Anaxagoras first said that the *Nous*, reason, rules the world; but now, for the first time, had man come to recognise that the Idea must rule the mental reality. And

of Terror,⁶ from which the bourgeoisie, who had lost confidence in their own political capacity, had taken refuge first in the corruption of the Directorate,⁷ and, finally, under the wing of the Napoleonic despotism. The promised eternal peace was turned into an endless war of conquest. The society based upon reason had fared no better. The antagonism between rich and poor, instead of dissolving into general prosperity, had become intensified by the removal of the guild and other privileges, which had to some extent bridged it over, and by the removal of the charitable institutions of the Church. The “freedom of property” from feudal fetters, now veritably accomplished, turned out to be, for the small capitalists and small proprietors, the freedom to sell their small property, crushed under the overmastering competition of the large capitalists and landlords, to these great lords, and thus, as far as the small capitalists and peasant proprietors were concerned, became “freedom *from* property”. The development of industry upon a capitalistic basis made poverty and misery of the working masses conditions of existence of society. Cash payment became more and more, in Carlyle’s phrase, the sole nexus between man and man. The number of crimes increased from year to year. Formerly, the feudal vices had openly stalked about in broad daylight; though not eradicated, they were now at any rate thrust into the background. In their stead, the bourgeois vices, hitherto practiced in secret, began to blossom all the more luxuriantly. Trade became to a greater and greater extent cheating. The “fraternity” of the revolutionary motto was realised in the chicanery and rivalries of the battle of competition. Oppression by force was replaced by corruption; the sword, as the first social lever, by gold. The right of the first night was transferred from the feudal lords to the bourgeois manufacturers. Prostitution increased to an extent never heard of. Marriage itself remained, as before, the legally recognised form, the official cloak of prostitution, and, moreover, was supplemented by rich crops of adultery.

In a word, compared with the splendid promises of the philosophers, the social and political institutions born of the “triumph of reason” were bitterly disappointing caricatures. All that was wanting was the men to formulate this disappointment, and they came with the turn of the century. In 1802, Saint-Simon’s Geneva letters appeared;

*this was a magnificent sunrise. All thinking beings have participated in celebrating this holy day. A sublime emotion swayed men at that time, an enthusiasm of reason pervaded the world, as if now had come the reconciliation of the Divine Principle with the world.” [Hegel: *Philosophy of History*, 1840, p. 535.] Is it not high time to set the anti-Socialist law² in action against such teachings, subversive and to the common danger, by the late Professor Hegel? — Note by Engels.*

in 1808 appeared Fourier's first work, although the groundwork of his theory dated from 1799; on January 1, 1800, Robert Owen undertook the direction of New Lanark.⁸

At this time, however, the capitalist mode of production, and with it the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, was still very incompletely developed. Modern industry, which had just arisen in England, was still unknown in France. But modern industry develops, on the one hand, the conflicts which make absolutely necessary a revolution in the mode of production, and the doing away with its capitalistic character — conflicts not only between the classes begotten of it, but also between the very productive forces and the forms of exchange created by it. And, on the other hand, it develops, in these very gigantic productive forces, the means of ending these conflicts. If, therefore, about the year 1800, the conflicts arising from the new social order were only just beginning to take shape, this holds still more fully as to the means of ending them. The "have-nothing" masses of Paris, during the Reign of Terror, were able for a moment to gain the mastery, and thus to lead the bourgeois revolution to victory in spite of the bourgeoisie themselves. But, in doing so, they only proved how impossible it was for their domination to last under the conditions then obtaining. The proletariat, which then for the first time evolved itself from these "have-nothing" masses as the nucleus of a new class, as yet quite incapable of independent political action, appeared as an oppressed, suffering order, to whom, in its incapacity to help itself, help could, at best, be brought in from without or down from above.

This historical situation also dominated the founders of socialism. To the crude conditions of capitalistic production and the crude class conditions correspond crude theories. The solution of the social problems, which as yet lay hidden in undeveloped economic conditions, the Utopians attempted to evolve out of the human brain. Society presented nothing but wrongs; to remove these was the task of reason. It was necessary, then, to discover a new and more perfect system of social order and to impose this upon society from without by propaganda, and, wherever it was possible, by the example of model experiments. These new social systems were foredoomed as Utopian; the more completely they were worked out in detail, the more they could not avoid drifting off into pure fantasies.

These facts once established, we need not dwell a moment longer upon this side of the question, now wholly belonging to the past. We can leave it to the literary small fry to solemnly quibble over these fantasies, which today only make us smile, and to crow over the superiority of their own bald reasoning, as compared with such "insanity". For ourselves, we delight in the stupendously grand thoughts and germs of thought that everywhere break out through their phantastic covering, and to which these Philistines are blind.

Saint-Simon was a son of the great French Revolution, at the outbreak of which he was not yet 30. The Revolution was the victory of the Third Estate⁹ — i.e., of the great masses of the nation, *working* in production and in trade, over the privileged *idle* classes, the nobles and the priests. But the victory of the Third Estate soon revealed itself as exclusively the victory of a smaller part of this “estate”, as the conquest of political power by the socially privileged section of it — i.e., the propertied bourgeoisie. And the bourgeoisie had certainly developed rapidly during the Revolution, partly by speculation in the lands of the nobility and of the Church, confiscated and afterwards put up for sale, and partly by frauds upon the nation by means of army contracts. It was the domination of these swindlers that, under the Directorate, brought France to the verge of ruin, and thus gave Napoleon the pretext for his *coup d'état*.

Hence, to Saint-Simon the antagonism between the Third Estate and the privileged classes took the form of an antagonism between “workers” and “idlers”. The idlers were not merely the old privileged classes, but also all who, without taking any part in production or distribution, lived on their incomes. And the workers were not only the wage-workers, but also the manufacturers, the merchants, the bankers. That the idlers had lost the capacity for intellectual leadership and political supremacy had been proved, and was by the Revolution finally settled. That the non-possessing classes had not this capacity seemed to Saint-Simon proved by the experiences of the Reign of Terror. Then, who was to lead and command? According to Saint-Simon, science and industry, both united by a new religious bond, destined to restore that unity of religious ideas which had been lost since the time of the Reformation — a necessarily mystic and rigidly hierarchic “new Christianity”. But science, that was the scholars; and industry, that was, in the first place, the working bourgeois, manufacturers, merchants, bankers. These bourgeois were, certainly, intended by Saint-Simon to transform themselves into a kind of public officials, of social trustees; but they were still to hold, *vis-à-vis* of the workers, a commanding and economically privileged position. The bankers especially were to be called upon to direct the whole of social production by the regulation of credit. This conception was in exact keeping with a time in which modern industry in France and, with it, the chasm between bourgeoisie and proletariat was only just coming into existence. But what Saint-Simon especially lays stress upon is this: what interests him first, and above all other things, is the lot of the class that is the most numerous and the most poor (“*la classe la plus nombreuse et la plus pauvre*”).

Already in his Geneva letters, Saint-Simon lays down the proposition that “all men ought to work”.

In the same work he recognises also that the Reign of Terror was the reign of the non-possessing masses. “See,” says he to them, “what happened in France at the time

when your comrades held sway there; they brought about a famine.”

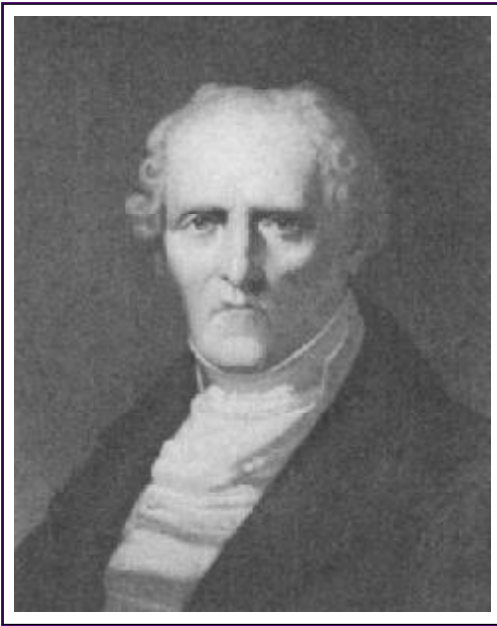
But to recognise the French Revolution as a class war, and not simply one between nobility and bourgeoisie, but between nobility, bourgeoisie, and the non-possessors, was, in the year 1802, a most pregnant discovery. In 1816, he declares that politics is the science of production, and foretells the complete absorption of politics by economics. The knowledge that economic conditions are the basis of political institutions appears here only in embryo. Yet what is here already very plainly expressed is the idea of the future conversion of political rule over men into an administration of things and a direction of processes of production — that is to say, the “abolition of the state”, about which recently there has been so much noise.

Saint-Simon shows the same superiority over his contemporaries, when in 1814, immediately after the entry of the allies into Paris,^{*} and again in 1815, during the Hundred Days’ War,¹⁰ he proclaims the alliance of France and England, and then of both of these countries, with Germany, as the only guarantee for the prosperous development and peace of Europe. To preach to the French in 1815 an alliance with the victors of Waterloo¹¹ required as much courage as historical foresight.

If in Saint-Simon we find a comprehensive breadth of view, by virtue of which almost all the ideas of later socialists that are not strictly economic are found in him in embryo, we find in Fourier a criticism of the existing conditions of society, genuinely French and witty, but not upon that account any the less thorough. Fourier takes the bourgeoisie, their inspired prophets before the Revolution, and their interested eulogists after it, at their own word. He lays bare remorselessly the material and moral misery of the bourgeois world. He confronts it with the earlier philosophers’ dazzling promises of a society in which reason alone should reign, of a civilisation in which happiness should be universal, of an illimitable human perfectibility, and with the rose-coloured phraseology of the bourgeois ideologists of his time. He points out how everywhere the most pitiful reality corresponds with the most high-sounding phrases, and he overwhelms this hopeless fiasco of phrases with his mordant sarcasm.

Fourier is not only a critic, his imperturbably serene nature makes him a satirist, and assuredly one of the greatest satirists of all time. He depicts, with equal power and charm, the swindling speculations that blossomed out upon the downfall of the Revolution, and the shopkeeping spirit prevalent in, and characteristic of, French commerce at that time. Still more masterly is his criticism of the bourgeois form of the relations between sexes, and the position of woman in bourgeois society. He was the first to declare that in any given society the degree of woman’s emancipation is the natural measure of the general emancipation.

But Fourier is at his greatest in his conception of the history of society. He divides



Charles Fourier (1772-1837)



Henri Saint-Simon (1760-
1825)

its whole course, thus far, into four stages of evolution — savagery, barbarism, the patriarchate, civilisation. This last is identical with the so-called civil, or bourgeois, society of today — i.e., with the social order that came in with the 16th century. He proves “that the civilised stage raises every vice practiced by barbarism in a simple fashion into a form of existence, complex, ambiguous, equivocal, hypocritical” — that civilisation moves “in a vicious circle”, in contradictions which it constantly reproduces without being able to solve them; hence it constantly arrives at the very opposite to that which it wants to attain, or pretends to want to attain, so that, e.g., “under civilisation poverty is born of superabundance itself”.

Fourier, as we see, uses the dialectic method in the same masterly way as his contemporary, Hegel. Using these same dialectics, he argues against talk about illimitable human perfectibility, that every historical phase has its period of ascent and also its period of descent, and he applies this observation to the future of the whole human race. As Kant introduced into natural science the idea of the ultimate destruction of the earth, Fourier introduced into historical science that of the ultimate destruction of the human race.

Whilst in France the hurricane of the Revolution swept over the land, in England a quieter, but not on that account less tremendous, revolution was going on. Steam and the new tool-making machinery were transforming manufacture into modern industry, and thus revolutionising the whole foundation of bourgeois society. The sluggish march of development of the manufacturing period changed into a veritable storm and stress period of production. With constantly increasing swiftness the splitting-up into large capitalists and non-possessing proletarians went on. Between these, instead of the former stable middle class, an unstable mass of artisans and small shopkeepers, the most fluctuating portion of the population, now led a precarious existence.

The new mode of production was, as yet, only at the beginning of its period of ascent; as yet it was the normal, regular method of production — the only one possible under existing conditions. Nevertheless, even then it was producing crying social abuses — the herding together of a homeless population in the worst quarters of the large towns; the loosening of all traditional moral bonds, of patriarchal subordination, of family relations; overwork, especially of women and children, to a frightful extent; complete demoralisation of the working class, suddenly flung into altogether new conditions, from the country into the town, from agriculture into modern industry, from stable conditions of existence into insecure ones that change from day to day.

At this juncture, there came forward as a reformer a manufacturer 29-years-old — a man of almost sublime, childlike simplicity of character, and at the same time one of the few born leaders of men. Robert Owen had adopted the teaching of the

materialistic philosophers: that man's character is the product, on the one hand, of heredity; on the other, of the environment of the individual during his lifetime, and especially during his period of development. In the industrial revolution most of his class saw only chaos and confusion, and the opportunity of fishing in these troubled waters and making large fortunes quickly. He saw in it the opportunity of putting into practice his favourite theory, and so of bringing order out of chaos. He had already tried it with success, as superintendent of more than 500 men in a Manchester factory. From 1800 to 1829, he directed the great cotton mill at New Lanark, in Scotland, as managing partner, along the same lines, but with greater freedom of action and with a success that made him a European reputation. A population, originally consisting of the most diverse and, for the most part, very demoralised elements, a population that gradually grew to 2500, he turned into a model colony, in which drunkenness, police, magistrates, lawsuits, poor laws, charity, were unknown. And all this simply by placing the people in conditions worthy of human beings, and especially by carefully bringing up the rising generation. He was the founder of infant schools, and introduced them first at New Lanark. At the age of two, the children came to school, where they enjoyed themselves so much that they could scarcely be got home again. Whilst his competitors worked their people 13 or 14 hours a day, in New Lanark the working-day was only 10 and a half hours. When a crisis in cotton stopped work for four months, his workers received their full wages all the time. And with all this the business more than doubled in value, and to the last yielded large profits to its proprietors.

In spite of all this, Owen was not content. The existence which he secured for his workers was, in his eyes, still far from being worthy of human beings. "The people were slaves at my mercy."

The relatively favourable conditions in which he had placed them were still far from allowing a rational development of the character and of the intellect in all directions, much less of the free exercise of all their faculties.

And yet, the working part of this population of 2500 persons was daily producing as much real wealth for society as, less than half a century before, it would have required the working part of a population of 600,000 to create. I asked myself, what became of the difference between the wealth consumed by 2500 persons and that which would have been consumed by 600,000?

The answer was clear. It had been used to pay the proprietors of the establishment 5% on the capital they had laid out, in addition to over £300,000 clear profit. And that

* On March 31, 1814.

which held for New Lanark held to a still greater extent for all the factories in England.

If this new wealth had not been created by machinery, imperfectly as it has been applied, the wars of Europe, in opposition to Napoleon, and to support the aristocratic principles of society, could not have been maintained. And yet this new power was the creation of the working class.⁵

To them, therefore, the fruits of this new power belonged. The newly-created gigantic productive forces, hitherto used only to enrich individuals and to enslave the masses, offered to Owen the foundations for a reconstruction of society; they were destined, as the common property of all, to be worked for the common good of all.

Owen's communism was based upon this purely business foundation, the outcome, so to say, of commercial calculation. Throughout, it maintained this practical character. Thus, in 1823, Owen proposed the relief of the distress in Ireland by communist colonies, and drew up complete estimates of costs of founding them, yearly expenditure, and probably revenue. And in his definite plan for the future, the technical working out of details is managed with such practical knowledge — ground plan, front and side and bird's-eye views all included — that the Owen method of social reform once accepted, there is from the practical point of view little to be said against the actual arrangement of details.

His advance in the direction of communism was the turning-point in Owen's life. As long as he was simply a philanthropist, he was rewarded with nothing but wealth, applause, honour, and glory. He was the most popular man in Europe. Not only men of his own class, but statesmen and princes listened to him approvingly. But when he came out with his communist theories that was quite another thing. Three great obstacles seemed to him especially to block the path to social reform: private property, religion, the present form of marriage. He knew what confronted him if he attacked these — outlawry, excommunication from official society, the loss of his whole social position. But nothing of this prevented him from attacking them without fear of consequences, and what he had foreseen happened. Banished from official society, with a conspiracy of silence against him in the press, ruined by his unsuccessful communist experiments in America, in which he sacrificed all his fortune, he turned directly to the working class and continued working in their midst for 30 years. Every social movement, every real advance in England on behalf of the workers links itself on to the name of Robert Owen. He forced through in 1819, after five years' fighting, the first law limiting the hours of labour of women and children in factories. He was president of the first congress at which all the trade unions of England united in a single great trade association.¹² He introduced as transition measures to the complete communistic organisation of society, on the one hand, co-operative societies for retail

trade and production. These have since that time, at least, given practical proof that the merchant and the manufacturer are socially quite unnecessary. On the other hand, he introduced labour bazaars for the exchange of the products of labour through the medium of labour-notes, whose unit was a single hour of work; institutions necessarily doomed to failure, but completely anticipating Proudhon's¹³ bank of exchange of a much later period, and differing entirely from this in that it did not claim to be the panacea for all social ills, but only a first step towards a much more radical revolution of society.

The Utopians' mode of thought has for a long time governed the socialist ideas of the 19th century, and still governs some of them. Until very recently, all French and English socialists did homage to it. The earlier German communism, including that of Weitling,¹⁴ was of the same school. To all these, socialism is the expression of absolute truth, reason and justice, and has only to be discovered to conquer all the world by virtue of its own power. And as an absolute truth is independent of time, space, and of the historical development of man, it is a mere accident when and where it is discovered. With all this, absolute truth, reason, and justice are different with the founder of each different school. And as each one's special kind of absolute truth, reason, and justice is again conditioned by his subjective understanding, his conditions of existence, the measure of his knowledge and his intellectual training, there is no other ending possible in this conflict of absolute truths than that they shall be mutually exclusive of one another. Hence, from this nothing could come but a kind of eclectic, average socialism, which, as a matter of fact, has up to the present time dominated the minds of most of the socialist workers in France and England. Hence, a mish-mash allowing of the most manifold shades of opinion: a mish-mash of such critical statements, economic theories, pictures of future society by the founders of different sects, as excite a minimum of opposition; a mish-mash which is the more easily brewed the more definite sharp edges of the individual constituents are rubbed down in the stream of debate, like rounded pebbles in a brook.

To make a science of socialism, it had first to be placed upon a real basis.

II [Hegelian dialectics]

In the meantime, along with and after the French philosophy of the 18th century, had arisen the new German philosophy, culminating in Hegel. Its greatest merit was the taking up again of dialectics as the highest form of reasoning. The old Greek philosophers were all born natural dialecticians, and Aristotle, the most encyclopaedic of them, had already analysed the most essential forms of dialectic thought. The

newer philosophy, on the other hand, although in it also dialectics had brilliant exponents (e.g. Descartes and Spinoza),¹⁵ had, especially through English influence, become more and more rigidly fixed in the so-called metaphysical mode of reasoning, by which also the French of the 18th century were almost wholly dominated, at all events in their special philosophical work. Outside philosophy in the restricted sense, the French nevertheless produced masterpieces of dialectic. We need only call to mind Diderot's¹⁶ *Le Neveu de Rameau*, and Rousseau's *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*. We give here, in brief, the essential character of these two modes of thought.

When we consider and reflect upon Nature at large, or the history of mankind, or our own intellectual activity, at first we see the picture of an endless entanglement of relations and reactions, permutations and combinations, in which nothing remains what, where and as it was, but everything moves, changes, comes into being and passes away. We see, therefore, at first the picture as a whole, with its individual parts still more or less kept in the background; we observe the movements, transitions, connections, rather than the things that move, combine, and are connected. This primitive, naive but intrinsically correct conception of the world is that of ancient Greek philosophy, and was first clearly formulated by Heraclitus:¹⁷ everything is and is not, for everything is *fluid*, is constantly changing, constantly coming into being and passing away.

But this conception, correctly as it expresses the general character of the picture of appearances as a whole, does not suffice to explain the details of which this picture is made up, and so long as we do not understand these, we have not a clear idea of the whole picture. In order to understand these details, we must detach them from their natural, special causes, effects, etc. This is, primarily, the task of natural science and historical research: branches of science which the Greeks of classical times, on very good grounds, relegated to a subordinate position, because they had first of all to collect materials for these sciences to work upon. A certain amount of natural and historical material must be collected before there can be any critical analysis, comparison, and arrangement in classes, orders, and species. The foundations of the exact natural sciences were, therefore, first worked out by the Greeks of the Alexandrian period,¹⁸ and later on, in the Middle Ages, by the Arabs. Real natural science dates from the

* From "The Revolution in Mind and Practice," p. 21, a memorial addressed to all the "red Republicans, Communists and Socialists of Europe," and sent to the provisional government of France, 1848, and also "to Queen Victoria and her responsible advisers." — *Note by Engels*.

§ Note, *l.c.*, p. 22. — *Note by Engels*.

second half of the 15th century, and thence onward it had advanced with constantly increasing rapidity. The analysis of Nature into its individual parts, the grouping of the different natural processes and objects in definite classes, the study of the internal anatomy of organised bodies in their manifold forms — these were the fundamental conditions of the gigantic strides in our knowledge of Nature that have been made during the last 400 years. But this method of work has also left us as legacy the habit of observing natural objects and processes in isolation, apart from their connection with the vast whole; of observing them in repose, not in motion; as constraints, not as essentially variables; in their death, not in their life. And when this way of looking at things was transferred by Bacon and Locke from natural science to philosophy, it begot the narrow, metaphysical mode of thought peculiar to the last century.

To the metaphysician, things and their mental reflexes, ideas, are isolated, are to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, are objects of investigation fixed, rigid, given once for all. He thinks in absolutely irreconcilable antitheses. "His communication is 'yea, yea; nay, nay'; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."^{*} For him, a thing either exists or does not exist; a thing cannot at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another; cause and effect stand in a rigid antithesis, one to the other.

At first sight, this mode of thinking seems to us very luminous, because it is that of so-called sound common sense. Only sound common sense, respectable fellow that he is, in the homely realm of his own four walls, has very wonderful adventures directly he ventures out into the wide world of research. And the metaphysical mode of thought, justifiable and necessary as it is in a number of domains whose extent varies according to the nature of the particular object of investigation, sooner or later reaches a limit, beyond which it becomes one-sided, restricted, abstract, lost in insoluble contradictions. In the contemplation of individual things, it forgets the connection between them; in the contemplation of their existence, it forgets the beginning and end of that existence; of their repose, it forgets their motion. It cannot see the wood for the trees.

For everyday purposes, we know and can say, e.g., whether an animal is alive or not. But, upon closer inquiry, we find that this is, in many cases, a very complex question, as the jurists know very well. They have cudgelled their brains in vain to discover a rational limit beyond which the killing of the child in its mother's womb is murder. It is just as impossible to determine absolutely the moment of death, for physiology proves that death is not an instantaneous, momentary phenomenon, but a very protracted process.

In like manner, every organised being is every moment the same and not the

same; every moment, it assimilates matter supplied from without, and gets rid of other matter; every moment, some cells of its body die and others build themselves anew; in a longer or shorter time, the matter of its body is completely renewed, and is replaced by other molecules of matter, so that every organised being is always itself, and yet something other than itself.

Further, we find upon closer investigation that the two poles of an antithesis, positive and negative, e.g., are as inseparable as they are opposed, and that despite all their opposition, they mutually interpenetrate. And we find, in like manner, that cause



Georg Hegel (1770-1831)

and effect are conceptions which only hold good in their application to individual cases; but as soon as we consider the individual cases in their general connection with the universe as a whole, they run into each other, and they become confounded when we contemplate that universal action and reaction in which causes and effects are eternally changing places, so that what is effect here and now will be cause there and then, and *vice versa*.

None of these processes and modes of thought enters into the framework of metaphysical reasoning. Dialectics, on the other hand, comprehends things and their representations, ideas, in their essential connection, concatenation, motion, origin and ending. Such processes as those mentioned above are, therefore, so many corroborations of its own method of procedure.

Nature is the proof of dialectics, and it must be said for modern science that it has furnished this proof with very rich materials increasingly daily, and thus has shown that, in the last resort, Nature works dialectically and not metaphysically; that she does not move in the eternal oneness of a perpetually recurring circle, but goes through a real historical evolution. In this connection, Darwin must be named before all others. He dealt the metaphysical conception of Nature the heaviest blow by his proof that all organic beings, plants, animals, and man himself, are the products of a process of evolution going on through millions of years. But, the naturalists, who have learned to think dialectically, are few and far between, and this conflict of the results of discovery with preconceived modes of thinking, explains the endless confusion now reigning in theoretical natural science, the despair of teachers as well as learners, of authors and readers alike.

An exact representation of the universe, of its evolution, of the development of mankind, and of the reflection of this evolution in the minds of men, can therefore only be obtained by the methods of dialectics with its constant regard to the innumerable actions and reactions of life and death, of progressive or retrogressive changes. And in this spirit, the new German philosophy has worked. Kant began his career by resolving the stable solar system of Newton and its eternal duration, after the famous initial impulse had once been given, into the result of a historical process, the formation of the Sun and all the planets out of a rotating, nebulous mass. From this, he at the same time drew the conclusion that, given this origin of the solar system, its future death followed of necessity. His theory, half a century later, was established mathematically by Laplace, and half a century after that, the spectroscope proved the existence in space of such incandescent masses of gas in various stages of condensation.

This new German philosophy culminated in the Hegelian system. In this system — and herein is its great merit — for the first time the whole world, natural, historical,

intellectual, is represented as a process — i.e., as in constant motion, change, transformation, development; and the attempt is made to trace out the internal connection that makes a continuous whole of all this movement and development. From this point of view, the history of mankind no longer appeared as a wild whirl of senseless deeds of violence, all equally condemnable at the judgment seat of mature philosophic reason and which are best forgotten as quickly as possible, but as the process of evolution of man himself. It was now the task of the intellect to follow the gradual march of this process through all its devious ways, and to trace out the inner law running through all its apparently accidental phenomena.

That the Hegelian system did not solve the problem it propounded is here immaterial. Its epoch-making merit was that it propounded the problem. This problem is one that no single individual will ever be able to solve. Although Hegel was — with Saint-Simon — the most encyclopaedic mind of his time, yet he was limited, first, by the necessary limited extent of his own knowledge and, second, by the limited extent and depth of the knowledge and conceptions of his age. To these limits, a third must be added. Hegel was an idealist. To him, the thoughts within his brain were not the more or less abstract pictures of actual things and processes, but, conversely, things and their evolution were only the realised pictures of the “Idea”, existing somewhere from eternity before the world was. This way of thinking turned everything upside down, and completely reversed the actual connection of things in the world. Correctly and ingeniously as many groups of facts were grasped by Hegel, yet, for the reasons just given, there is much that is botched, artificial, laboured, in a word, wrong in point of detail. The Hegelian system, in itself, was a colossal miscarriage — but it was also the last of its kind. It was suffering, in fact, from an internal and incurable contradiction. Upon the one hand, its essential proposition was the conception that human history is a process of evolution, which, by its very nature, cannot find its intellectual final term in the discovery of any so-called absolute truth. But, on the other hand, it laid claim to being the very essence of this absolute truth. A system of natural and historical knowledge, embracing everything, and final for all time, is a contradiction to the fundamental law of dialectic reasoning. This law, indeed, by no means excludes, but, on the contrary, includes the idea that the systematic knowledge of the external universe can make giant strides from age to age.

The perception of the fundamental contradiction in German idealism led necessarily back to materialism, but *nota bene*,* not to the simply metaphysical, exclusively mechanical materialism of the 18th century. Old materialism looked upon all previous

* The Bible, Matthew, Chapter 5, Verse 37.

history as a crude heap of irrationality and violence; modern materialism sees in it the process of evolution of humanity, and aims at discovering the laws thereof. With the French of the 18th century, and even with Hegel, the conception obtained of Nature as a whole — moving in narrow circles, and forever immutable, with its eternal celestial bodies, as Newton, and unalterable organic species, as Linnaeus,¹⁹ taught. Modern materialism embraces the more recent discoveries of natural science, according to which Nature also has its history in time, the celestial bodies, like the organic species that, under favourable conditions, people them, being born and perishing. And even if Nature, as a whole, must still be said to move in recurrent cycles, these cycles assume infinitely larger dimensions. In both aspects, modern materialism is essentially dialectic, and no longer requires the assistance of that sort of philosophy which, queen-like, pretended to rule the remaining mob of sciences. As soon as each special science is bound to make clear its position in the great totality of things and of our knowledge of things, a special science dealing with this totality is superfluous or unnecessary. That which still survives of all earlier philosophy is the science of thought and its laws — formal logic and dialectics. Everything else is subsumed in the positive science of Nature and history.

Whilst, however, the revolution in the conception of Nature could only be made in proportion to the corresponding positive materials furnished by research, already much earlier certain historical facts had occurred which led to a decisive change in the conception of history. In 1831, the first working-class rising took place in Lyons; between 1838 and 1842, the first national working-class movement, that of the English Chartists, reached its height. The class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie came to the front in the history of the most advanced countries in Europe, in proportion to the development, upon the one hand, of modern industry, upon the other, of the newly-acquired political supremacy of the bourgeoisie. Facts more and more strenuously gave the lie to the teachings of bourgeois economy as to the identity of the interests of capital and labour, as to the universal harmony and universal prosperity that would be the consequence of unbridled competition. All these things could no longer be ignored, any more than the French and English socialism, which was their theoretical, though very imperfect, expression. But the old idealist conception of history, which was not yet dislodged, knew nothing of class struggles based upon economic interests, knew nothing of economic interests; production and all economic relations appeared in it only as incidental, subordinate elements in the “history of civilisation”.

The new facts made imperative a new examination of all past history. Then it was seen that *all* past history, with the exception of its primitive stages, was the history of class struggles; that these warring classes of society are always the products of the

modes of production and of exchange — in a word, of the *economic* conditions of their time; that the economic structure of society always furnishes the real basis, starting from which we can alone work out the ultimate explanation of the whole superstructure of juridical and political institutions as well as of the religious, philosophical, and other ideas of a given historical period. Hegel has freed history from metaphysics — he made it dialectic; but his conception of history was essentially idealistic. But now idealism was driven from its last refuge, the philosophy of history; now a materialistic treatment of history was propounded, and a method found of explaining man's "knowing" by his "being", instead of, as heretofore, his "being" by his "knowing".

From that time forward, socialism was no longer an accidental discovery of this or that ingenious brain, but the necessary outcome of the struggle between two historically developed classes — the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Its task was no longer to manufacture a system of society as perfect as possible, but to examine the historico-economic succession of events from which these classes and their antagonism had of necessity sprung, and to discover in the economic conditions thus created the means of ending the conflict. But the socialism of earlier days was as incompatible with this materialist conception as the conception of Nature of the French materialists was with dialectics and modern natural science. The socialism of earlier days certainly criticised the existing capitalistic mode of production and its consequences. But it could not explain them, and, therefore, could not get the mastery of them. It could only simply reject them as bad. The more strongly this earlier socialism denounced the exploitation of the working class, inevitable under capitalism, the less able was it clearly to show in what this exploitation consisted and how it arose. but for this it was necessary — (1) to present the capitalistic mode of production in its historical connection and its inevitableness during a particular historical period, and therefore, also, to present its inevitable downfall; and (2) to lay bare its essential character, which was still a secret. This was done by the discovery of *surplus value*. It was shown that the appropriation of unpaid labour is the basis of the capitalist mode of production and of the exploitation of the worker that occurs under it; that even if the capitalist buys the labour power of his labourer at its full value as a commodity on the market, he yet extracts more value from it than he paid for; and that in the ultimate analysis, this surplus value forms those sums of value from which are heaped up constantly increasing masses of capital in the hands of the possessing classes. The genesis of capitalist production and the production of capital were both explained.

These two great discoveries, the materialistic conception of history and the revelation of the secret of capitalistic production through surplus value, we owe to Marx. With these discoveries, socialism became a science. The next thing was to work

out all its details and relations.

III

[The materialist conception of history & scientific socialism]

The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view, the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in men's better insights into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the *philosophy*, but in the *economics* of each particular epoch. The growing perception that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason, and right wrong,* is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange changes have silently taken place with which the social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping. From this it also follows that the means of getting rid of the incongruities that have been brought to light must also be present, in a more or less developed condition, within the changed modes of production themselves. These means are not to be invented by deduction from fundamental principles, but are to be discovered in the stubborn facts of the existing system of production.

What is, then, the position of modern socialism in this connection?

The present situation of society — this is now pretty generally conceded — is the creation of the ruling class of today, of the bourgeoisie. The mode of production peculiar to the bourgeoisie, known, since Marx, as the capitalist mode of production, was incompatible with the feudal system, with the privileges it conferred upon individuals, entire social ranks and local corporations, as well as with the hereditary ties of subordination which constituted the framework of its social organisation. The bourgeoisie broke up the feudal system and built upon its ruins the capitalist order of society, the kingdom of free competition, of personal liberty, of the equality, before the law, of all commodity owners, of all the rest of the capitalist blessings. Thenceforward, the capitalist mode of production could develop in freedom. Since

* Note well.

steam, machinery, and the making of machines by machinery transformed the older manufacture into modern industry, the productive forces, evolved under the guidance of the bourgeoisie, developed with a rapidity and in a degree unheard of before. But just as the older manufacture, in its time, and handicraft, becoming more developed under its influence, had come into collision with the feudal trammels of the guilds, so now modern industry, in its complete development, comes into collision with the bounds within which the capitalist mode of production holds it confined. The new productive forces have already outgrown the capitalistic mode of using them. And this conflict between productive forces and modes of production is not a conflict engendered in the mind of man, like that between original sin and divine justice. It exists, in fact, objectively, outside us, independently of the will and actions even of the men that have brought it on. Modern socialism is nothing but the reflex, in thought, of this conflict in fact; its ideal reflection in the minds, first, of the class directly suffering under it, the working class.

Now, in what does this conflict consist?

Before capitalist production — i.e., in the Middle Ages — the system of petty industry obtained generally, based upon the private property of the labourers in their means of production; in the country, the agriculture of the small peasant, freeman, or serf; in the towns, the handicrafts organised in guilds. The instruments of labour — land, agricultural implements, the workshop, the tool — were the instruments of labour of single individuals, adapted for the use of one worker, and, therefore, of necessity, small, dwarfish, circumscribed. But, for this very reason, they belonged as a rule to the producer himself. To concentrate these scattered, limited means of production, to enlarge them, to turn them into the powerful levers of production of the present day — this was precisely the historic role of capitalist production and of its upholder, the bourgeoisie. In the fourth section of *Capital*,* Marx has explained in detail how since the 15th century this has been historically worked out through the three phases of simple co-operation, manufacture, and modern industry. But the bourgeoisie, as is shown there, could not transform these puny means of production into mighty productive forces without transforming them, at the same time, from means of production of the individual into *social* means of production only workable by a collectivity of men. The spinning wheel, the handloom, the blacksmith's hammer, were replaced by the spinning-machine, the power-loom, the steam-hammer; the individual workshop, by the factory implying the co-operation of hundreds and thousands of workmen. In like manner, production itself changed from a series of individual into a series of social acts, and the production from individual to social products. The yarn, the cloth, the metal articles that now come out of the factory were

the joint product of many workers, through whose hands they had successively to pass before they were ready. No one person could say of them: "I made that; this is *my* product."

But where, in a given society, the fundamental form of production is that spontaneous division of labour which creeps in gradually and not upon any preconceived plan, there the products take on the form of *commodities*, whose mutual exchange, buying and selling, enable the individual producers to satisfy their manifold wants. And this was the case in the Middle Ages. The peasant, e.g., sold to the artisan agricultural products and bought from him the products of handicraft. Into this society of individual producers, of commodity producers, the new mode of production thrust itself. In the midst of the old division of labour, grown up spontaneously and upon *no definite plan*, which had governed the whole of society, now arose division of labour upon a *definite plan*, as organised in the factory; side by side with *individual* production appeared *social* production. The products of both were sold in the same market, and, therefore, at prices at least approximately equal. But organisation upon a definite plan was stronger than spontaneous division of labour. The factories working with the combined social forces of a collectivity of individuals produced their commodities far more cheaply than the individual small producers. Individual producers succumbed in one department after another. Socialised production revolutionised all the old methods of production. But its revolutionary character was, at the same time, so little recognised that it was, on the contrary, introduced as a means of increasing and developing the production of commodities. When it arose, it found ready-made, and made liberal use of, certain machinery for the production and exchange of commodities: merchants' capital, handicraft, wage-labour. Socialised production thus introducing itself as a new form of the production of commodities, it was a matter of course that under it the old forms of appropriation remained in full swing, and were applied to its products as well.

In the medieval stage of evolution of the production of commodities, the question as to the owner of the product of labour could not arise. The individual producer, as a rule, had, from raw material belonging to himself, and generally his own handiwork, produced it with his own tools, by the labour of his own hands or of his family. There was no need for him to appropriate the new product. It belonged wholly to him, as a matter of course. His property in the product was, therefore, based *upon his own labour*. Even where external help was used, this was, as a rule, of little importance, and very generally was compensated by something other than wages. The apprentices and journeymen of the guilds worked less for board and wages than for education, in order that they might become master craftsmen themselves.

Then came the concentration of the means of production and of the producers in large workshops and manufactories, their transformation into actual socialised means of production and socialised producers. But the socialised producers and means of production and their products were still treated, after this change, just as they had been before — i.e., as the means of production and the products of individuals. Hitherto, the owner of the instruments of labour had himself appropriated the product, because, as a rule, it was his own product and the assistance of others was the exception. Now, the owner of the instruments of labour always appropriated to himself the product, although it was no longer *his* product but exclusively the product of the *labour of others*. Thus, the products now produced socially were not appropriated by those who had actually set in motion the means of production and actually produced the commodities, but by the *capitalists*. The means of production, and production itself, had become in essence socialised. But they were subjected to a form of appropriation which presupposes the private production of individuals, under which, therefore, every one owns his own product and brings it to market. The mode of production is subjected to this form of appropriation, although it abolishes the conditions upon which the latter rests.*

This contradiction, which gives to the new mode of production its capitalistic character, *contains the germ of the whole of the social antagonisms of today*. The greater the mastery obtained by the new mode of production over all important fields of production and in all manufacturing countries, the more it reduced individual production to an insignificant residuum, *the more clearly was brought out the incompatibility of socialised production with capitalistic appropriation*.

The first capitalists found, as we have said, alongside of other forms of labour, wage-labour ready-made for them on the market. But it was exceptional, complementary, accessory, transitory wage-labour. The agricultural labourer, though, upon occasion, he hired himself out by the day, had a few acres of his own land on which he could at all events live at a pinch. The guilds were so organised that the journeyman of today became the master of tomorrow. But all this changed, as soon as the means of production became socialised and concentrated in the hands of capitalists. The means of production, as well as the product, of the individual producer became more and more worthless; there was nothing left for him but to turn wage-worker under the capitalist. Wage-labour, aforesaid the exception and accessory, now became the rule and basis of all production; aforesaid complementary, it now became the sole remaining function of the worker. The wage-worker for a time became a wage-worker

* Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*, Part I, Scene 4 (Faust's study).

for life. The number of these permanent wage-workers was further enormously increased by the breaking-up of the feudal system that occurred at the same time, by the disbanding of the retainers of the feudal lords, the eviction of the peasants from their homesteads, etc. The separation was made complete between the means of production concentrated in the hands of the capitalists, on the one side, and the producers, possessing nothing but their labour-power, on the other. *The contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation manifested itself as the antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie.*

We have seen that the capitalistic mode of production thrust its way into a society of commodity-producers, of individual producers, whose social bond was the exchange of their products. But every society based upon the production of commodities has this peculiarity: that the producers have lost control over their own social inter-relations. Each man produces for himself with such means of production as he may happen to have, and for such exchange as he may require to satisfy his remaining wants. No one knows how much of his particular article is coming on the market, nor how much of it will be wanted. No one knows whether his individual product will meet an actual demand, whether he will be able to make good his costs of production or even to sell his commodity at all. Anarchy reigns in socialised production.

But the production of commodities, like every other form of production, has it peculiar, inherent laws inseparable from it; and these laws work, despite anarchy, in and through anarchy. They reveal themselves in the only persistent form of social inter-relations — i.e., in exchange — and here they affect the individual producers as compulsory laws of competition. They are, at first, unknown to these producers themselves, and have to be discovered by them gradually and as the result of experience. They work themselves out, therefore, independently of the producers, and in antagonism to them, as inexorable natural laws of their particular form of production. The product governs the producers.

In medieval society, especially in the earlier centuries, production was essentially directed toward satisfying the wants of the individual. It satisfied, in the main, only the wants of the producer and his family. Where relations of personal dependence existed, as in the country, it also helped to satisfy the wants of the feudal lord. In all this there was, therefore, no exchange; the products, consequently, did not assume the character of commodities. The family of the peasant produced almost everything they wanted: clothes and furniture, as well as the means of subsistence. Only when it began to produce more than was sufficient to supply its own wants and the payments in kind to

* K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1965, pp. 312-507

the feudal lords, only then did it also produce commodities. This surplus, thrown into socialised exchange and offered for sale, became commodities.

The artisans of the towns, it is true, had from the first to produce for exchange. But they, also, themselves supplied the greatest part of their individual wants. They had gardens and plots of land. They turned their cattle out into the communal forest, which, also, yielded them timber and firing. The women spun flax, wool, and so forth. Production for the purpose of exchange, production of commodities, was only in its infancy. Hence, exchange was restricted, the market narrow, the methods of production stable; there was local exclusiveness without, local unity within; the Mark in the country; in the town, the guild.

But with the extension of the production of commodities, and especially with the introduction of the capitalist mode of production, the laws of commodity-production, hitherto latent, came into action more openly and with greater force. The old bonds were loosened, the old exclusive limits broken through, the producers were more and more turned into independent, isolated producers of commodities. It became apparent that the production of society at large was ruled by absence of plan, by accident, by anarchy; and this anarchy grew to greater and greater height. But the chief means by aid of which the capitalist mode of production intensified this anarchy of socialised production was the exact opposite of anarchy. It was the increasing organisation of production, upon a social basis, in every individual productive establishment. By this, the old, peaceful, stable condition of things was ended. Wherever this organisation of production was introduced into a branch of industry, it brooked no other method of production by its side. The field of labour became a battle-ground. The great geographical discoveries, and the colonisation following them, multiplied markets and quickened the transformation of handicraft into manufacture. The war did not simply break out between the individual producers of particular localities. The local struggles began, in their turn, national conflicts, the commercial wars of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Finally, modern industry and the opening of the world market made the struggle universal, and at the same time gave it an unheard-of virulence. Advantages in natural or artificial conditions of production now decide the existence or non-existence of individual capitalists, as well as of whole industries and countries. He that falls is remorselessly cast aside. It is the Darwinian struggle of the individual for existence transferred from Nature to society with intensified violence. The conditions of existence natural to the animal appear as the final term of human development. The contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation now presents itself as *an antagonism between the organisation of production in the individual workshop and the anarchy of production in society generally.*

The capitalistic mode of production moves in these two forms of the antagonism immanent to it from its very origin. It is never able to get out of that “vicious circle” which Fourier had already discovered. What Fourier could not, indeed, see in his time is that this circle is gradually narrowing; that the movement becomes more and more a spiral, and must come to an end, like the movement of planets, by collision with the centre. It is the compelling force of anarchy in the production of society at large that more and more completely turns the great majority of men into proletarians; and it is the masses of the proletariat again who will finally put an end to anarchy in production. It is the compelling force of anarchy in social production that turns the limitless perfectibility of machinery under modern industry into a compulsory law by which every individual industrial capitalist must perfect his machinery more and more, under penalty of ruin.

But the perfecting of machinery is making human labour superfluous. If the introduction and increase of machinery means the displacement of millions of manual by a few machine-workers, improvement in machinery means the displacement of more and more of the machine-workers themselves. It means, in the last instance, the production of a number of available wage workers in excess of the average needs of capital, the formation of a complete industrial reserve army, as I called it in 1845,* available at the times when industry is working at high pressure, to be cast out upon the street when the inevitable crash comes, a constant dead weight upon the limbs of the working class in its struggle for existence with capital, a regulator for keeping of wages down to the low level that suits the interests of capital. Thus it comes about, to quote Marx, that machinery becomes the most powerful weapon in the war of capital against the working class; that the instruments of labour constantly tear the means of subsistence out of the hands of the labourer; that the very product of the worker is turned into an instrument for his subjugation.* Thus it comes about that the economising of the instruments of labour becomes at the same time, from the outset, the most reckless waste of labour-power, and robbery based upon the normal conditions under which labour functions;§ that machinery, the most powerful

* It is hardly necessary in this connection to point out that, even if the *form* of appropriation remains the same, the *character* of the appropriation is just as much revolutionised as production by the changes described above. It is, of course, a very different matter whether I appropriate to myself my own product or that of another. Note in passing that wage-labour, which contains the whole capitalistic mode of production in embryo, is very ancient; in a sporadic, scattered form it existed for centuries alongside of slave-labour. But the embryo could duly develop into the capitalistic mode of production only when the necessary historical preconditions had been furnished. — *Note by Engels.*

instrument for shortening labour time, becomes the most unfailing means for placing every moment of the labourer's time and that of his family at the disposal of the capitalist for the purpose of expanding the value of his capital. Thus it comes about that the overwork of some becomes the preliminary condition for the idleness of others, and that modern industry, which hunts after new consumers over the whole world, forces the consumption of the masses at home down to a starvation minimum, and in doing thus destroys its own home market. "The law that always equilibrates the relative surplus-population, or industrial reserve army, to the extent and energy of accumulation, this law rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock. It establishes an accumulation of misery, corresponding with the accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole, i.e., on the side of the class that produces *its own product in the form of capital*." (Marx's *Capital*, p. 671)[‡] And to expect any other division of the products from the capitalist mode of production is the same as expecting the electrodes of a battery not to decompose acidulated water, not to liberate oxygen at the positive, hydrogen at the negative pole, so long as they are connected with the battery.

We have seen that the ever-increasing perfectibility of modern machinery is, by the anarchy of social production, turned into a compulsory law that forces the individual industrial capitalist always to improve his machinery, always to increase its productive force. The bare possibility of extending the field of production is transformed for him into a similarly compulsory law. The enormous expansive force of modern industry, compared with which that of gases is mere child's play, appears to us now as a *necessity* for expansion, both qualitative and quantitative, that laughs at all resistance. Such resistance is offered by consumption, by sales, by the markets for the products of modern industry. But the capacity for extension, extensive and intensive, of the markets is primarily governed by quite different laws that work much less energetically. The extension of the markets cannot keep pace with the extension of production. The collision becomes inevitable, and as this cannot produce any real solution so long as it does not break in pieces the capitalist mode of production, the collisions become periodic. Capitalist production has begotten another "vicious circle".

As a matter of fact, since 1825, when the first general crisis broke out, the whole industrial and commercial world, production and exchange among all civilised peoples and their more or less barbaric hangers-on, are thrown out of joint about once every 10 years. Commerce is at a stand-still, the markets are glutted, products accumulate, as multitudinous as they are unsaleable, hard cash disappears, credit vanishes, factories

are closed, the mass of the workers are in want of the means of subsistence, because they have produced too much of the means of subsistence; bankruptcy follows upon bankruptcy, execution upon execution. The stagnation last for years; productive forces and products are wasted and destroyed wholesale, until the accumulated mass of commodities finally filter off, more or less depreciated in value, until production and exchange gradually begin to move again. Little by little, the pace quickens. It becomes a trot. The industrial trot breaks into a canter, the canter in turn grows into the headlong gallop of a perfect steeplechase of industry, commercial credit, and speculation, which finally, after breakneck leaps, ends where it began — in the ditch of a crisis. And so over and over again. We have now, since the year 1825, gone through this five times, and at the present moment (1877), we are going through it for the sixth time. And the character of these crises is so clearly defined that Fourier hit all of them off when he described the first as “*crise pléthorique*”, a crisis from plethora.

In these crises, the contradiction between socialised production and capitalist appropriation ends in a violent explosion. The circulation of commodities is, for the time being, stopped. Money, the means of circulation, becomes a hindrance to circulation. All the laws of production and circulation of commodities are turned upside down. The economic collision has reached its apogee. *The mode of production is in rebellion against the mode of exchange.*

The fact that the socialised organisation of production within the factory has developed so far that it has become incompatible with the anarchy of production in society, which exists side by side with and dominates it, is brought home to the capitalists themselves by the violent concentration of capital that occurs during crises, through the ruin of many large, and a still greater number of small, capitalists. The whole mechanism of the capitalist mode of production breaks down under the pressure of the productive forces, its own creations. It is no longer able to turn all this mass of means of production into capital. They lie fallow, and for that very reason the industrial reserve army must also lie fallow. Means of production, means of subsistence, available labourers, all the elements of production and of general wealth, are present in abundance. But “abundance becomes the source of distress and want” (Fourier), because it is the very thing that prevents the transformation of the means of production and subsistence into capital. For in capitalistic society, the means of production can only function when they have undergone a preliminary transformation into capital, into the means of exploiting human labour power. The necessity of this transformation into capital of the means of production and subsistence stands like a ghost between these and the workers. It alone prevents the coming together of the material and personal levers of production; it alone forbids the means of production to function,

the workers to work and live. On the one hand, therefore, the capitalistic mode of production stands convicted of its own incapacity to further direct these productive forces. On the other, these productive forces themselves, with increasing energy, press forward to the removal of the existing contradiction, to the abolition of their quality as capital, to the *practical recognition of their character as social production forces*.

This rebellion of the productive forces, as they grow more and more powerful, against their quality as capital, this stronger and stronger command that their social character shall be recognised, forces the capitalist class itself to treat them more and more as social productive forces, so far as this is possible under capitalist conditions. The period of industrial high pressure, with its unbounded inflation of credit, not less than the crash itself, by the collapse of great capitalist establishments, tends to bring about that form of the socialisation of great masses of the means of production which we meet with in the different kinds of joint-stock companies. Many of these means of production and of distribution are, from the outset, so colossal that, like the railways, they exclude all other forms of capitalistic expansion. At a further stage of evolution, this form also becomes insufficient. The producers on a large scale in a particular branch of an industry in a particular country unite in a “trust”, a union for the purpose of regulating production. They determine the total amount to be produced, parcel it out among themselves, and thus enforce the selling price fixed beforehand. But trusts of this kind, as soon as business becomes bad, are generally liable to break up, and on this very account compel a yet greater concentration of association. The whole of a particular industry is turned into one gigantic joint-stock company; internal competition gives place to the internal monopoly of this one company. This has happened in 1890 with the English alkali production, which is now, after the fusion of 48 large works, in the hands of one company, conducted upon a single plan, and with a capital of £6,000,000.

In the trusts, freedom of competition changes into its very opposite — into monopoly; and the production without any definite plan of capitalistic society capitulates to the production upon a definite plan of the invading socialistic society. Certainly, this is so far still to the benefit and advantage of the capitalists. But, in this case, the exploitation is so palpable, that it must break down. No nation will put up with production conducted by trusts, with so barefaced an exploitation of the community by a small band of dividend-mongers.

In any case, with trusts or without, the official representative of capitalist society — the state — will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production.* This necessity

* *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, p. 109. — Note by Engels.

for conversion into state property is felt first in the great institutions for intercourse and communication — the post office, the telegraphs, the railways.

If the crises demonstrate the incapacity of the bourgeoisie for managing any longer modern productive forces, the transformation of the great establishments for production and distribution into joint-stock companies, trusts, and state property, show how unnecessary the bourgeoisie are for that purpose. All the social functions of the capitalist are now performed by salaried employees. The capitalist has no further social function than that of pocketing dividends, tearing off coupons, and gambling on the stock exchange, where the different capitalists despoil one another of their capital. At first, the capitalistic mode of production forces out the workers. Now, it forces out the capitalists, and reduces them, just as it reduced the workers, to the ranks of the surplus population, although not immediately into those of the industrial reserve army.

But, the transformation, either into joint-stock companies and trusts, or into state ownership, does not do away with the capitalistic nature of the productive forces. In the joint-stock companies and trusts, this is obvious. And the modern state, again, is only the organisation that bourgeois society takes on in order to support the external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against the encroachments as well of the workers as of individual capitalists. The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers — proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is, rather, brought to a head. But, brought to a head, it topples over. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution.

This solution can only consist in the practical recognition of the social nature of the modern forces of production, and therefore in the harmonising with the socialised character of the means of production. And this can only come about by society openly and directly taking possession of the productive forces which have outgrown all control, except that of society as a whole. The social character of the means of production and of the products today reacts against the producers, periodically disrupts all production and exchange, acts only like a law of Nature working blindly, forcibly, destructively.

* Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1 (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1965), pp. 435-87.

§ *ibid.*, p. 462.

‡ *ibid.*, p. 645.

But, with the taking over by society of the productive forces, the social character of the means of production and of the products will be utilised by the producers with a perfect understanding of its nature, and instead of being a source of disturbance and periodical collapse, will become the most powerful lever of production itself.

Active social forces work exactly like natural forces: blindly, forcibly, destructively, so long as we do not understand, and reckon with, them. But, when once we understand them, when once we grasp their action, their direction, their effects, it depends only upon ourselves to subject them more and more to our own will, and, by means of them, to reach our own ends. And this holds quite especially of the mighty productive forces of today. As long as we obstinately refuse to understand the nature and the character of these social means of action — and this understanding goes against the grain of the capitalist mode of production, and its defenders — so long these forces are at work in spite of us, in opposition to us, so long they master us, as we have shown above in detail.

But when once their nature is understood, they can, in the hand working together, be transformed from master demons into willing servants. The difference is as that between the destructive force of electricity in the lightning in the storm, and electricity under command in the telegraph and the voltaic arc; the difference between a conflagration, and fire working in the service of man. With this recognition, at last, of the real nature of the productive forces of today, the social anarchy of production gives place to a social regulation of production upon a definite plan, according to the needs of the community and of each individual. Then the capitalist mode of appropriation, in which the product enslaves first the producer, and then the appropriator, is replaced by the mode of appropriation of the products that is based upon the nature of the modern means of production; upon the one hand, direct social appropriation, as means to the maintenance and extension of production — on the other, direct individual appropriation, as means of subsistence and of enjoyment.

Whilst the capitalist mode of production more and more completely transforms the great majority of the population into proletarians, it creates the power which, under penalty of its own destruction, is forced to accomplish this revolution. Whilst it forces on more and more the transformation of the vast means of production, already socialised, into state property, it shows itself the way to accomplishing this revolution. *The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into state property.*

But, in doing this, it abolishes itself as proletariat, abolishes all class distinction and class antagonisms, abolishes also the state as state. Society, thus far, based upon class antagonisms, had need of the state. That is, of an organisation of the particular class which was, *pro tempore** the exploiting class, an organisation for the purpose of

preventing any interference from without with the existing conditions of production, and, therefore, especially, for the purpose of forcibly keeping the exploited classes in the condition of oppression corresponding with the given mode of production (slavery, serfdom, wage-labour). The state was the official representative of society as a whole; the gathering of it together into a visible embodiment. But, it was this only in so far as it was the state of that class which itself represented, for the time being, society as a whole: in ancient times, the state of slaveowning citizens; in the Middle Ages, the feudal lords; in our own time, the bourgeoisie. When, at last, it becomes the real representative of the whole of society, it renders itself unnecessary. As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection; as soon as class rule, and the individual struggle for existence based upon our present anarchy in production, with the collisions and excesses arising from these, are removed, nothing more remains to be repressed, and a special repressive force, a state, is no longer necessary. The first act by virtue of which the state really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society — the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society — this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a state. State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself; the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. The state is not “abolished”. *It dies out.* This gives the measure of the value of the phrase “*a free state*”, both as to its justifiable use at times by agitators, and as to its ultimate scientific inefficiency; and also of the demands of the so-called anarchists for the abolition of the state out of hand.

Since the historical appearance of the capitalist mode of production, the appropriation by society of all the means of production has often been dreamed of, more or less vaguely, by individuals, as well as by sects, as the ideal of the future. But it could become possible, could become a historical necessity, only when the actual conditions for its realisation were there. Like every other social advance, it becomes practicable, not by men understanding that the existence of classes is in contradiction to justice, equality, etc., not by the mere willingness to abolish these classes, but by virtue of certain new economic conditions. The separation of society into an exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class, was the necessary consequence of the deficient and restricted development of production in former times. So long as the total social labour only yields a produce which but slightly exceeds that barely necessary for the existence of all; so long, therefore, as labour engages all or almost all the time of the great majority of the members of society — so long, of necessity, this society is divided into classes. Side by side with the great majority, exclusively bond slaves to labour, arises a class freed from directly productive labour, which looks after

the general affairs of society: the direction of labour, state business, law, science, art, etc. It is, therefore, the law of division of labour that lies at the basis of the division into classes. But this does not prevent this division into classes from being carried out by means of violence and robbery, trickery and fraud. It does not prevent the ruling class, once having the upper hand, from consolidating its power at the expense of the working class, from turning its social leadership into an intensified exploitation of the masses.

But if, upon this showing, division into classes has a certain historical justification, it has this only for a given period, only under given social conditions. It was based upon the insufficiency of production. It will be swept away by the complete development of modern productive forces. And, in fact, the abolition of classes in society presupposes a degree of historical evolution at which the existence, not simply of this or that particular ruling class, but of any ruling class at all, and, therefore, the existence of class distinction itself, has become an obsolete anachronism. It presupposes, therefore, the development of production carried out to a degree at which appropriation of the means of production and of the products, and, with this, of political domination, of the monopoly of culture, and of intellectual leadership by a particular class of society, has become not only superfluous but economically, politically, intellectually, a hindrance to development.

This point is now reached. Their political and intellectual bankruptcy is scarcely

* I say “*have to*.” For only when the means of production and distribution have *actually* outgrown the form of management by joint-stock companies, and when, therefore, the taking them over by the state has become *economically* inevitable, only then — even if it is the state of today that effects this — is there an economic advance, the attainment of another step preliminary to the taking over of all productive forces by society itself. But of late, since Bismarck²⁰ went in for state ownership of industrial establishments, a kind of spurious socialism has arisen, degenerating, now and again, into something of flunkeyism, that without more ado declares *all* state ownership, even of the Bismarckian sort, to be socialistic. Certainly, if the taking over by the state of the tobacco industry is socialistic, then Napoleon and Metternich²¹ must be numbered among the founders of socialism. If the Belgian state, for quite ordinary political and financial reasons, itself constructed its chief railway lines; if Bismarck, not under any economic compulsion, took over for the state the chief Prussian lines, simply to be better able to have them in hand in case of war, to bring up the railway employees as voting cattle for the government, and especially to create for himself a new source of income independent of parliamentary votes — this was, in no sense, a socialistic measure, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously. Otherwise, the Royal Maritime Company, the Royal porcelain manufacture, and even the regimental tailor shops of the army would also be socialistic institutions, or even, as was seriously proposed by a sly dog in Frederick William III’s reign²², the taking over by the state of the brothels. — *Note by Engels.*

any longer a secret to the bourgeoisie themselves. Their economic bankruptcy recurs regularly every 10 years. In every crisis, society is suffocated beneath the weight of its own productive forces and products, which it cannot use, and stands helpless, face-to-face with the absurd contradiction that the producers have nothing to consume, because consumers are wanting. The expansive force of the means of production bursts the bonds that the capitalist mode of production had imposed upon them. Their deliverance from these bonds is the one precondition for an unbroken, constantly accelerated development of the productive forces, and therewith for a practically unlimited increase of production itself. Nor is this all. The socialised appropriation of the means of production does away, not only with the present artificial restrictions upon production, but also with the positive waste and devastation of productive forces and products that are at the present time the inevitable concomitants of production, and that reach their height in the crises. Further, it sets free for the community at large a mass of means of production and of products, by doing away with the senseless extravagance of the ruling classes of today, and their political representatives. The possibility of securing for every member of society, by means of socialised production, an existence not only fully sufficient materially, and becoming day-by-day more full, but an existence guaranteeing to all the free development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties — this possibility is now, for the first time, here, but *it is here*.*

With the seizing of the means of production by society, production of commodities is done away with, and, simultaneously, the mastery of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by systematic, definite organisation. The struggle for individual existence disappears. Then, for the first time, man, in a certain sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom, and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now comes under the dominion and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of Nature, because he has now become master of his own social organisation. The laws of his own social action, hitherto standing face-to-face with man as laws of Nature foreign to, and dominating him, will then be used with full understanding, and so mastered by him. Man's own social organisation, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by Nature and history, now becomes the result of his own free action. The extraneous objective forces that have, hitherto, governed history, pass under the control of man himself. Only from that time will man himself, more and more consciously, make his own history — only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him. It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of

necessity to the kingdom of freedom.

Let us briefly sum up our sketch of historical evolution.

I. Mediaeval Society — Individual production on a small scale. Means of production adapted for individual use; hence primitive, ungainly, petty, dwarfed in action. Production for immediate consumption, either of the producer himself or his feudal lord. Only where an excess of production over this consumption occurs is such excess offered for sale, enters into exchange. Production of commodities, therefore, only in its infancy. But already it contains within itself, in embryo, *anarchy in the production of society at large*.

II. Capitalist Revolution — transformation of industry, at first by means of simple co-operation and manufacture. Concentration of the means of production, hitherto scattered, into great workshops. As a consequence, their transformation from individual to social means of production — a transformation which does not, on the whole, affect the form of exchange. The old forms of appropriation remain in force. The capitalist appears. In his capacity as owner of the means of production, he also appropriates the products and turns them into commodities. Production has become a *social* act. Exchange and appropriation continue to be *individual* acts, the acts of individuals. *The social product is appropriated by the individual capitalist*. Fundamental contradiction, whence arise all the contradictions in which our present-day society moves, and which modern industry brings to light.

A. Severance of the producer from the means of production. Condemnation of the worker to wage-labour for life. *Antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie*.

B. Growing predominance and increasing effectiveness of the laws governing the production of commodities. Unbridled competition. *Contradiction between socialised organisation in the individual factory and social anarchy in the production as a whole*.

C. On the one hand, perfecting of machinery, made by competition compulsory for each individual manufacturer, and complemented by a constantly growing displacement of labourers. *Industrial reserve army*. On the other hand, unlimited extension of production, also compulsory under competition, for every manufacturer. On both sides, unheard-of development of productive forces, excess of supply over demand, over-production, glutting of the markets, crises every ten years, the vicious circle: excess here, of means of production and products — excess there, of labourers, without employment and without means of existence. But these two levers of production and of social well-being are unable to work together, because the capitalist form of

* For the time being.

production prevents the productive forces from working and the products from circulating, unless they are first turned into capital — which their very superabundance prevents. The contradiction has grown into an absurdity. *The mode of production rises in rebellion against the form of exchange.* The bourgeoisie are convicted of incapacity further to manage their own social productive forces.

D. Partial recognition of the social character of the productive forces forced upon the capitalists themselves. Taking over of the great institutions for production and communication, first by joint-stock companies, later on by trusts, then by the state. The bourgeoisie demonstrated to be a superfluous class. All its social functions are now performed by salaried employees.

III. Proletarian Revolution — Solution of the contradictions. The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialised means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property. By this act, the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital they have thus far borne, and gives their socialised character complete freedom to work itself out. Socialised production upon a predetermined plan becomes henceforth possible. The development of production makes the existence of different classes of society thenceforth an anachronism. In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the state dies out. Man, at last the master of his own form of social organisation, becomes at the same time the lord over Nature, his own master — free.

To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and thus the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed proletarian class a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, scientific socialism. ■

Glossary & Notes

Introduction

The following abbreviations have been used for frequently-cited editions:

MECW K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vols. 1-47, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1975-1995

MESW K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* [in three volumes], Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969-1970

1 *MESW*, Vol. 3, p. 339

2 *ibid.*, p. 340

3 Quoted in B. Nicolaievsky and O. Maenchen-Helfen, *Karl Marx: Man and Fighter* (Penguin Books: Harmondsworth, 1983), p. 52

4 *MECW*, Vol. 3, p. 182

5 *MECW*, Vol. 1, p. 195

6 *MESW*, Vol. 3, p. 344

7 *MECW*, Vol. 1, p. 216

8 *ibid.*, p. 220

9 *ibid.*, p. 337

10 *MECW*, Vol. 3, p. 141

11 *MECW*, Vol. 1, p. 400

12 *MECW*, Vol. 3, p. 98

13 *ibid.*, p. 30

14 *ibid.*, p. 30

15 *ibid.*, p. 14

16 *ibid.*, p. 144

17 *ibid.*, p. 155

18 *ibid.*, p. 162

19 *ibid.*, p. 163

20 *ibid.*, p. 184

21 *ibid.*, p. 182

- 22 *ibid.*, p. 187
 23 *MESW*, Vol.1, p. 504
 24 *MECW*, Vol. 3, p. 422
 25 *ibid.*, p. 436
 26 *ibid.*, p. 440
 27 *ibid.*, p. 455
 28 *ibid.*, p. 456
 29 *ibid.*, p. 444
 30 *ibid.*, pp. 464-65
 31 *ibid.*, pp. 445-46
 32 *ibid.*, p. 467
 33 *ibid.*, p. 468
 34 *MECW*, Vol. 4, p. 82
 35 *ibid.*, p. 193
 36 *ibid.*, p. 60
 37 *ibid.*, p. 93
 38 *ibid.*, pp. 120-21
 39 *ibid.*, p. 43
 40 *ibid.*, p. 150
 41 *ibid.*, pp. 35-37
 42 V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works* (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1976), Vol. 38. p. 26
 43 *MECW*, Vol. 4, p. 525
 44 *ibid.*, p. 526
 45 *ibid.*, pp. 582-83
 46 F. Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1973), p. 30
 47 *MESW*, Vol. 3, p. 336
 48 *MECW*, Vol. 3, pp. 175-76

* A few figures may serve to give an approximate idea of the enormous expansive force of the modern means of production, even under capitalist pressure. According to Mr. Giffen, the total wealth of Great Britain and Ireland amounted, in round numbers, in

1814 to £2,200,000,000

1865 to £6,100,000,000

1875 to £8,500,000,000

As an instance of the squandering of the means of production and of products during a crisis, the total loss in the *German iron industry* alone, in the crisis 1873-78, was given at the second German Industrial Congress (Berlin, February 21, 1878) as £22,750,000. — *Note by Engels.*

- 49 *MECW*, Vol. 5, p. 8
 50 *ibid.*, pp. 53-54
 51 *ibid.*, p. 49

Special Introduction to the English Edition of 1892

- 1 *Bimetallism* was the use of gold and silver as legal tender based upon a supposedly fixed ratio in their monetary values (market prices). In his 1859 *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy* (Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1970), Marx noted the untenability of this system: "All historical experience in this sphere simply shows that, where two commodities function as legally valid measures of value, it is always one of them only which actually maintains this position" (p. 76).
- 2 *Vorwärts* (*Forward*) was the central organ of the United Socialist Workers Party (USAP) of Germany after the unification of the SAP and the ADAV in May 1875. It was printed in Leipzig from October 1, 1876 until October 27, 1878. Engels' *Anti-Dühring* was serialised in it between January 3, 1877 to July 7, 1878.
- 3 *Paul Lafargue* (1842-1911) was a member of the General Council of the First International. He participated in organising the International's section in France (1869-70) and was one of founders of the Workers' Party in France.
- 4 *The Mark* was the ancient German village community. Under this title Engels briefly related, in an appendix to the first German and first English edition of *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, the history of the German peasantry from ancient times.
- 5 *Duns Scotus*, John (1265-1308) was an English Franciscan monk and a prominent representative of medieval scholasticism. In opposition to the dominant views of the Roman Catholic Church he strove to separate philosophy from theology, arguing that it is impossible to find rational grounds for the idea of divine creation of the world from nothing.
- 6 *Nominalism* was a trend within medieval European philosophy, which held that only individual things with their individual properties really exist. This was in contrast to the dominant trend upheld by the Catholic Church (medieval realism) which held that general concepts possessed real existence and preceded the existence of individual things, i.e., the concept "apple" preceded the existence of individual apples. The most prominent nominalists were Duns Scotus and William of Occam (1285-1349). They were ideologists of the secular feudal lords who fought against the claims of the Papacy and the Catholic Church to world domination.
- 7 *Bacon*, Francis (1561-1626) was the first exponent of materialist philosophy and experimental science in the period of modern European history.
- 8 *Homoiomeriae* a term used by the ancient Greek philosopher Anaxagoras (c. 500-428 BC)

to denote the minutest, qualitatively definite material particles subject to endless division. According to Anaxagoras homoeomerics were the primary basis of all that exists and their combinations gave rise to a multiplicity of things.

- 9 *Democritus* (c. 460-370 BC) was a Greek materialist philosopher who believed that the world consisted of *atomos* (eternally existing, indivisible particles that were constantly in motion) and vacuum.
- 10 *Hobbes*, Thomas (1588-1679) was an English materialist philosopher who held that the world is the sum-total of bodies governed by the laws of mechanical motion. Both animals and humans were simply complex mechanisms completely governed by external effects.
- 11 *Locke*, John (1632-1704) developed the theory of knowledge of materialist empiricism, i.e., that our ideas come into being through the influence of external objects upon our sense-organs. Ideas acquired through direct sense-perception (“experience”) are the only true source of knowledge, but are not knowledge themselves. The latter requires the application to these sensations of the process of reasoning, which transforms simple ideas into complex ones.
- 12 *Priestley*, Joseph (1733-1804) was a materialist philosopher and scientist who argued that all matter possesses the properties of extent, density and impenetrability, its characteristics being determined by the action of the forces of attraction and repulsion. In his view human sensations and reasoning are the product of the complex organisation of matter.
- 13 *Deism* is a religious philosophical doctrine which recognises the existence of God as the prime cause of the universe but denies God’s intervention in natural events and human affairs.
- 14 Engels refers to the English commercial and industrial bourgeoisie as the “middle class” in deference to the 19th century English tradition wherein those people with aristocratic titles (lords, dukes, barons, etc.) were regarded as the “upper class”.
- 15 The reference is to the First World Trade and Industrial Exhibition held in London between May and October 1851.
- 16 *Laplace*, Pierre Simon de (1749-1827) was an exponent of mechanical materialism, an astronomer and mathematician. He proved that the solar system was stable and consequently required no periodical interference from a creator to restore its equilibrium. He also demonstrated mathematically the soundness of Immanuel Kant’s hypothesis that the Sun and planets of the solar system had come into existence through the collapse of a rotating cloud (nebula) of gas and dust particles.
- 17 *Neo-Kantian agnosticism* was an idealist trend which sprang up in Germany in the second half of the 19th century under the slogan “Back to Kant!” It reproduced the idealist and metaphysical elements in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), ignoring its materialist and dialectical elements. Kant had divided all phenomena into their unknowable

essence (the “thing-in-itself”) and their knowable appearance (the “thing-for-us”). The Neo-Kantians either regarded all scientific and philosophical concepts and categories as purely logical constructions (giving no true objective knowledge of the world), or denied that it was possible to have scientific knowledge of social phenomena.

- 18 *Albuminous bodies* are any category of water-soluble proteins found in egg-white, milk, blood, etc.; albuminoids are the complex protein forming the framework of organs and tissues of animals and plants.
- 19 *Luther, Martin* (1483-1546) was a founder of Protestantism. His translation of the Bible played an important role in the formation of the German language. He denied that the clergy were necessary as mediators between believers and God, and affirmed that “salvation” did not depend upon Church-sanctioned “good deeds” and the performance of its rituals, but upon sincere belief in God. According to him, religious truth is based not on the “sacred traditions” of the Christian Church (papal judgments, etc.), but on the Gospel itself. These views reflected the conflict between the early bourgeois world outlook and the ideology of the feudal-Christian Catholic Church authorities. At the same time, Luther opposed the doctrines which expressed the material interests of the early German bourgeois (the town burghers) such as the idea of free trade. He stood on the side of the feudal ruling classes during the great Peasant War (1525).
- 20 *Calvin, Jean* (1509-1564) was one of the leaders of the Protestant Reformation in France. His religious doctrine provided justification for bourgeois enterprise in the epoch of primitive accumulation of capital. This was expressed in declaring modesty and frugality the greatest virtues in life.
- 21 *Yeomanry* was the term used to describe the small, independent landowner class of farmers in England that developed out of the disintegration of medieval serfdom.
- 22 *Cromwell, Oliver* (1599-1658) was the leader of the bourgeoisified landed nobility that joined forces with the merchants and manufacturers during the English bourgeois revolution of the 17th century. From 1653 until his death, he was Lord Protector (president) of the republican Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland.
- 23 *Charles I* (1600-1649) was king of England (1625-49) until he was deposed and executed during the bourgeois revolution led by Cromwell, referred to by English bourgeois historians as the “Great Rebellion”.
- 24 The *Glorious Revolution* is the name given by English bourgeois historians to the *coup d'état* of 1688 which resulted in the deposing of the House of Stuarts from the restored absolutist monarchy and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy (subordinate to Parliament) in 1689 with the Dutchman William of Orange at its head.
- 25 *Louis Philippe* (1773-1850) became king of France in 1830. His regime, which represented the interests of the big French bankers, was deposed by the February 1848 revolution in

Paris which led to the proclamation of the Second French Republic, the First Republic having been proclaimed in September 1792.

- 26 The *War of the Roses* (1455-85) was a dynastic struggle between the feudal Houses of Lancaster and York, the name being derived from their emblems, the red and the white rose. The Yorks were supported by the big feudal landowners from the southern, more economically developed part of England and also by the knighthood and the townspeople, while the Lancasters were backed by the feudal landowners from the poorer northern counties. The war, actually a series of wars spanning 40 years, culminated in the almost complete extermination of the ancient feudal families and the rise to power of a new dynasty, the Tudors, who set up an absolute monarchy throughout the country in alliance with the emerging bourgeoisie.
- 27 *Henry VIII* (1491-1547) was king of England from 1509 to 1547. In 1534, when his divorce from Catherine of Aragon, was declared invalid by the Catholic Church of England, he declared himself sole head of the Church of England.
- 28 *Henry VII* (1457-1509) was king of England from 1485 to 1509. Grandson of Owen Tudor, husband of Queen Catherine (widow of King Henry V), he founded the Tudor dynasty by defeating the army of King Richard III at Bosworth in 1485. He reunified the feudal ruling class of England after the War of the Roses by marrying Elizabeth of York.
- 29 *Cartesianism* is the doctrine propounded by the followers of the 17th-century French mechanical materialist philosopher, mathematician and physicist René Descartes (in Latin, *Cartesius*). The Cartesianist school became especially widespread among philosophers in France and the Netherlands in the 17th and 18th centuries.
- 30 *Republicans and Terrorists* refers to the radical wing of the bourgeois democrats (represented by the Jacobins in Paris) during the Great French Revolution of 1789-93. As against the bourgeois liberal-monarchist Girondins, who sought a constitutional-monarchy, the Jacobins stood for a democratic republic and the use of state-organised terror against the counterrevolutionary supporters of the monarchy and the landed aristocracy. The Jacobins were supported by the common people (the shopkeepers, artisans and day labourers) of Paris.
- 31 The *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* was adopted by the French Constituent Assembly in 1789. It propounded the political principles of bourgeois democracy and was incorporated into the French Constitution of 1791, which established a constitutional monarchy. The Jacobins used this declaration as a model when formulating their own Declaration of the Rights of Man in 1793. The revolutionary National Convention included the latter as an introduction to the first republican Constitution of 1793.
- 32 The *Code Civil* (also known as the *Code Napoléon*) refers to the system of bourgeois law as represented by five codes (civil, civil procedure, commercial, criminal and criminal procedure)

promulgated in the period 1804-10 under the bourgeois military-bureaucratic dictatorship of the ex-Jacobin general Napoleon Bonaparte.

- 33 James *Watt* (1736-1819) designed a steam-powered engine in 1774, and a steam-powered locomotive in 1784. Richard *Arkwright* (1732-92) invented a cotton-spinning machine in 1768. Edmund *Cartwright* (1743-1823) invented the power loom in 1785-90.
- 34 This refers to the British electoral *Reform Act* passed by the House of Commons in 1831, which was finally endorsed by the House of Lords in June 1832, and which opened the way for representation in Parliament of the industrial bourgeoisie. The *French Revolution of 1830* refers to the July 1830 overthrow of the restored Bourbon monarchy and the installation of Louis Philippe, the Duke of Orleans, as King of France.
- 35 The *Repeal of the Corn Laws* refers to the bill adopted by the British Parliament in June 1848 which signified the victory of the industrial capitalists over the landlord bourgeoisie. The Corn Laws aimed at restricting or prohibiting the importing of grain from abroad and were introduced to safeguard the interests of the big landowners.
- 36 In 1824, under mass pressure, the British Parliament adopted an act repealing the ban on the formation of trade unions.
- 37 The *People's Charter*, containing the demands of the National Charter Association, was published on May 8, 1838 in the form of a bill submitted to the British Parliament. It consisted of six clauses, namely, universal suffrage for men over 21, annual elections to Parliament, secret ballot, equal constituencies, abolition of property qualifications for candidates, and salaries for MPs. The Chartists presented three petitions to Parliament to this effect, but they were rejected in 1839, 1842 and 1849.
- 38 The *Anti-Corn Law League* was founded in 1838 by Manchester factory-owners Richard Cobden and John Bright to demand repeal of the Corn Laws in the name of unrestricted free trade in order to reduce workers' wages and weaken the economic and political power of the landlord bourgeoisie (the aristocracy). After the repeal of these laws in 1848, the League ceased to exist.
- 39 The reference is to the mass demonstration in London, which the Chartists staged on April 10, 1848 in order to present to Parliament a petition requesting the adoption of the demands in the People's Charter. It ended in a fiasco due to the indecision and wavering of its organisers. The failure of the demonstration was exploited by the government to repress the Chartist movement.
- 40 The reference is to the spontaneous insurrection by the Parisian workers on June 22, 1848. After five days of street fighting the workers were defeated and 3000 rebel prisoners were massacred by the "democratic" republican army.
- 41 *Louis Bonaparte* (1808-1873) was the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France from 1804 to 1815. On December 2, 1851, Louis Bonaparte, who had been president of the

Second French Republic since 1848, carried out a *coup d'état* and proclaimed the establishment of the Second Empire. He ruled as Emperor of France until 1870.

- 42 *Brother Jonathan* was the nickname for the US government before “Uncle Sam” superseded it.
- 43 *Revivalism* was a movement of Protestants which made its first appearance in the first half of the 18th century in England and then spread to the United States. Its adherents sought to strengthen and widen the influence of Christianity by delivering religious sermons and organising new communities of believers. Dwight Moody and Ira Sankey, two American preachers, were organisers of the movement.
- 44 The electoral *Reform Act* of 1867 was introduced under mass pressure from the British labour movement, with the active co-operation of the General Council of the First International headed by Marx. The Act more than doubled the number of eligible voters and extended the electoral franchise to a section of skilled, male, workers.
- 45 *Disraeli*, Benjamin (1804-1881) was Conservative Party leader and prime minister of Britain in 1868 and again in 1874-80.
- 46 *Katheder-Socialism* (socialism of the chair) was a bourgeois ideological trend in Germany in the 1870s and 1880s. Its representatives, primarily university professors, preached bourgeois social-reformism under the guise of socialism from their university chairs. They claimed that the state was a supra-class institution, which could gradually introduce socialism and reconcile the interests of capital and wage-labour.
- 47 *Bretano*, Lujo (1844-1931) was a German bourgeois economist and representative of *Katheder-Socialism*.

Socialism: Utopian & Scientific

- 1 The *Contract Social* (theory of social contract) was a bourgeois doctrine of the state espoused by the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). According to Rousseau the state was the result of a contract consciously concluded between people in which they gave up their “natural state” of complete personal freedom in favour of the state in order to protect their “natural right” to private property.
- 2 The reference is to the *anti-Socialist law* adopted by the German Reichstag (imperial assembly) in October 1878. The law banned all organisations of the United Socialist Workers’ Party, leading the party to change its name to the Social-democratic Party of Germany (SPD). Due to the pressure exerted by the workers’ mass movement the law was abrogated in October 1890.
- 3 The *Anabaptists* were members of a religious sect which held that those baptised in infancy had to be baptised again at adulthood. Under the leadership the Protestant preacher *Thomas Münzer* (c. 1490-1525) they became the ideologists and political leaders of the radical-

peasant wing of the Reformation in Germany, aiming at a social revolution in the interests of the peasant masses and the urban poor, rather than, as Luther sought, merely a reform of the Catholic Church and its teachings.

- 4 The *Levellers* were the radical plebeian wing of the anti-monarchist bloc led by Oliver Cromwell during the English bourgeois revolution of the 17th century. Under the leadership of Gerrard Winstanley (1609-1652) the left-wing of the Levellers, the “True Levellers” or “Diggers”, voiced the interests of the propertyless section of the rural poor, demanding the abolition of private landownership and briefly establishing a model commune on common land on St. George’s Hill in Surrey in 1650.
- 5 *Babeuf*, François-Noël (1760-1797), also known as Gracchus Babeuf, was the leader of a secret revolutionary organisation known as the Society of Equals which sought to restore the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the common people that had existed during the Great French Revolution under the Jacobins (1793) as the lever for creating a communistic “Republic of Equals”.
- 6 The *Reign of Terror* was the period of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the urban and rural poor headed by the Jacobins from June 1793 to July 1794.
- 7 The *Directorate* (Directoire) was the executive body, consisting of five Directors, which ruled the First French Republic from November 1795 until November 1799, when it was overthrown and replaced by Napoleon Bonaparte’s military-bureaucratic dictatorship. It was supported by a coalition of rightward moving Jacobins and defended the interests of the new bourgeoisie against the urban poor.
- 8 *New Lanark* was a cotton-spinning factory near the Scottish town of Lanark. It was built in 1784 together with a small township.
- 9 The *Third Estate* was the name given to the social caste under the French feudal regime made up of commoners. The other two estates were those of the clergy and the nobility.
- 10 The *Hundred Days’ War* was the period from the temporary restoration of Napoleon Bonaparte’s rule, lasting from his return to Paris from exile on the Mediterranean island of Elba (March 20, 1815) until his second abdication on June 22, 1815.
- 11 *Waterloo* was a place near Brussels where Napoleon Bonaparte’s armies were defeated on June 18, 1815 by the Anglo-Dutch armies led by Arthur Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington, and the Prussian army led by Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher.
- 12 The reference is to the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union of Great Britain and Ireland set up at a congress of co-operative societies and trade unions held in London in October 1833 with Robert Owen as chairperson. It was dissolved in August 1834.
- 13 *Proudon*, Pierre Joseph (1809-1865) was a French economist and social theorist, an ideologist of the petty-bourgeoisie and one of the founders of anarchism. During the revolution of 1848-49 he attempted to set up a special bank to carry out the exchange of goods between

small producers without the use of money and to grant free credit to workers. His *Bank du peuple* (People's Bank), founded on January 31, 1849, existed for about two months.

- 14 *Weitling*, Wilhelm (1808-1871) was the first German theoretician of (utopian) communism and was a prominent figure in the secret *Bund der Gerechten* (League of the Just), which under Marx and Engels' influence became the Communist League in 1847.
- 15 *Spinoza*, Baruch or Benedikt (1632-1677) was a Dutch philosopher who maintained that Nature needs nothing external to bring into being its existence, since it is its own cause. Creative Nature, or as he called it, "God", is differentiated into "substance" and the world of individual finite things, both corporeal and thinking.
- 16 *Diderot*, Denis (1713-1784) was a French philosopher and editor of the *Encyclopédie*. To his mechanistic materialist outlook he imparted some elements of dialectics, such as ideas on the connection between matter and motion.
- 17 *Heraclitus* of Ephesus (c. 544-483 BC) was an ancient Greek materialist philosopher and dialectician. In his major work, *On Nature*, only fragments of which have survived, he argued that fire was the primary material of nature and that: "The world, an entity created by none of the gods or men, but was, is, and will be eternally, living fire, regularly becoming ignited and regularly becoming extinguished." Heraclitus maintained that everything in nature was in a continuous process of flux, with all properties eventually turning into their opposites. In human affairs, the counterpart of this process, was struggle.
- 18 The reference is to the period emanating from the 3rd century BC to the 7th century AD, named after the Greco-Egyptian city of Alexandria, a major port at the mouth of the Nile and renowned centre of learning in the ancient world.
- 19 *Linnaeus*, Carolus (1707-1778) was a Swedish naturalist whose chief service to science was his taxonomical classification of plants and animals into related genera, classes and families.
- 20 *Bismarck*, Otto (1815-1898) was prime minister of Prussia from 1862 to 1871, and then chancellor of the new Prussian-dominated German Reich (empire) from 1871-90.
- 21 *Metternich*, Klemens (1773-1859) was foreign minister for the Austrian empire from 1809 to 1821 and chancellor from 1821 to 1848. He was the organiser of the Holy Alliance of formed by Austria, Prussia and Russia to suppress revolutionary movements in Europe and preserve monarchical rule.
- 22 *Frederick William III* (1770-1840) was king of Prussia from 1797 until 1840. ■

Engels' Socialism: Utopian and Scientific explains the origins of the modern socialist movement. After the **Communist Manifesto**, it is probably the most influential work expounding the basic ideas of Marxism.

This new edition contains a lengthy introductory essay by Doug Lorimer setting out the path of development of Marx and Engels towards scientific socialism, as distinct from the various utopian varieties that had predominated hitherto.

The present edition also contains Engels' introduction to the 1892 English edition and extensive explanatory notes.

Resistance books