

Karl Marx
Nineteenth Century
Memories and Reflections

Edited by
Debraj Bhattacharya



PARCHMENT

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Publisher's Note

It was 1818. Karl Marx took birth. It was 1848. Communist Manifesto was born. In this year of 'celebration' of Marx's double century we can worship a two hundred years old philosopher or we can look at the journey of a philosophy through a span of 170 years from different angles.

Here, in this book, we have chosen the second route. I am thankful to the editor of this book. Mr. Debraj Bhattacharya accepted my proposal after pondering for three to four seconds. In these moments I really feel nostalgic about the institution of my college days which has gifted me with such a scope to meet such senior fellows.

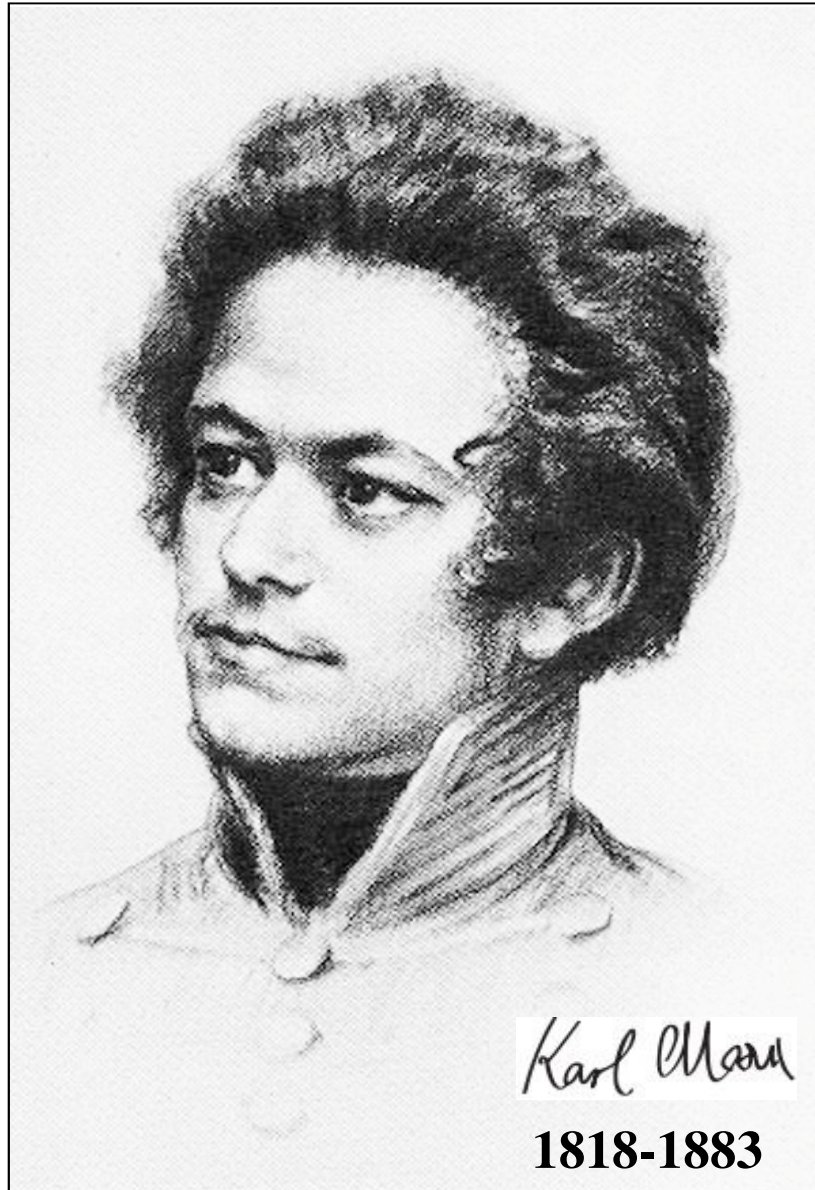
I am also thankful to Sangita Kar, Sourav Kar, Indranil Tarafdar and Abhishek Sarkar who worked hard for this book as a team.

After two hundred years a person usually becomes attacked by his dogmatic followers. Marx is no exception. But in this book we have tried to participate in the practice of Marx studies keeping ourselves apart from that dogmatic fanaticism.

Thank you, dear readers.

Please be with us from this first venture of Parchment.

Phalguni Ghosh



"Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it"

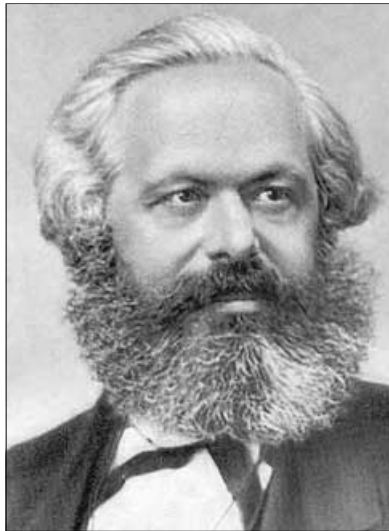
To

All those who created the Marxist Internet Archive

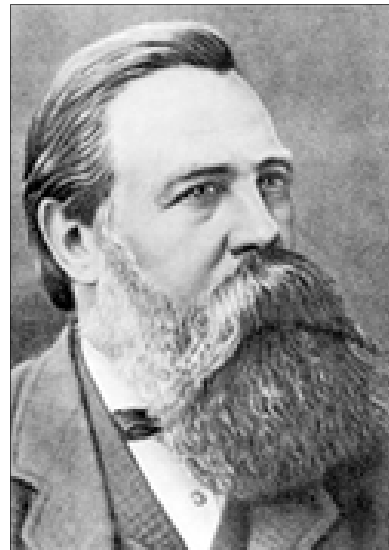
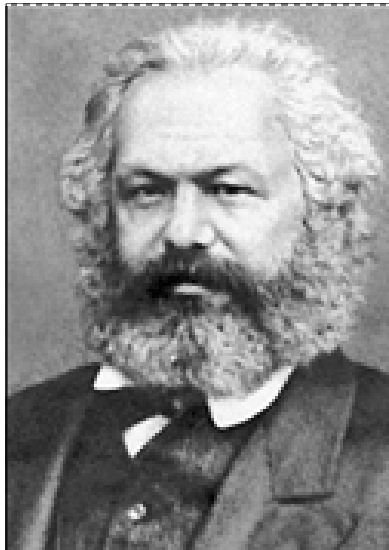
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Karl and Jenny Marx



Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels



Introduction

Once upon a time in Calcutta there was a God, and his name was Karl Marx. Marxism was supposedly a “science” and therefore it was also supposedly “true.” Followers of that God, who were known as “Communists” bitterly fought against each other. The Naxalites thought that the revolutionary path is the only path, CPI(M) described them as reckless, while SUCI portrayed itself as the only true “Communist party”. When I was growing up in the cold-war era of late seventies and early eighties, USA was bad, and USSR was good. During Olympic Games, India’s performance used to be very bad, and therefore we used to support USSR and jump in joy when Soviet Union got more medals than USA. Brigade Parade ground used to be the site of huge political rallies, where a grim looking Marx’s image could be seen along with equally grim Engels, Lenin and Stalin. These were the Gods one was supposed to worship.

Then as I was about to enter college, Soviet Union collapsed. At College Street copies of *Das Kapital* began to disappear. In the intellectual circles, the name of Francis Fukuyama was floating around. Fukuyama had announced the triumph of capitalism and western democracy and coined the famous phrase – end of history (Fukuyama, 1992). He was mocking Marx and indeed it seemed that at the end Cold War, there was one decisive winner. Marx, the God, it seemed was destined for the dustbin of History. Communist Parties were turning towards capitalism, shopping malls drew more attention than Marx, in intellectual/academic circles new names were gaining popularity – Foucault, Derrida, Baudrillard, Spivak, Bhaba, Edward

Said and others. Postmodernism, postcolonialism and deconstruction were the new buzzwords, not mode of production. There was nothing classy about class anymore, Marxism became as backdated as Calcutta was in comparison to Bangalore. The fall of CPI(M) in 2011 after unhappy attempts to become market friendly, almost completed the story. Marxism continued, but in pockets, in the little magazine corner of the Book Fair, in magazines available in small outlets in College Street.

Meanwhile, in universities of Europe and USA a bitter academic war was fought between those who wanted to preserve and renew Marx and those who were trying to discard or move beyond Marx. The war, largely outside the political domain, hovered around the issue of modernity versus postmodernity. Authors like Alex Callinicos (1999), Marshall Berman (1982), David Harvey (1989), and others sought to defend the Marxist modernist project while others sought to move beyond Marx. The Foucauldian concepts of “discourse” and “power/knowledge” increasingly replaced Marxist framework of analysis and at a more popular level it was accepted by the turn of the century that the worst years of capitalist exploitation of workers was over, and indeed it was time to make capitalism “humane” rather than waste one’s life trying to overthrow it. Therefore, Marx continued to exist, but largely within an academic sphere and to some extent as nostalgia. The God was gone.

However, the story was destined for a plot twist. One of the paradoxical impacts of the growth of capitalism was the internet revolution which touched India from about the turn of the century. The revolution had a profound impact on availability of information, including on Marxism. Slowly but surely, spaces like YouTube began to get filled up with content related to Marxism – documentaries, lec-

tures, short explanatory videos on key concepts, interviews etc. Search engines made it possible to sit in a marginal part of the world and search for latest books. This information revolution slowly but surely began to revive an interest in Marx among a new generation worldwide, especially after the Occupy movement. The highpoint of this information revolution was perhaps the creation of the Marxist Internet Archive, which for the first time in history made an enormous amount of texts on Marxism by different writers available around the world for free.

Even after this revolution in the new century, interest in Marx was confined to a small group of people around the world. What changed the scenario drastically was the sudden financial crisis of USA and Europe when banks had to be bailed out by their governments to save capitalism from its worst crisis in many years. Suddenly, Karl Marx, the nineteenth century intellectual who predicted that capitalism is inherently crisis ridden, was back in the mainstream (Flanders, 2013). Even mainstream economists began to accept that although Marx's prescriptions for the future may not be acceptable, his analysis of the inherent tendencies of capitalism needs to be given serious thought.

It is a happy accident that Karl Marx's bicentenary has come within a few years of the financial crisis and at a point in time when mainstream economists and civil society organisations have accepted that inequality of income is a serious problem within capitalism, not just something that can be addressed easily through judicious policy measures.

This return of Marx has led to huge number of books, papers and articles published around the world. Broadly speaking, one can see three trends. First, new biographies of Marx and the people around him. Second, rethinking Marxist concepts in the light of intellectual devel-

opments since Marx, such as environment. Third, assessing what is there in Marx's writing that correctly explains the contemporary world.

Our humble tribute to Marx on his bicentenary is set in this context. Thanks to the internet revolution, it is now possible to sit in Kolkata (previously Calcutta) and read many texts that was impossible to access earlier without going to British Library or other major university libraries. What we seek to do in this book is to bring out from the archive six authors of the nineteenth century who wrote on Marx. The tradition of writing on Marx in the twentieth century is too well known for us to make any contribution. Therefore, we chose to take advantage of the internet revolution and return to the nineteenth century to discover texts from that era which has relevance for our time and also helps to understand the man behind the mythology.

The first text is an essay on Marx by his daughter Eleanor Marx. Eleanor was of course an important intellectual in her own right, and has several important pieces, most notably on the issue of women. In the text we have included in the book, Eleanor reflects on his father's intellectual contribution. The text serves a dual purpose – for those who are not familiar with Marx, it provides a succinct introduction to his intellectual life and tells us how she chose to remember her father, at least publicly. It is evident that she was not interested in sharing her personal feelings and sought to protect the legacy of Marx by summarising his work but at the same time eliminating controversies. Her love for her father comes out in her “objective” defence of the ideas of Capital in the second section of essay. She says, “I have confined myself in strictly historical and biographical details of the MAN. Of his striking personality, his immense erudition, his wit, humour, general kindli-

ness and ever-ready sympathy it is not for me to speak.” It is obvious that the daughter took great pride in these qualities of his father.

There are probably very few stories of friendship as remarkable as that between Karl and Friedrich. We reproduce here the speech Frederick Engels gave at the grave side of Marx. In this speech Engels was keen on drawing a parallel between Marx and Darwin. He said, “Just as Darwin discovered the law of development or organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history.” Engels saw the greatest contribution of Marx as the discovery of a hidden law that shapes human history in general and the capitalist system in particular. This version of Marx’s intellectual contribution had a huge impact on the twentieth century, but the question that we need to ask today is perhaps whether such a “law of development of human history” is valid or not. Whatever our answer is, we need to take note of the perspective of Engels.

The third text, by Wilhelm Liebknecht, is from his memoir of Marx. Here we break away from the intellectual side of Marx to briefly explore him as a person who loved to smoke but could not afford to buy high quality cigars. This, somewhat light-hearted text, reveals an eccentric scholar and a warm human being which is often forgotten while erecting gigantic statues of Marx. Readers will find in the full-text of the memoir, which is available in the Marxist Internet Archive, many other delightful stories which give us the human aspects of Marx – the man who loved his beer, the man who loved his wife and children, the quiet role of Jenny in his life, etc.

Next, we have selected a letter written by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, a contemporary French intellectual. In the letter Proudhon makes a statement that perhaps has rele-

vance in the context of the history of Marxism in the twentieth century – “Let us seek together, if you wish, the laws of society, the manner in which these laws are realized, the process by which we shall succeed in discovering them; but, for God’s sake, after having demolished all the *a priori* dogmatisms, do not let us in our turn dream of indoctrinating the people...” Proudhon gives the example of Martin Luther, who after overthrowing Christian theology created a new Protestant theology. Proudhon warned Marx that this should not happen again. Was he able to see that Marx would one day become God?

A question that has appeared again and again after 1917 is whether the dream of an emancipatory society can be achieved only through a revolutionary event or is it also possible through peaceful means. This debate is central to the Left in India as well, where some have gone for the armed path and others have followed the electoral path. One of the first thinkers to raise the possibility of the non-violent, social democratic process of gradual emancipation was Eduard Bernstein. In our fifth text, Bernstein argues that Marx was not a dogmatic person and was open to non-revolutionary path to emancipation of the poor. He says, “Marx was by passion a revolutionary fighter, but his passion did not blind him to the teaching of experience. He admitted in 1872 that in countries like England it was possible to bring about the emancipation of the workers by peaceful means.”

Finally, we come to Marx’s bitter rival and someone who was as charismatic as Marx himself – Mikhail Bakunin. Our final text is an excerpt from a longer piece by Bakunin, where he attacks Marx by arguing that there is a fundamental similarity between Otto von Bismarck and Karl Marx – “the cult of the State”. He goes on to argue , “His

socialist political programme is a very faithful expression of his personal attitude. The supreme objective of all his efforts, as is proclaimed in the fundamental statutes of his party in Germany, is the establishment of the great People's State." If Bakunin is correct, then the authoritarian communist state was a logical product of Marx's thinking, rather than an aberration following from certain historical situation. But was Bakunin judging Marx correctly?

These six texts, we hope, will give our readers some questions worth pondering over rather than simple answers. It is not our objective to erect another God, but to generate curiosity about Marx and the questions he grappled with. Maybe he didn't find all the correct answers, but he did ask some powerful questions.

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Eleanor Marx



Jenny Julia Eleanor Marx (1855 – 1898) was the youngest daughter of Karl and Jenny Marx. She was born on 16 January 1855 and committed suicide on 31 March 1898. She was her father's Secretary by the time she was 16 and later helped to translate Capital and edited Value, Price and Profit and Wage Labour and Capital. She was active in labour movement. She was the founding member of Socialist League. She was also a feminist and a stage actor. Her works are - The Factory Hell, The Woman Question, Shelley's Socialism: Two Lectures, The Working-Class Movement in America, The Working Class Movement in England: A Brief Historical Sketch.

Karl Marx

There is no time perhaps so little fitted for writing the biography of a great man as that immediately after his death, and the task is doubly difficult when it falls to one who knew and loved him. It is impossible for me to do more at present than give the briefest sketch of my father's life. I shall confine myself to a simple statement of facts, and I shall not even attempt an exposition of his great theories and discoveries; theories that are the very foundation of Modern Socialism — discoveries that are revolutionising the whole science of Political Economy. I hope, however, to give in a future number of *Progress* an analysis of my

father's chief work — "Das Kapital," and of the truths set forth in it.

Karl Marx was born at Trier, on May 1818, of Jewish parents. His father — a man of great talent — was a lawyer, strongly imbued with French eighteenth-century ideas of religion, science, and art; his mother was the descendant of Hungarian Jews, who in the seventeenth century settled in Holland. Amongst his earliest friends and playmates were Jenny — afterwards his wife — and Edgar von Westphalen. From their father, the Baron von Westphalen — himself half a Scot — Karl Marx imbibed his first love for the "Romantic" School, and while his father read him Voltaire and Racine, Westphalen read him Homer and Shakespeare. These always remained his favorite writers. At once much loved and feared by his school-fellows — loved because he was always in mischief, and feared because of his readiness in writing satirical verse and lampooning his enemies, Karl Marx passed through the usual school routine, and then proceeded to the Universities of Bonn and Berlin, where, to please his father, he for a time studied law, and to please himself he studied history and philosophy. In 1842 he was about to habilitate himself at Bonn as "Privat Dozent," but the political movement arisen in Germany since the death of Frederick William III. in 1840, threw him into another career. The chiefs of the Rhenish Liberals — Kamphausen and Hansemann — had founded the *Rhenish Gazette* at Cologne, with the co-operation of Marx, whose brilliant and bold criticism of the provincial Landtag created such a sensation, that, though only twenty-four years old, he was offered the chief editorship of the paper. He accepted it, and therewith began his long struggle with all despotisms, and with Prussian despotism in particular. Of course the paper appeared under the

supervision of a censor — but the poor censor found himself powerless. The *Gazette* invariably published all important articles, and the censor could do nothing. Then a second, a “special” one was sent from Berlin, but even this double censorship proved of no avail, and finally in 1843 the government simply suppressed the paper altogether. In the same year, 1843, Marx had married his old friend and playfellow, to whom he had been engaged for seven years, Jenny von Westphalen, and with his young wife proceeded to Paris. Here, together with Arnold Ruge, he published the *Deutsche Französische Jahrbücher*, in which he began the long series of his socialist writings. His first contribution was a critique on Hegel’s “Rechts-philosophie;” the second, an essay on the “Jewish Question.” When the *Jahrbücher* ceased to appear, Marx contributed to the journal *Votwärtz*, of which he is usually said to have been the editor. As a matter of fact, the editorship of this paper to which Heine, Everbeck, Engels, etc., contributed, seems to have been carried on in a somewhat erratic manner, and a really responsible editor never existed. Marx’ next publication was the “Heilige Familie” written together with Engels, a satirical critique directed against Bruno Bauer and his school of Hegelian idealists.

While devoting most of his time at this period to the study of Political Economy and of the French Revolution, Karl Marx continued to wage fierce war with the Prussian government, and as a consequence, this government demanded of M. Guizot — it is said through the agency of Alexander von Humboldt, who happened to be in Paris — Marx’ expulsion from France. With this demand Guizot bravely complied, and Marx had to leave Paris. He went to Brussels, and there in 1846 published, in French, a

“Discours sur la libre échange.” Proudhon now published his “Contradictions Economiques ou Philosophie de la Misère,” and wrote to Marx that he awaited his “*férule critique*.” He did not wait long, for in 1847 Marx published his “Misère de la Philosophie, reponse à la Philosophie de la Misère de M., Proudhon” and the “*férule*” was applied with a severity Proudhon had probably not bargained for. This same year Marx founded a German Working-Man’s Club at Brussels, and, what is of more importance, joined, together with his political friends, the “Communitic League.” The whole organisation of the league was changed by him; from a hole-and-corner conspiracy it was transformed into an organisation for the propaganda of Communist principles, and was only secret because existing circumstances made secrecy a necessity. Wherever German working-men’s clubs existed the league existed also, and it was the first socialist movement of an *international* character, Englishmen, Belgians, Hungarians, Poles, Scandinavians being members; it was the first organisation of the Social Democratic Party. In 1847 a Congress of the League was held in London, at which Marx and Engels assisted as delegates; and they were subsequently appointed to write the celebrated “Manifesto of the Communist Party” — first published just before the Revolution of 1848, and then translated into well nigh all European languages. This manifesto opens with a review of the existing conditions of society. It goes on to show how gradually the old feudal division of classes has disappeared, and how modern society is divided simply into two classes — that of the capitalists or bourgeois class, and that of the proletariat; of the expropriators and expropriated; of the bourgeois class possessing wealth and power and producing nothing, of the labor-class that produces wealth but pos-

sesses nothing. The bourgeoisie after using the proletariat to fight its political battles against feudalism, has used the power thus acquired to enslave the proletariat. To the charge that Communism aims at “abolishing property,” the manifesto replied that Communists aim only at abolishing the bourgeois system of property, by which already for nine-tenths or the Community property *is* abolished; to the accusation that Communists aim at “abolishing marriage and the family” the Manifesto answered by asking what kind of “family” and “marriage” were possible for the working men, for whom in all true meaning of the words neither exists. As to “abolishing father-land and nationality,” these *are* abolished for the proletariat, and, thanks to the development of industry, for the bourgeoisie also. The bourgeoisie has wrought great revolutions in history; it has revolutionised the whole system of production. Under its hands the steam-engine, the self-acting mule, the steam-hammer, the railways and ocean-steamers of our days were developed. But its most revolutionary production was the production of the proletariat, of a class whose very conditions of existence compel it to overthrow the whole actual society. The Manifesto ends with the words:

“Communists scorn to conceal their aims and views. They declare openly that their ends are only attainable through the violent overthrow of all existing conditions of society. Let the governing classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The Proletarians have nothing to lose by it but their chains. They have a world to win. Proletarians of all countries, unite!”

In the meantime Marx had continued in the *Brüsseler Zeitung* his attack on the Prussian government, and again the Prussian government demanded his expulsion — but in vain, until the February revolution caused a movement

among the Belgian workmen, when Marx, without any ado, was expelled by the Belgian government. The provisional government of France had, however, through Flocon, invited him to return to Paris, and this invitation he accepted. In Paris he remained some time, till after the Revolution of March, 1848, when he returned to Cologne, and there founded the *New Rhenish Gazette* — the only paper representing the working class, and daring to defend the June insurgents of Paris. In vain did the various reactionary and Liberal papers denounce the *Gazette* for its licentious audacity in attacking all that is holy and defying all authority — and that, too, in a Prussian fortress! In vain did the authorities by virtue of the State of Siege suspend the paper for six weeks. It again appeared under the very eyes of the police, its reputation and circulation growing with the attacks made upon it. After the Prussian coup d'état of November, the *Gazette*, at the head of each number, called on the people to refuse the taxes, and to meet force by force. For this, and on account of certain articles, the paper was twice prosecuted — and acquitted. Finally after the May rising (1849) in Dresden, the Rhenish Provinces, and South Germany, the *Gazette* was forcibly suppressed. The last number — printed in red type — appeared on May 19th, 1849.

Marx now again returned to Paris, but a few weeks after the demonstration of June 13th, 1849, the French government gave him the choice of retiring to Brittany or leaving France. He preferred the latter, and went to London — where he continued to live for over thirty years. An attempt to bring out the *New Rhenish Gazette* in the form of a review, published at Hamburg, was not successful. Immediately after Napoleon's coup d'état, Marx wrote his "18th Brumaire de Louis Bonaparte," and in 1853 the

“Revelations Concerning the Cologne Trial.” — in which he laid bare the infamous machinations of the Prussian government and police.

After the condemnation at Cologne of the members of the Communist League, Marx for a time retired from active political life, devoting himself to his economical studies at the British Museum, to contributing leading articles and correspondence to the *New York Tribune*, and to writing pamphlets and fly-sheets attacking the Palmerston *régime*, widely circulated at the time by David Urquhart.

The first fruits of his long, earnest studies in Political Economy appeared in 1859, in his “Kritik zur Politischer Economie” — a work which contains the first exposition of his Theory of Value.

During the Italian war, Marx, in the German piper *Das Volk*, published in London, denounced the Bonapartism that hid itself under the guise of liberal sympathy for oppressed nationalities, and the Prussian policy that under the cloak of neutrality, merely sought to fish in troubled waters. On this occasion it became necessary to attack Carl Vogt, who in the pay of the “midnight assassin” was agitating for German neutrality, nay sympathy. Infamously and deliberately calumniated by Carl Vogt, Marx replied to him and other gentlemen of his ilk in “Herr Vogt,” 1860, in which he accused Vogt of being in Napoleon’s pay. Just ten years later, in 1870, this accusation was proved to be true. The French government of National Defence published a list of the Bonapartist hirelings and under the letter V appeared: *Vogt*, received August,^[1] 1859, 10,000:francs.” In 1867 Marx published at Hamburg his chief work “Das Kapital,”^[2] to a consideration of which I shall return in the next number of *Progress*.

Meanwhile the condition of the working men’s movement

had so far advanced that Karl Marx could think of executing a long-cherished plan — the establishment in all the more advanced countries of Europe and America of an International Working Men's Association. A public meeting to express sympathy with Poland was held in April, 1864. This brought together the working men of various nationalities, and it was decided to found the International. This was done at, a meeting (presided over by Professor Beesley) in St. James' Hall on September 28, 1864. A provisional general council was elected, and Marx drew up the Inaugural Address and the Provisional Rules. In this address, after an appalling picture of the misery of the working classes, even in years of so-called commercial prosperity, he tells the working men of all countries to combine, and, as nearly twenty years before in the Communist Manifesto, he concluded with the words: "Proletarians of all countries, unite!" The "Rules" stated the reasons for founding the International:

"CONSIDERING,

"That the emancipation of the working classes insist be conquered by the working classes themselves; that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule;

"That the economical subjection of the man of labor to the monopoliser of the means of labor, that is, the sources of life, lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms of social misery, mental degradation, and political dependence;

"That the economical emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate as a means;

"That all efforts aiming at that great end have hitherto failed from the want of solidarity between the manifold di-

visions of labor in each country, and front the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries;

“That the emancipation of labor is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists, and depending for its solution on the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries

“That, the present revival of the working classes in the most industrious countries of Europe, while it raises a new hope, gives solemn warning against a relapse into the old errors, and calls for the immediate combination of the still disconnected movements

“FOR THESE REASONS

“The International Working Men’s Association has been founded.”

To give, any account of Marx’s work in the International would be to write a history of the Association itself — for, while never being more than the Corresponding secretary for Germany and Russia, he was the leading spirit of all the general councils. With scarcely any exceptions the Addresses — from the Inaugural one to the last one — on the “Civil War in France” were written by him. In this last address Marx explained the real meaning of the Commune — “that sphinx so tantalizing to the bourgeois mind.” In words as vigorous as beautiful he branded the corrupt government of “national defection that betrayed France into the hands of Prussia,” he denounced the government of such men as the forger Jules Favre, the usurer Perry, and the thrice infamous Thiers, that “monstrous gnome” the “political shoe-black of the Empire.” After contrasting the horrors perpetrated by the Versaillists and the heroic devotion of the Pa-

risian working men, dying for the preservation of the very republic of which M. Perry is now Prime Minister, Marx concludes:

“Working men’s Paris with its Commune will be for ever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators’ history is already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them.”

The fall of the Commune placed the International in an impossible position. It became necessary to remove the General Council from London to New York, and this, at Marx’ suggestion, was done by the Hague Congress in 1873. Since then the movement has taken another form; the continual intercourse between the proletarians of all countries — one of the fruits of the International Association — has shown that, there no longer exists the necessity for a formal organisation. But whatever the form, the work is going on, must go on so long as the present conditions of society shall exist.

Since 1873 Marx had given himself up almost entirely to his work, though this had been retarded, for some years by ill-health. The M.S. of the second volume of his chief work will be edited by his oldest, truest, and dearest friend, Frederick Engels. There are other MSS., which may also be published.

I have confined myself in strictly historical and biographical details of the MAN. Of his striking personality, his immense erudition, his wit, humour, general kindness and ever-ready sympathy it is not for me to speak. To sum up all -

“the elements

So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up,

And say to all the world, “This was a Man!”

II

David Ricardo begins his great work, “Principles of Political Economy and Taxation,” with these words: “The value of a commodity, or the quantity of any other commodity for which it will exchange, depends upon the relative quantity of *labor* necessary for its production, and not on the greater or less *compensation* which is paid for that labor.” This great discovery of Ricardo’s, that there is but *one* real standard of value, *labor*, forms the starting-point of Marx’ “Das Kapital.” I cannot enter here into a detailed account of the way in which Marx completes, and partly corrects, Ricardo’s theory of value, and develops, out of it, a theory of that fearfully contested subject, *currency*, which by its clearness, simplicity, and logical force, has carried conviction even into the heads of many political economists of the ordinary stamp. I must confine myself to the mode, based upon his theory of value, by which Marx explains the origin and the continued accumulation of capital in the hands of a, thereby, privileged class.

Suppose all exchanges of commodities to be entirely fair; suppose that every buyer gets the full value in goods for his money, and that every seller receives in money the full value of the necessary labor invested in his produce. If, then, as political economists are in the habit of assuming, every producer sells that which he does not want, and buys with the money thus obtained that which he does want, but which he does not himself produce, then all things are for the best in this best of economical worlds; but the formation of Capital — this word taken, for the present, in its

usual meaning — is impossible. A man may save money, or store up goods, but he cannot, as yet, use them as Capital, except perhaps by lending the money on interest. But that is, though a very ancient, yet a very subordinate and primitive form of Capital. The making of profits is impossible on the basis supposed above.

And yet, we see every day that profits, and very large profits, are made by some people. In order to account for this, let its begin by looking at the *form* of the transaction which produces profits. Hitherto we have dealt with independent producers, who, under a system of social division of labor, sell what they do not want, and buy what they do want for their own use. But now the producer appears as a man who enters the market, not with produce, but with money, and who buys, not what he wants, but what he does *not* want for his own use. He buys, in one word, in order to re-sell what he has bought. But to buy 20 tons of pig-iron, or 10 bales of cotton for £100, and to re-sell them for £100 would be an absurdity. And indeed we find our businessman does not commit such an absurdity. He buys his commodities, say for £100, and re-sells them, on an average, say for £110. But how is this possible? We still assume that all commodities are bought and sold at this full labor-value. Then no profit can come out of any amount of such buying and selling. A change in the value of the commodity bought and sold, for instance, the rise in cotton in consequence of the American Civil War, may explain how profits arise in a few solitary instances. But commodities do not always rise in value, they generally fluctuate about a certain average value and price. What is gained now is lost hereafter. With our supposition of equal exchanges, profits are impossible.

Very well. Suppose now, exchanges were not equal — suppose every seller to be able to sell his article 10 per cent.

above its real value. Then, what every one of them gains as a seller, he loses again as a buyer. Again, let every buyer buy at 10 per cent. below the value of the article bought. What he gains as a buyer, leaves his hands again as soon as he turns seller.

Suppose, finally, profits to be the result of cheating. I sell you a ton of iron for £5, while it is worth no more than £3. In that case, I am £2 richer, and you are £2 poorer. Before the bargain you had £5 in money and I had £3 in value of iron — together £8. After the bargain you hold £3 in iron and I £5 in gold — together again £8. Value has changed hands, but it has not been created, and profits to be real must be value newly created. It is self-evident that the totality of the capitalist class of a country cannot cheat itself.

Thus if equivalents are exchanged, profits are impossible; and if non-equivalents are exchanged, profits are equally impossible. Yet they exist. How is this economical enigma to be solved?

Now it is evident that the increase of value which appears in the re-sale as profits, and which transforms money into capital, cannot arise from that money, for both in the buying and in the selling the money merely represents the value of the commodity bought and sold (we assume here again all exchanges to be exchanges of equivalents). Nor can it arise from the value of the commodity which is supposed to be bought and sold at its full value, neither more nor less. The increase of value can, therefore, arise only out of the *actual use* of the commodity in question. But how can new value arise from the use, the consumption of a commodity? This would only be possible if our businessmen had the good luck to find in the market a commodity endowed with the special quality that its consumption would be, *ipso facto*, a creation of wealth.

And that commodity exists in the market. That commodity is called by economists *Labor* but Marx, more correctly, calls it *Labor-power*, and this expression I shall use here.

The existence of Labor-power as a commodity in the market, pre-supposes that it is sold by its owner, and, therefore, that the latter is a free agent, who sells his Labor-power to another free agent, both dealing with each other voluntarily and on an equal footing. It presupposes, moreover, that the sale is for a limited time only, as otherwise the seller, from a free agent, would become a slave. And, finally, it presupposes that the owner of the labor-power, the future laborer, is not in a position to sell commodities, the produce of his own labor, but that he is compelled to sell, instead, his capacity to labor. Thus, our businessman lives in a society where he meets the free laborer in the market — free not only to dispose as a free agent of his labor-power, but free also from the possession of all means by which he himself could transform the labor-power into actual labor, into work. A free man — but free also from the ownership of victuals, of raw material, and of tools, unless, perhaps, the simplest and cheapest.

That our two “free agents” are enabled to meet each other in the market, is evidently not a phenomenon produced by simple nature. It is the result of a long historical process, the result of many previous revolutions of society. And, indeed, it is only since the latter half of the fifteenth century that we find the mass of the population being gradually turned into such “free” sellers of their own labor-power.

Now labor-power, as a saleable commodity, has a value and a price like other commodities. Its value is determined, as in all other cases, by the labor necessary for its production, and therefore its reproduction. The value of labor-power is the value of the necessaries of life required to keep the la-

borer in a state fit for his work, and, as he is subject, to natural decay and death, to reproduce and to continue the race of sellers of labor-power. The extent and composition of these necessities of life varying very much for different epochs and countries, are yet more or less fixed for a single country, and a given period. The standard of life established there among the working class settles it.

Let us now see how our business-man consumes the labor-power he has bought. Suppose the work to be done is cotton-spinning. The hired laborer is introduced into the factory and there finds all the requisites for his work: cotton in the state of preparation which renders it fit for spinning into yarn, machinery, etc. Suppose the normal production of a spinier per hour to be one and two-third pounds of yarn, for which one and two-thirds pounds of cotton are required (leaving unavoidable waste out of the question). Then in six hours our spinner will turn 10 lbs. of cotton into 10 lbs. of yarn. If the value of the cotton be 1s. per lb. the 10 lbs. of yarn will represent in value of cotton 10s. Assuming the wear and tear of machinery, oil, coal, etc., during these six hours to represent a value of 2s., that will raise the value of the yarn to 12s. There remains to be known how much is added to its value by the labor of the spinner.

Suppose the value of labor-power for one day, that is to say the value of the necessities of life required to maintain the laborer for one day to be 3s. Suppose, again, that this sum of necessities, or the 3s. representing it in money, are equivalent to, or embody the labor of one worker for six hours. Our spinner, then, at the end of six hours work has added a value of 3s. to the yarn, so that its total value is 15s. Our businessman, now a master cotton-spinner, has in his yarn the full equivalent of his outlay: 10s. for cotton, 2s. for wear and tear, etc., 3s. for labor-power employed — total

15s. He is repaid in the value of' his yarn for every fraction of a farthing he has advanced.

But there, is no margin for any profits. But our master cotton-spinner or would-be capitalist very soon informs us that this is not the way at all in which *he* understood his bargain. If six hours' labor suffice to *keep* the laborer for a full day, including the night, that is no reason why the laborer should not *work* a whole day. He, the master, has hired the man's labor-power for a day. He, therefore, is entitled to have a full day's work out of him. The value of the labor-power and the value of the labor it is capable of performing may be different things. If they are, then the worker is entitled to have the first and the employer is equally entitled to pocket the second. Labor is not only the source of wealth, and of value, but it is also the source of more value than that of the labor-power required to perform that labor. And that is the very reason why the employer has hired the laborer.

Instead of discharging his workman after the six hours he makes him work say another six hours, twelve in all (we will not at present mind the Factory Acts). Then after twelve hours' work we have the following result:

20 lbs. of cotton at	1s. £1 0 0
Wear and tear twelve hours, twice	2s 4 0
Labor added in twelve hours	6 0
Value of 20 lbs. of yarn	£1 10 0
OUTLAY OF EMPLOYER:	
20 lbs. of cotton, as above,	£1 0 0
Wear and tear	4 0
Wages paid to spinner	3 0
Margin for profit	3s

The enigma is solved, the possibility of profits explained. Money has been transformed into capital.

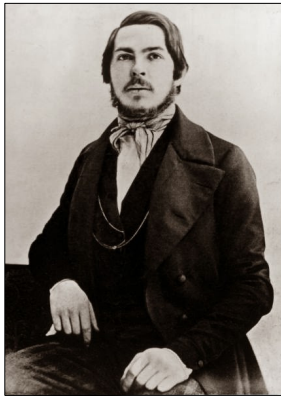
The above simple transaction between employer and workman not only explains the genesis of capital, but it forms the groundwork of our whole system of production (called by Marx *capitalist production*). It forms the gist of Marx' whole book, and is at this moment perfectly understood by the Socialists of the Continent, especially by those of Germany and Russia.

I said the 3s. were not profit, but a *margin* for profit. The sum thus entering the pocket of the capitalist Marx calls *surplus value*. It is not all profit, but it includes the employer's profit. He has to share it with others: with the Government in the shape of rates and taxes, with the landlord for rent, with the merchant, etc.

Thus, all classes of society not composed of actual and immediate producers of wealth (and these, in England at least, are almost exclusively wages-laborers), all classes, from kings and queens to music-masters and greengrocers, live upon their respective shares of this surplus-value. In other words, they live upon the net produce of the surplus labor which the capitalist extracts from his workpeople, but for which he does not pay. It matters not whether the share of surplus-labor falling to each member of society not actually a producer is granted as a gift by Act of Parliament from the public revenue, or whether it has to be earned by performing some function not actually productive. There is no

other fund out of which they can be paid, but the sum total of the surplus value created by the immediate producers, for which they are *not paid*.

Friedrich Engels



Friedrich Engels, also known as Frederick Engels, (1820 – 1895) was a German social scientist, revolutionary and friend of Karl Marx. Engels met Marx in 1844 and remained his collaborator and friend for rest of Marx's life. Thanks to his father's wealth, Engels also played an important financial role in Marx's life. He co-authored *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* with Marx in 1848. His other important works are – *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, *Anti-*

Duhring, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, *Dialectics of Nature* and *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. He also edited the unfinished volumes of Marx's *Capital*.

Speech at the Grave of Karl Marx

Highgate Cemetery, London. March 17, 1883

On the 14th of March, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest living thinker ceased to think. He had been left alone for scarcely two minutes, and when we came back we found him in his armchair, peacefully gone to sleep -- but for ever.

An immeasurable loss has been sustained both by the militant proletariat of Europe and America, and by historical science, in the death of this man. The gap that has been left by the departure of this mighty spirit will soon enough

make itself felt.

Just as Darwin discovered the law of development or organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means, and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch, form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, art, and even the ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of vice versa, as had hitherto been the case.

But that is not all. Marx also discovered the special law of motion governing the present-day capitalist mode of production, and the bourgeois society that this mode of production has created. The discovery of surplus value suddenly threw light on the problem, in trying to solve which all previous investigations, of both bourgeois economists and socialist critics, had been groping in the dark.

Two such discoveries would be enough for one lifetime. Happy the man to whom it is granted to make even one such discovery. But in every single field which Marx investigated -- and he investigated very many fields, none of them superficially -- in every field, even in that of mathematics, he made independent discoveries.

Such was the man of science. But this was not even half the man. Science was for Marx a historically dynamic, revolutionary force. However great the joy with which he welcomed a new discovery in some theoretical science whose practical application perhaps it was as yet quite impossible

to envisage, he experienced quite another kind of joy when the discovery involved immediate revolutionary changes in industry, and in historical development in general. For example, he followed closely the development of the discoveries made in the field of electricity and recently those of Marcel Deprez.

For Marx was before all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation. Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival. His work on the first *Rheinische Zeitung* (1842), the *Paris Vorwärts* (1844), the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung* (1847), the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (1848-49), the *New York Tribune* (1852-61), and, in addition to these, a host of militant pamphlets, work in organisations in Paris, Brussels and London, and finally, crowning all, the formation of the great International Working Men's Association - this was indeed an achievement of which its founder might well have been proud even if he had done nothing else.

And, consequently, Marx was the best hated and most calumniated man of his time. Governments, both absolutist and republican, deported him from their territories. Bourgeois, whether conservative or ultra-democratic, vied with one another in heaping slanders upon him. All this he brushed aside as though it were a cobweb, ignoring it, answering only when extreme necessity compelled him. And he died beloved, revered and mourned by millions of revolutionary fellow workers - from the mines of Siberia to

California, in all parts of Europe and America - and I make bold to say that, though he may have had many opponents, he had hardly one personal enemy. His name will endure through the ages, and so also will his work.

Wilhelm Liebknecht



Wilhelm Martin Philipp Christian Ludwig Liebknecht (1826 – 1900) was a German socialist and one of the founders of the Social Democratic Party (SPD). He was arrested in 1850 for his working class politics in Switzerland and was banished from the country. He then relocated to London where he stayed

till 1862. During this time, he became a member of the Communist Party and a friend of Karl Marx which lasted till Marx's death. He wrote about Marx in his book *Karl Marx: Biographical Memoirs*, which was published in 1896.

Excerpts from: Karl Marx: Biographical Memoirs

My first lengthy conversation with Marx took place the day after our meeting at the aforesaid picnic of the Communist Labourers' Educational Club. There, of course, was no opportunity for a satisfactory exchange of opinions, and Marx had invited me to the clubroom for the following day, where I should probably also meet Engels. I arrived a little before the fixed time; Marx was not yet there, but I found several old acquaintances and was engaged in animated conversation, when Marx, saluting me very warmly, patted

me on the shoulder and invited me downstairs to Engels in the private parlour, where we should be left more to ourselves. I did not know what a private parlour was, and I had a presentiment that now the main examination was impending, but I followed confidently. Marx, who had made the same sympathetic impression on me as the day previous, had the quality of inspiring confidence. He took my arm and led me into the private parlour; that is to say, the private room of the host – or was it a hostess? – where Engels, who had already provided himself with a pewter pot full of dark-brown stout, at once received me with merry jokes. In a trice we had ordered Amy (or Emma, as the refugees had re-baptised her in German, on account of the similarity of sound), the sprightly waitress (I soon formed a better acquaintance with her; she married one of my comrades of Becker's corps), in a trice we had ordered "stuff" to drink and to eat – with us fugitives the stomach question played a paramount part – in a trice the beer had been brought and we seated ourselves, myself on one side of the table, Marx and Engels opposite me. The massive mahogany table, the shining pewter pots, the foaming stout, the prospect of a genuine English beefsteak with accessories, the long clay pipes inviting to a smoke – it was really comfortable and vividly recalled a certain picture in the English illustrations of Boz. But an examination it was for all that. Well, let it come. The conversation waxed more and more fluent. I

soon found that my examiners had already gathered information concerning me. A lengthy composition on the June battle I had written for Hecker's *Volksfreund* in Muttentz in the summer of 1848 under the fresh impressions of the tragedy that marked a new historical era, had been read by Marx and Engels and had attracted their attention to me. I had not entertained any personal relations to them previous to meeting Engels in Geneva the year before. Of Marx I had only known the articles in the Paris annals and the *Poverty of Philosophy*, and of Engels *The Condition of the Working Classes in England*. The *Communist Manifesto* I – a communist since 1846 – had been able to obtain only shortly before my meeting with Engels after the constitutional campaign, although I had heard of it before, of course, and knew the contents; and the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* I had seen very rarely indeed. During the eleven months of its publication I had been either abroad or in prison or in the chaotic storm and strife of life in the free-corps.

I was suspected by both my examiners of philistine “Democracy” and “South German sentimental haziness.” And many a judgment I pronounced on men and things met with a very sharp criticism. Nevertheless, I succeeded in clearing myself of that suspicion. I had only to relate how I had fared in Baden with the citizen “Democracy,” how Brentano, after the second disturbance (the “Struve fizzler”),

had declined after a violent controversy to defend me before the jury that had summoned me for high treason and other crimes, because I had refused to deny my communist faith; how the same Brentano two months later in the middle of the outbreak, had sent me to the casemates of Rastatt on the charge of having planned an assault on him, and how subsequently he had been sharply criticised by his friend Hecker because he did not have me shot summarily before a court martial.

On the whole, the examination did not take an unfavourable course, and the conversation slowly assumed a wider scope. Soon we were on the field of natural science, and Marx ridiculed the victorious reaction in Europe that fancied it had smothered the revolution and did not suspect that natural science was preparing a new revolution. That King Steam who had revolutionised the world in the last century had ceased to rule, and that into his place a far greater revolutionist would step, the electric spark. And now Marx, all flushed and excited, told me that during the last few days the model of an electric engine drawing a railroad train was on exhibition in Regent street. "Now the problem is solved – the consequences are indefinable. In the wake of the economic revolution the political must necessarily follow, for the latter is only the expression of the former." In the way that Marx discussed this progress of science and mechanics, his conception of the world and especially that part later on

called the materialist conception of history became so clearly apparent that certain doubts I had hitherto entertained vanished like snow in the sun of spring. That evening I did not get home – we talked and laughed and drank till late the next morning, and the sun was already up when I went to bed. And I did not stay in bed long. I could not sleep. My head was too full of everything I had heard; the thoughts, surging to and fro, drove me out again, and I hastened to Regent Street in order to see the model, this modern Trojan horse that civilised society, like the Trojan men and women of old, was leading jubilantly into its Ilios in suicidal blindness, and that would surely bring on its destruction. *Essetalhaemar* – the day will come when the holy Ilios will fall.

A great crowd indicated the show window behind which the model was exhibited. I forced my way through; to be sure, there was the engine and the train, and engine and train were spinning around merrily.

It was then 1850, the beginning of July. And today it is 1896, the beginning of April. Forty-five years and a half have passed, and no railroad train is yet driven by an electric engine. The few street cars and whatever else are operated by electricity do not signify much on the whole, however much it may appear. And in spite of all revolutionising inventions it will take some time yet before lightning, completely tamed, will allow itself to be hitched to the yoke of

human labour and will drive King Steam from his throne. Revolutions are not accomplished in a sleight-of-hand fashion. Only the sensational shows in politics are called revolutions by the wonder-working rustic faith. And whoever prophesies revolutions is always mistaken in the date.

Well, though Marx was a prophet looking into the future with sharp eyes and perceiving much more than ordinary human beings, he never was a prophesier, and when Messieurs Kinkel, Ledru Rollin and other revolution-makers announced in every appeal to their folks in partibus the typical, "Tomorrow it will start," none was so merciless with his satire as Marx.

Only on the subject of "industrial crises" he fell victim to the prophesying imp, and in consequence was subjected to our hearty derision, which made him grimly mad. However, in the main point he was right nonetheless. The prophesied industrial crises did come – only not at the fixed time. And the causes of the prolonged intervals have been demonstrated by Marx with scientific perfection.

Apropos of this subject, let me mention that the verse against the prophets of revolutions in the famous poem of Freiligrath to Weidemeyer was inspired nearly literally by Marx while we were sitting together one evening with the "Tyrtaios of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*," who had a very susceptible ear for available remarks and generally conveyed them immediately to his notebook.

The enormous power and vital strength of civilised society has been recognised by none so well as by Marx. And England is just the right place for such a revelation. Here human society has developed most purely, one may say truly classically, and without casting aside all forms still in the concrete has overcome and excreted most thoroughly all the rubbish of previous centuries and social forms.

A would-be diplomat, Mr von Bennigsen, has lately launched in the German Reichstag the wise saying that the army is the strongest pillar of civilised society. If that man had been in England or had only an inkling of English conditions, he would not have committed himself to such a barrack-room pun. England has no army and society there stands on a foundation of such strong material and composition that the “rocher de bronze” (bronzework) of militarism in comparison to it is worm-eaten, mouldering junk. On the contrary, this “rocher de bronze,” with its Middle-Age absolutist plunder that breeds in it is a millstone around the neck of human society, hindering it in swimming and drawing it down to the bottom, while unweighted it would have strength to keep above water for a long time yet. The nervousness of the German bourgeoisie looking, like Prince Bismarck, to Dr Eisenbart for salvation and regarding as its last remedy soldiers, policemen, and “*si duo faciunt idem non est idem*” jurists, is an unmistakable sign that in Germany society has no longer any faith in itself.

And when in its desperation it increases the weight by which it is drawn into the abyss, it imitates the senseless exertions of a drowning man who by these same exertions removes the last chances of rescue and accelerates the catastrophe.

Marx and the children

Marx, like all strong and healthy natures, had an unusual affection for children. He was not only the most loving of fathers, who could be a child among children for hours, he also was attracted as by magnetism toward strange children, particularly helpless children in misery who chanced to cross his way. Time and again he would suddenly tear himself away from us on wandering through districts of poverty in order to stroke the hair of some child in rags sitting on a doorway or to slip a penny or halfpenny into its little hand. He mistrusted beggars, for in London begging has become a regular trade, and one that still has a golden bottom though collecting nothing but copper. By male or female beggars, therefore, he was not deceived long, although in the beginning, whenever he could afford it, he never refused to give. Against some of them who had taxed him by dint of artful display of artificial disease and suffering, he even had quite a strong spite, because he regarded the exploitation of human sympathy as a particularly flagrant meanness and as a stealing from poverty. But when a beg-

gar or a beggar woman with a whimpering child accosted Marx, then he was lost without fail, although roguery might be written ever so plainly on the forehead of the beggar or the woman. He could not withstand the imploring eyes of the child.

Physical weakness and helplessness always vividly excited his pity and sympathy. A man beating his wife, and wife-beating was then quite the fashion in London, he could have ordered with greatest relish to be beaten to death. By his impulsive character on such occasions he not infrequently brought himself and us into a fix. One day I was riding to Hampstead Road with him on the driver's seat of an omnibus, when we noticed at a stopping place in front of a gin palace a crowd from the middle of which a piercing female voice was shouting: "Murder! Murder!" Quick as a flash Marx had jumped down and I after him. I tried to hold him back – I might as well have tried to catch a flying bullet with my hands. In a trice we were in the middle of the crowd; and the human waves closed behind us. "What is up?" Only too soon it became evident what was up. A drunken woman had gotten into a row with her husband, the latter wanted to take her home, she resisted and holloed like mad. So far so good. There was no need of any intervention on our part, we could see that. But the quarrelling pair saw it also, and making peace at once attacked us, while the crowd closed more and more around us and as-

sumed a threatening attitude against the “damned foreigners.” Especially the woman went full of rage for Marx and concentrated her efforts on his magnificent shining black beard. I endeavoured to soothe the storm, in vain. Had not two strong constables made their appearance in time, we should have had to pay dearly for our philanthropic attempt at intervention. We were glad when we were out of it without a scratch and safely seated on another omnibus that brought us home. Later Marx was a little more cautious with similar attempts at intervention.

It is necessary to have seen Marx with his children in order to fully understand the deep mind and childlike heart of this hero of science. In his spare minutes or on his walks he carried them around, played with them the wildest, merriest games, in short was a child among children. On Hampstead Heath we would sometimes play “cavalry”: I would take one little daughter on my shoulder, Marx the other one, and then we would jump and trot, outdoing one another – now and then there would also be a little cavalry engagement, for the girls were wild as boys and could also stand a bump without crying.

For Marx, the society of children was a necessity – he recovered and refreshed himself thereby. And when his own children were grown up or dead, his grandchildren took their place. Little Jenny, who married Longuet, one of the fugitives of the Commune, in the beginning of the seven-

ties, brought into the house of Marx several boys, wild fellows. Especially the elder, Jean or Johnny, now on the point of “serving” his time in France as an “involuntary” volunteer, was grandpa’s pet. He could do whatever he pleased with him, and he knew it. One day, while I was on a visit to London, Johnny, whom his parents had sent across from Paris, as used to be done several times every year, conceived the ingenious thought to transform Mohr into an omnibus on the driver’s seat of which, that is Mohr’s shoulders, he seated himself, while Engels and myself were appointed omnibus horses. And after we had been duly hitched up, there was a wild chase, I meant to say a wild drive in the small house garden behind Marx’s cottage in Maitland Park Road. But perhaps it was in Engels’ house on Regent’s Park. The London model homes resemble each other like twins, and the house gardens more so. A few square yards of gravel and grass, both thickly covered by a layer of London black, or “black snow”: that is, the all-pervading soot, in such a manner that it is impossible to tell where the grass begins and the gravel ceases, that is the London “garden.”

Then it was “Get up!” with international German, French and English exclamations: Go on! Plus vite! (Quicker!) Hurrah! And Marx had to trot, until the sweat poured down from his forehead, and when Engels or I would try to slacken our speed, down came the whip of the cruel driver:

You naughty horse! Enavant! (Go ahead!) And so forth, until Marx could not stand it any longer, and then we began to negotiate with Johnny and a truce was established.

Tobacco

Marx was a passionate smoker. Like everything else, he carried on smoking with impetuosity. English tobacco being too strong for him, he provided for himself, whenever he had any chance of doing so, cigars which he half-chewed in order to heighten the enjoyment or to have a double pleasure. As cigars are very dear in England, he was continually on the hunt for cheap brands. And what kind of stuff he secured in this way may be imagined; “cheap and nasty” is an English expression, and Marx’s cigars were consequently dreaded by his friends. And with these abominable cigars he completely ruined his smoking taste and smell. He nevertheless believed and contended that he was an excellent connoisseur of cigars, until one evening we laid a trap for him, into which he unwarily fell. A visitor from Germany had brought some fine imported cigars with him during the year of the exposition of 1851, and we began to light and smoke them with ostentatious relish, when Marx entered. The unwonted aroma tickled his nose. “Ah, that smells excellent!” “Well, these are genuine Havanas brought over by X! Here, try one.” And the speaker offered to the guileless Marx, who delightedly accepted, a speci-

men of the most horrible brand of cigars we had been able to find in St Giles, the worst proletarian quarter of the West End, which brand resembled the genuine article in form and colour. The “horrible example” in the way of a cigar was lighted, Marx blew the delicious smoke into the air with raptured mien. “I was a little suspicious at first; generally they bring a miserable weed from Germany; but this one is really good!” We assented with grave faces, although we were ready to burst. A few days later he learned the true state of things. He did not lose his temper, but maintained obstinately that the cigar had been a genuine Havana and that we were now trying to hoodwink him. And he could not be convinced of the contrary.

Marx’s passion for cigars had also a stimulating effect on his talent for political economy, not in theory, but in practice. He had smoked for a long time a certain brand of cigars that was very cheap according to English ideas – and proportionately nasty – when he found on his way through Holborn a still cheaper brand. I believe for one shilling and sixpence per pound and box. That brought forth his political-economic talent for saving: with every box he smoked he “saved” one shilling and sixpence. Consequently, the more he smoked the more he “saved.” If he managed to consume a box per day, then he could live at a pinch on his “savings.” And to this system of saving, which he had demonstrated to us one evening in a humorous speech he de-

voted himself with so much energy and self-sacrifice that after the lapse of some months the family physician had to interfere and to forbid Marx peremptorily to enrich himself by such a system of “saving.”

We had many a laugh over this Marxian theory of saving. That equally practical theories of saving would be believed in and seriously considered as a solution of the social problem by the “nation of thinkers” for many years, such a thing we did not suspect at that time. I learned this fact only after my return to Germany. In England, whenever similar allusions were made in English newspapers, I had always regarded them as inventions.

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon



Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809 – 1865) was a French intellectual and is generally known as the father of Anarchism. He was a member of the French Parliament after 1848. After the publication of his first major work, “*What is Property? Or, an Inquiry into the Principle of Right and Government*” he attracted Marx’s attention and the two started corresponding with each other. They

however fell out and this had important implications for the relationship between Marxists and Anarchists. He coined the phrase “Property is theft.”

Letter to Karl Marx

Lyon, 17 May 1846

My dear Monsieur Marx,

I gladly agree to become one of the recipients of your correspondence, whose aims and organization seem to me most useful. Yet I cannot promise to write often or at great length: my varied occupations, combined with a natural idleness, do not favour such epistolary efforts. I must also take the liberty of making certain qualifications which are suggested by various passages of your letter.

First, although my ideas in the matter of organization

and realization are at this moment more or less settled, at least as regards principles, I believe it is my duty, as it is the duty of all socialists, to maintain for some time yet the critical or dubitative form; in short, I make profession in public of an almost absolute economic anti-dogmatism.

Let us seek together, if you wish, the laws of society, the manner in which these laws are realized, the process by which we shall succeed in discovering them; but, for God's sake, after having demolished all the *a priori* dogmatisms, do not let us in our turn dream of indoctrinating the people; do not let us fall into the contradiction of your compatriot Martin Luther, who, having overthrown Catholic theology, at once set about, with excommunication and anathema, the foundation of a Protestant theology. For the last three centuries Germany has been mainly occupied in undoing Luther's shoddy work; do not let us leave humanity with a similar mess to clear up as a result of our efforts. I applaud with all my heart your thought of bringing all opinions to light; let us carry on a good and loyal polemic; let us give the world an example of learned and far-sighted tolerance, but let us not, merely because we are at the head of a movement, make ourselves the leaders of a new intolerance, let us not pose as the apostles of a new religion, even if it be the religion of logic, the religion of reason. Let us gather together and encourage all protests, let us brand all exclusiveness, all

mysticism; let us never regard a question as exhausted, and when we have used our last argument, let us begin again, if need be, with eloquence and irony. On that condition, I will gladly enter your association. Otherwise — no!

I have also some observations to make on this phrase of your letter: *at the moment of action*. Perhaps you still retain the opinion that no reform is at present possible without a *coup de main*, without what was formerly called a revolution and is really nothing but a shock. That opinion, which I understand, which I excuse, and would willingly discuss, having myself shared it for a long time, my most recent studies have made me abandon completely. I believe we have no need of it in order to succeed; and that consequently we should not put forward *revolutionary action* as a means of social reform, because that pretended means would simply be an appeal to force, to arbitrariness, in brief, a contradiction. I myself put the problem in this way: *to bring about the return to society, by an economic combination, of the wealth which was withdrawn from society by another economic combination*. In other words, through Political Economy to turn the theory of Property against Property in such a way as to engender what you German socialists call *community* and what I will limit myself for the moment to calling *liberty* or *equality*. But I believe that I know the means of solving this problem with only a short delay; I would therefore prefer to burn Prop-

erty by a slow fire, rather than give it new strength by making a St Bartholomew's night of the proprietors ...

Your very devoted
Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

Eduard Bernstein



Eduard Bernstein (1850 – 1932) was a German social democratic thinker and a member of Social Democratic Party. His most important and controversial work was *The Preconditions of Socialism* (1899), in which he raised doubts about Marx's predictions regarding the future of capitalism, and had argued for a peaceful, non-revolutionary approach to socialism. He was criticised by

Rosa Luxemburg and other revolutionary Marxists for his views.

Karl Marx and Social Reform

To the average Englishman Karl Marx is in regard to social politics an ultra- revolutionary State-Socialist, the advocate of violent overthrow of all constituted order in government. Considering the great influence Marx and his school of thought hold upon the Socialist labour movement of today, it may not seem untimely to investigate how far this impression is justified.

What was Marx's position to social reform? In putting the question thus, we have at once to contend with a difficulty. Marx during his life wrote a great deal, and, of course, also learned a great deal. Which of his writings represent the

living Marx? The great mass of friends and foes alike treat a quotation from the *Manifesto of the Communists* in the same way as a quotation from *Das Kapital*. They adjudge to them quite the same value, as high or as low as their estimation of Marx may be.

Now it is certainly true that from about 1846 there runs through all writings of Marx an identical line of thought. His conception of social evolution and of the historical mission of the modern proletariat, as laid down in the *Manifesto*, until the last underwent no change in principle. But for our purpose it is not only the general principle we have to consider, but also the application given to it by Marx in regard to questions of the day, its relation to time and ways and means. To assume that also in this respect Marx's ideas underwent no change at all, would mean that he was either a god or a madman. Yet of those who admit or proclaim that he was one of the greatest thinkers of our era a great many treat him in a way as only such assumption would justify.

It is curious indeed how sensible people have not hesitated a moment to put into the mouth of a man whose keen intellect they profess to admire, the most idiotic nonsense. In his otherwise praiseworthy book on German Social Democracy, Mr Russell, for example, says of Marx: 'In his views of human nature he generalised the economic motive, so as to cover all departments of social life', and 'there is no

question, in Marx, of justice or virtue, no appeal to human sympathy or morality, might alone is right.' (pp 8 and 14) [1] If this were true, Marx as a social philosopher would be convicted at the outset. But it is an absolutely mistaken notion of the trend of Marx's theory. Mr Russell could with as much right have said that in Darwin's theory of the struggle for life there was no question of paternal love or tribal co-operation amongst animals.

Marx's social theory is based on what he has called historic materialism, a conception of history worked out by himself and Frederick Engels in the forties of this century. According to it the ultimate forces in the evolution of social life, the ultimate causes that determine the evolution of morals are of an economic nature; they are to be found in the changes of the modes of production of the necessities of life. To a given mode of production and exchange of the necessities of life, correspond certain forms of social institutions and moral conceptions, and they will prevail as long as the former continues to exist, though not always in their purity or in absolute sway, as they have to contend with remainders of former institutions and the germs of a slowly evolving new mode of life, factors which call forth a certain variety such as everywhere we observe in nature. But in every period of history we can easily distinguish a prevailing mode of production and exchange, and a corresponding conception of life, and of duties and rights, which also pre-

vail and determine the nature of the social and political institutions of the period. This is quite obvious in the earlier stages of social life. But the more complex society becomes, the more will the objective causes of social evolution recede into the background, and subjective ones appear to determine its course. But, powerful as the subjective factor is in history, it is still under the control of the working of the economic foundations of social life.

It is in this sense that Marx says in the preface to *Das Kapital*:

Even when a society has got upon the right track for the discovery of the natural law of its evolution, it can neither jump over normal phases of its development, nor can it remove them by decree. But it can shorten and alleviate the pain of child-birth. [2]

People have stigmatised the materialistic conception of history as historic fatalism. But they have, as yet, not been able to point out a country where production on commercial lines and feudal law and morals are coexisting in full vigour.

We have seen progressive movements, upheld by most energetic men, entirely collapse for no other reason than because they anticipated a state of social evolution which had not yet set in. On the other hand, wherever the industrial development has reached certain points, it has called forth social movements which, if different in garb, according to

special geographical conditions, are in substance alike in all countries. Twenty years ago a whole generation of heroic youth risked freedom and life in Russia to bring about a social revolution. They were sacrificed in vain; the material premises of their idea did not exist. Semi-Asiatic conditions of life prevailed in the greater part of the country. Since then an increasing number of factories has been built, new railways have been constructed, the traffic increased, modern commerce extended all over the country, trade enormously expanded. These economic changes have revolutionised the brains of the people more than all the pamphlets and leaflets written in glowing terms and distributed broadcast by the young heroes who risked freedom and life for a generous ideal. Today it is admitted on all sides that Russia has her own labour movement. The dream, fostered by men like Bakunin, of saving the Russians the period of bourgeois economy is done with forever; neither can the all-powerful Tsar – to speak with Marx – remove it by decree, nor can the fiery revolutionist make Russia jump over its phases of evolution with the aid of dynamite.

In short, there is what we Germans call *Gesetzmässigkeit* – an order of law – in social evolution. Marx has formulated the main principles of it in his *Criticism of Political Economy*, published in 1859, as follows:

A formation of society will not disappear until all productive forces are evolved for which it is wide enough, and

new and higher systems of production will never be installed until the material conditions of their existence are hatched out in the very bosom of the old society. Hence humanity always sets itself only to solve problems it is capable of solving; for if you examine things closer you will always find that the problem arises only where the material premises of its solution exist already, or are at least in the process of being formed. [3]

So much for the objective side of social evolution. The main subjective lever of it is, as long as society is divided into classes, the class antagonism or class war. It has been said that, if such a thing has existed in former ages, it does not exist in advanced modern society, in our enlightened era of liberal or democratic institutions, and facts are extant in this country which indeed seem to disprove the whole theory of the class struggle. Do we not see the great mass of the workers in England appallingly indifferent towards any social reform movement which does not bear upon their individual and immediate interest? Is it not the visible result of the social inertia of the workers that labour questions have taken a back seat in Parliament, and would stand even still more in the background but for the great number of middle-class reformers?

The facts, themselves, cannot be denied, but they do not disprove the class-war theory as put forward by Marx; they only disprove some crude and narrow interpretations of it.

First of all there are different forms of warfare. ‘The process of revolution’, writes Marx, in the preface to *Das Kapital*, ‘will take more brutal or more human forms, according to the degree of development of the workers.’ [4] Now a great section of the wage-earners of this country have quite evidently made steady progress in regard to their social conditions. No wonder that they prefer what are called constitutional methods to the more violent forms of warfare. But, safe as this way is, it is not likely to arouse the passionate enthusiasm of the masses. Another reason of the apparent inertia of the workers in England, is perhaps just to be found in the fact that so many middle-class people have taken up social reform. To some extent this daily increase of middle-class reformers may be ascribed to a growing sense of social duty, although the growth itself again is an effect of, in the last instance, economic causes. But a much stronger force than the more or less ideological motives that have induced people in middle-class position to take up the cause of social reform, is the change the franchise reform has brought about in the political life of this country.

It is not a little surprising how indifferent many English Socialists are in regard to questions of the suffrage, so that a very influential labour leader could two or three years ago refuse to take part in an agitation for universal suffrage – not because it was inopportune, but that it was ‘mere radi-

calism'. In form, of course, it is, but with an adult population consisting in its majority of industrial wage-earners it is in substance more than that. Proudhon saw deeper when he declared that universal suffrage was incompatible with the subordination of labour to capital. And it is known what Lord Palmerston said of the changes Lord John Russell's Franchise Reform of 1860 would bring about in regard to the House of Commons. 'I dare say, the actors will be the same, but they will play to the galleries instead of to the boxes.' [5] So far, history has not disproved his fears.

Today the member of Parliament plays for an audience, the majority of which in most cases are workers, and he plays accordingly. There are very few of them who have not taken up at least one question of real or fancied interest to the workers as their speciality, from the legal eight-hours day to 'England for the English'. Any question which a large section of the workers have at heart is sure to find a great number of advocates in the ranks of the middle-class legislators. All this gives the class struggle another form.

It works today more as a potential than as an active force, more by the knowledge of what it might be than by actual manifestation. Politically as well as economically it is fought by sections or divisions, and often in forms which are the reverse of what they ought to be according to the letter, so that it might appear as if it were not the social classes that contest with one another the control of legisla-

tion, but rather the legislators that fight for the satisfaction of the classes. But the class struggle is no less a reality because it has taken the shape of continuous barter and compromise.

Marx's book *Zur Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie* appeared in 1859, the same year when Darwin's *Origin of Species* was first published. Marx has often been compared with Darwin, and, in my opinion, very justly so. That Marx from the beginning took the greatest interest in Darwin's researches, there is not the slightest doubt. A letter of Lassalle to Marx of the year 1859, shows that Marx had called Lassalle's attention to the *Origin of Species* as soon as the book had appeared. And, curiously enough, amongst the left manuscripts of Marx and Engels, I have come across one written not later than 1847, where I found a most remarkable passage pointing out with great vigour the struggle for life in *nature*. Of course, the term is not used, but the thing is clearly presented, and at the end we meet the following striking sentence: 'Hobbes could have founded his "*bellum omnium contra omnes*" with greater right on nature than on men.' [6]

This, only by the way. But, from all said, so far, it is quite evident that Marx's theory is eminently evolutionary. Now evolution is, as the *British Review* recently said, 'a very comfortable word'. You can, indeed, use it in the most Pickwickian sense. You can oppose it to revolution, you

can construct an absolute contradiction between evolution and revolution. To Marx, evolution included revolution and *vice versa*; the one was a stage of the other. Not every revolution must be violent or sanguinary. But, besides those brought about by industrial changes alone, we have those phases of social evolution, which take the shape of, or are brought about by, political revolutions. They, too, have their drawbacks, undoubtedly, but they have also their advantages – they clear away in a day the dust and the rubbish that else would take generations to remove – they are, in the words of Marx, the locomotives of history. They are also mostly attended by a great intellectual impulse. Thousands of slumbering intellects are stimulated, wits are sharpened, ranges of sight widened. And when it so comes to violent struggle, then, of course, might *is* right – as it has been in 1648, in 1793, in 1830 and in 1848. By that I do not mean to say that might was always ‘justice’.

Marx, then, was, if you like to put it thus, a revolutionary evolutionist. But he was far from revolutionary romanticism. I doubt whether he would have subscribed to the sentence, that in the natural philosophy of Socialism light is a more important factor than heat, but I am sure he would not have subscribed to the contrary, that heat was more important than light. Indeed, in a declaration against a section of the Communistic League, which then cultivated a very

heated revolutionism, Marx said in September 1850 – and I think these words ought not to be forgotten:

The minority puts into the place of the critical a dogmatic conception. To them not real existing conditions are the motive force of revolution, but mere *will*. Whilst we tell the workers, you must run through 15, 20, 50 years of civil wars and struggles, not only for changing the conditions, but for altering yourselves and for rendering yourselves capable of political supremacy, you, on the contrary declare: ‘We must at once capture power, or we may go and lay down to sleep.’ Whilst we explain, especially to the German workmen, how undeveloped the proletariat is in Germany, you flatter in the coarsest way the national sentiment and the sectional prejudice of the German handicraftsmen – a process which, true, is more popular. Just as the Democrats have made the word people, so you have made the word proletariat a fetish. Just like the Democrats, you substitute the revolutionary phrase for the revolutionary evolution. [7]

Here the question may be raised how this evolutionist conception agrees with the concluding words of the *Communist Manifesto*, that the ends of the Communists ‘can only be attained by the forcible overthrow of all existing conditions’. [8] To this the first reply is that the *Manifesto* was written on the eve of a revolution – the Revolution of 1848 – which, indeed, overthrew forcibly a good deal of the ex-

isting social conditions. The comparative youth of the movement, and, I may add, the youth of the writers themselves, as well as the very political situation of the time, explains the accentuation of revolutionary violence. Besides, the *Communist Manifesto* had a polemical purpose – to fight the enervating communism of universal love then flourishing in Germany. It had to educate the workers for the impending political struggle which was sure to take revolutionary form. At the same time as Marx and Engels wrote these lines they, however, strongly opposed all playing with conspiracy. Putting educational propaganda in the place of conspiracy was the condition of their joining the League of the Communists.

But it shall not be denied – Engels himself has it in one of his last publications expressly stated [9]– that Marx and he in 1848 greatly overestimated the state of industrial evolution attained. They believed the breakdown of bourgeois civilisation to be within hail, if, however, to be worked out in a prolonged series of revolutions. And in their overestimation of the state of social evolution they were even less sanguine than other Socialists of the time. ‘We all were firmly convinced’, Bakunin later said to Benoit Malon, ‘that we were living the last days of the old society.’ The year 1848 brought the great disappointment. How Marx understood its lesson the speech made in 1850 has shown. In our appreciation of the quickness of social movements we

are always subject to error, and may have continuously to correct ourselves, whilst our theory holds good all the time.

If his theory did not always protect Marx from a too sanguine view of the march of events, it, on the other hand, obliged him to propose nothing which was not based on a close study of actual conditions. He strongly resisted temptations to prescribe remedies for the future. To study the given economic conditions of society, to follow closely their march, to ascertain what to do – not from an imaginary perfect Socialist world, but from the very imperfect world we live in and its actual requirements – is therefore the task of the disciples of Marx. People may repeat in eloquent terms the general doctrines of the class war, and speak again and again of the social revolution and the socialisation of all the means of production, exchange, and distribution – they will still be poor Marxists if they refuse to acknowledge changes in the economic evolution which contradict former assumptions, and decline to act accordingly.

But better than all general deductions a rapid survey of Marx's own public life will illustrate the true sense of his social theory.

Marx and Engels had worked out their theory in the years 1845 and 1846. The literary controversies in which they affirmed it form one of the most interesting and most instructive chapters in the history of Socialism. As early as

that time both men were in intimate relation with the fighting representatives of advanced Democracy in different countries – Chartists in England, Radical Social Reformers in France, Democrats in Belgium.

In Germany there were then not even great political middle-class parties formed: the whole political struggle was almost exclusively fought in newspapers and other prints. But just because the fight was a literary one a tremendous amount of Radicalism was displayed. Germans believed themselves much superior to English and French. They imagined they could do without those petty institutions these had to try, just as a generation later the Russians did with respect to the same nations – Germany now included. Marx and Engels very soon overcame this superstition, and strongly opposed those Socialists who imported from England and France the condemnation of Parliamentaryism. They showed that this ultra-Radicalism was in fact reaction: the bourgeois liberties had first to be conquered and then criticised. [10] They proclaimed that the Communists had to support the bourgeoisie wherever it acted as a revolutionary progressive class. When, therefore, the Revolution of 1848 broke out, Marx and Engels, instead of preaching Communism in a small private sheet, preached Radical action in a comparatively widely circulated paper they had founded in conjunction with advanced political Democrats – the famous *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

Fighting on political lines did, however, not mean neglect of economic questions. Just the reverse. In the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, amongst others, the case of the peasants against the feudal classes was advocated most energetically, and there Marx published his lectures on wage-labour and capital, and took in all real struggles the side of the workers.

In May 1849, the paper was suppressed. Marx and Engels first resolved to go to South Germany, where a last battle was fought between the revolution and the reactionary governments. Whilst they in no way shared the political ideas of the South German Democrats, they were for saving what was to be saved for Democracy. But the battle was lost, and both had to emigrate.

In London they tried to reorganise the Communist League. Like other revolutionaries, they first hoped that a reconquest of their position by the French Radical Democrats would revive the revolutionary movements all over Europe. But soon they recognised that this hope was not well founded, and they opposed all movements amongst the German emigrants of forming leagues for revolutionary attempts. The hatred they drew upon themselves by this was without bounds, and results of the campaign of slander waged against them by men, many of whom afterwards became obedient Bismarckians, can even be traced in our own days. It was then that Marx, because he declined to support

an illusion which could only exact useless sacrifices, was declared a cold, calculating scribbler and system-maker, who had not a bit of feeling for the people; no heart, only reason; no heat, only dry – too dry – light.

His reply, or part of it, to such accusations we have given above. In a review then published by him he explained how commercial prosperity had set in, and that, with trade everywhere brisk, no general revolutionary rising was to be expected. ‘Such revolution’, he added, ‘is only possible in times when there exists a conflict between those two factors, the modern forces of production and the bourgeois forms of production.’ Even the reaction did not know how strong the foundations of bourgeois civilisation were. ‘Against this condition of things’, he added, ‘all attempts of reaction which aim at hampering bourgeois evolution will fail as surely as all the moral indignation and enthusiastic proclamations of the Democrats.’ [11]

Instead of devoting himself to emigration politics, Marx, whilst working hard, at a miserable pay, for his livelihood, and studying in the British Museum, supported what was left of the Chartist movement by gratuitous contributions to Ernest Jones’ papers, and lectured on social economy and other topics to a small nucleus of German workers. During the American Civil War he took energetically the side of the anti-slavery states, and readers of *Das Kapital* know how severely Marx censures Carlyle’s super-criticism of

this – to use his own words – ‘most imposing historical event’. [12]

The 1860s saw the setting on foot of the International Working Men’s Association, with Marx as its leading inspirer. When, somewhat later, the English Reform League was founded, an alliance of labour representatives and advanced Radicals for the purpose of pressing the then discussed Electoral Reform, the International, far from denouncing this ‘compromise’, supported it, and the General Council, in a report to the International Congress of 1867, referred with a certain pride to the fact that some of its members were most active members of the Council of the League.

The inaugural address and the statutes of the International are from the pen of Marx. [13] They are proofs of his unsectarian mind. He made them wide enough to be acceptable to all sections of the labour movement, and still precise enough to give the movement a distinct, well-defined class character. The emancipation of the working classes must be accomplished by the workers themselves, but it is no movement for new class monopolies and privileges; it is not a local or national, but a social problem embracing all countries, where modern society exists. Every political movement is only to be regarded as a means subordinate to the great end of economic emancipation. Truth, justice and morality shall rule the relation of the societies and individuals

without regard to colour, creed or nationality – no rights without duties, no duties without rights.

To him who is unable to detect in works like *Das Kapital* appeals to human sympathy and morality, the rules of the International may be a proof that there was even with Marx a question of morality and justice, of duties and of love of man.

The first years of the International went comparatively smoothly enough. The first congresses framed resolutions – most of them drafted or suggested by Marx in favour of technical and intellectual education, factory laws, trade unionism, cooperative societies, nationalisation of the means of transport, of mines and forests, and, later also, of land in general. But you read nothing of conspiracies and similar enterprises. The first international action which the council suggested was – an independent inquiry made by the workers themselves into the conditions of labour.

Then came the Paris Commune. The dissensions amongst the different French groups had already at an early time given a good deal of trouble to the General Council. After the downfall of the Commune they came to such a pitch that they took nearly all its time. Sections first invoked the authority of the Council, and when it was refused accused the Council of autocracy: Bakunin with his Anarchistic agitation aiding, the International broke up. A rival Interna-

tional created by Bakunin and his friends fared no better, in spite of its orthodoxy.

Was the International a failure? Yes, and no. It failed so far as it undervalued the difficulties of international cooperation. But it was nevertheless a most powerful intellectual lever: its propagandist influence was enormous. In one case at least it helped to prevent war; and if it could not prevent the disastrous Franco-German war, it fostered demonstrations against it in France and Germany which afterwards had the most beneficial effect.

The two Manifestoes of the International on the war are both written by Marx. [14] Still of greater interest, perhaps, than these is a letter on the war Marx wrote in September 1870 to the Council of the German Social Democratic Party. [15] There – three days after the battle of Sedan – he predicted as the necessary consequence of the then proposed forcible annexation of Alsace-Lorraine the Franco-Russian Alliance and Russia's predominance in Europe. Those who in Germany clamorously demanded the annexation were, he says, either knaves or fools. Events have shown that these words were hardly too strong.

In the same letter, however, Marx recognises that by the German victories one result at least was obtained for the German workers. 'Things will develop', he says, 'on a great scale and in a simplified form. If the German working classes, then, will not play an appropriate part, it will be

their own fault. *This war has shifted the centre of gravity of Continental labour movements from France to Germany.* Greater responsibility rests, therefore, with the German working classes.'

Marx has often been painted as an embittered and soured emigrant. Little confirmation is given to such assertion by this letter, written, I repeat, three days after the battle of Sedan. (It was at the time inserted in a proclamation issued by the committee of the German Social Democratic Party.)

Marx's position to *trade unionism* is illustrated by the resolution of the International strongly advocating trade organisation of the workers. As early as 1847 he had, in his book against Proudhon, [16] taken sides for trade unionism, at a time when nearly all Continental and many English Socialists were dead against it.

With regard to *cooperation*, Marx shared the general preference of nearly all Socialists for cooperative production against mere distributive societies. And this is not surprising if you consider the narrow, dividend-hunting spirit displayed for a long time by most distributive associations. Still Marx acknowledged their importance, if independent from state and bourgeois direction, as being examples of the superfluity of the exploiting capitalists and useful means of strengthening the position of the workers. But he emphasised their insufficiency, in face of the enormous means of capitalist society, for revolutionising the whole

industrial world. It was impossible, according to him, to bring about a whole revolution of society behind the back of that society, so to speak. For this end the very means and weapons of society were to be made use of.

And this leads to the much discussed question of *Socialism and state influence*. Marx has been described alternatively as a hard and fast State Socialist, and as an anarchist opponent to State Socialism; as a rigid centralist, and as an ultra-federalist. In fact he was neither the one nor the other. He neither shared what he mockingly called the belief in state miracles, nor did he share the superstitious *fear of the state*. [17] To Marx the state was an historical product corresponding to a given form of society, altering according to the changes in the composition of this society, and disappearing with it when its day was done. Before, however, this could be arrived at, the state machinery was to be conquered by the workers and used for the purpose of carrying out their emancipation.

This was his *original* theory. Already in the 1860s, we see him in the International oppose state omnipotence in matters of education. (See *Beehive*, 14 and 21 August 1869.) The state was to make education *compulsory*, to ascertain that a fixed minimum of education was given, and to provide means and supervision in regard to *efficiency*. But education itself must be independent of state tutorship, its man-

agement must be left to the municipalities or similar popular bodies.

In the famous pamphlet on the Paris Commune, Marx has more fully sketched out his ideas on the coming political organisation of society. There he declares bluntly that ‘the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purpose’. On the other hand, nothing would be more against the purpose than to break up the big nations into small independent states. ‘The unity of great nations’, he writes, ‘if originally brought about by political force, has now become a powerful coefficient of social production.’[18] It is not to be abolished. Through democratisation of local and municipal government, by increasing the functions and powers of local elected bodies, through a proper system of devolution and delegation of powers the state was to be changed into a real commonwealth – not a power above society, but a tool in the hands of an organised democracy. For details I must refer to the third section of the said pamphlet itself. The whole is rather sketchy, and not all perhaps practicable. But it is also not meant as more than a general outline, to be corrected by experience. One thing, however, is clear. You may call Marx whatever you like, you cannot call him after that a state idoliser and a fanatic for officialism.

And here I may also refer to the famous sentence, ‘Force is the midwife of old society in child-birth with a new soci-

ety.’ A thousand times it has been quoted, and in 999 cases in the sense of an appeal to brute violence. But if we look to the passage where it is taken from, what examples of force do we find there? The *Colonial systems*, the *funding system*, *modern taxation*, the *system of commercial protection*. ‘Some of these methods’, says Marx, ‘are based on brute force, as the colonial system.’ ‘But all’, he continues, ‘utilise the power of the state, the centralised and organised force of society, to foster the process of evolution with hot-house vigour, and to shorten the transition periods.’ And then follows the sentence: ‘Force is the midwife of society’, etc. [19] It is quite evident, then, that it is, before all, the utilisation of the power of organised society Marx emphasises here, and not brute force. In the same spirit he describes (Chapter 15, section 9 of *Das Kapital*) factory legislation as ‘the first conscious and systematic interference of society with the processes of production’. [20]

I lay stress on this point, not in order to whitewash Marx in the eyes of the Philistine, but because I think it only just to disconnect the cult of brute force and the unprovoked use of sanguinary phraseology from the name of Marx. Marx was by passion a revolutionary fighter, but his passion did not blind him to the teaching of experience. He admitted in 1872 that in countries like England it was possible to bring about the emancipation of the workers by peaceful means. [21] Today this is certainly still more the case, since the

influence of the workers on the legislation has increased more than threefold. Not only societies, but also Socialists, have to learn.

In the *Franco-German Annals*, which Marx, together with the neo-Hegelian Ruge, started in 1844, there is printed a curious correspondence between Marx, Ruge, Bakunin, and some other men on the principles of their projected review. In the concluding letter Marx says:

Nothing prevents us from connecting our criticism with *real* struggles. We, then, don't appear before the world as doctrinaires with a new principle: *Here is truth – here kneel down!* We unfold to the world from its own principles new principles. [22]

In the same year Marx became a convert to Socialism. He took it up in this realistic spirit, and overcame at once the then flourishing Utopianism. And in the same spirit he wrote after the downfall of the Commune:

The working class did not expect miracles from the Commune. They have no ready-made Utopias to introduce *pas décret du peuple*. They know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending, by its own economic agencies, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men. [23]

These words alone dispel the idea that Marx expected the realisation of a socialistic society from one great cataclysm.

The term 'social reform' is as equivocal as all political terms. We are all social reformers today: some in order to fortify present society, others in order to prepare the way for an easy and organic growth of a new cooperative society, based on common ownership of land and the means of production. And even amongst reformers in the latter sense some will prefer a more cautious policy, others a more impulsive action. But intentions alone do not decide the course of development, and in a given moment the impulsive reformer may have to choose between destroying the chance of a real step in advance, and thereby delaying the whole movement, or, by supporting people whose ways generally are not his, help the carrying out of such progressive measures. However strong Marx's sympathies were with the impulsive reformer, where an important step in the direction of lifting the social position of the workers was in question he would certainly not have hesitated to part ways with him if he refused to lend a hand.

Notes

Notes have been provided by the Marxist Internet Archive, except where noted.

1. Bertrand Russell, *German Social Democracy: Six Lectures* (London, 1896). The actual text reads: 'Thus as, in

economic theory, he accepted in their crudest form the tenets of orthodox English economists, so, in his view of human nature, he generalised their economic motive so as to cover all departments of social life... In this magnificent work [*The Communist Manifesto* – MIA], we have already all the epic force of the materialistic theory of history: its cruel, unsentimental fatality, its disdain of morals and religion, its reduction of all social relations to the blind action of impersonal productive forces. Not a word of blame for the cruel revolutions of the bourgeoisie, not a word of regret for the ironically-pictured idylls of the mediaeval world. There is no question, in Marx, of justice or virtue, no appeal to human sympathy or morality; might alone is right, and communism is justified by its inevitable victory.’ Available at The Open Library.

2. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1 (Moscow, 1977), p 20 See M.I.A..

3. Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* See M.I.A..

4. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1 (Moscow, 1977), p 20 See M.I.A..

5. John Russell, First Earl Russell (1792-1878) was a Liberal politician. An advocate of political reform, he held several key governmental positions, including Prime Minister during 1846-52 and 1865-66. His proposal in the early 1860s to reform and extend the franchise to include some working-class men was frustrated by the Liberal Prime Minister of the day, Henry John Temple, Third Viscount

Palmerston (1784-1865), and he was unable to introduce it when he became Prime Minister on Palmerston's death. The franchise was subsequently extended by a succeeding Conservative government, although full male suffrage was not introduced until 1918.

6. 'Bellum omnium contra omnes' – 'War of all against all'. The following appears in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*: 'Hobbes had much better reasons for invoking nature as a proof of his *bellum omnium contra omnes* and Hegel, on whose construction our true socialist depends, for perceiving in nature the cleavage, the slovenly period of the Absolute Idea, and even calling the animal the concrete anguish of God.' See M.I.A.

7. Minutes of Central Committee Meeting, 15 September 1850, in Karl Marx, *The Revolutions of 1848* (Harmondsworth, 1978), p 341.

8. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* See M.I.A..

9. See Friedrich Engels, Introduction to Karl Marx, *The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850* See M.I.A..

10. See the section, 'The German or "True" Socialism', in the *Manifesto of the Communists* (London, Reeves). This section gives in a condensed form the polemics of Marx and Engels against contemporary Socialists [Author's note]. [Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* See M.I.A. – MIA.]

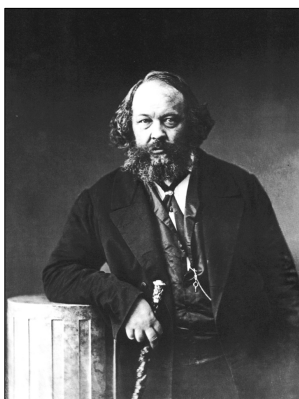
11. Karl Marx, *The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850* See M.I.A..
12. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1 (Moscow, 1977), p 244 See M.I.A..
13. For example, Karl Marx, *General Rules*, October 1864 See M.I.A.; *Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association* See M.I.A..
14. Karl Marx, *On the War* See M.I.A.; *Second Address: On the War* See M.I.A..
15. Karl Marx to Brunswick Committee of the German Social Democratic Party, extract in *Selected Correspondence* (Moscow, 1975), pp 231-32
16. Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* See M.I.A..
17. 'Don't fear', says the resolution of the International on factory laws, 'that you fortify governments if you support them in enforcing such laws. You make them your servants.' [Author's note]
18. Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France* See M.I.A..
19. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1 (Moscow, 1977), p 703 See M.I.A..
20. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1 (Moscow, 1977), p 451 See M.I.A..

21. This can be construed from Marx's letter to Ludwig Kugelmann of 12 April 1871: 'If you look at the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I declare: the next French Revolution will no longer attempt to transfer the bureaucratic-military apparatus from one hand to another, but *to smash* it, and this is the precondition for every real people's revolution on the Continent.' (*Selected Correspondence* (Moscow, 1975), p 247)

22. Karl Marx to Arnold Ruge, September 1843 See M.I.A..

23. Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France* See M.I.A..

Mikhail Bakunin



Mikhail Alexandrovich Bakunin (1814 – 1876) was a Russian revolutionary and an influential Anarchist thinker. He was a member of the International Working Men's Association, which was a federation of trade unions and workers' organizations. Karl Marx was also a member. The 1872 Hague Congress saw a bitter debate between Marx and his followers and Bakunin's faction, although Bakunin himself was not present. The Bakunin faction lost, and Bakunin

was expelled. He however remained an influential Anarchist thinker. Bakunin is known for his book *God and the State* and several pamphlets which are available in various anthologies of his writings.

Critique of Economic Determinism and Historical Materialism

The Marxist sociologists, men like Engels and Lassalle, in objecting to our views contend that the State is not at all the cause of the poverty, degradation, and servitude of the masses; that both the miserable condition of the masses and the despotic power of the State are, on the contrary, the effect of a more general underlying cause. In particular, we are told that they are both the products of an inevitable

stage in the economic evolution of society; a stage which, historically viewed, constitutes an immense step forward to what *they* call the “Social Revolution.” To illustrate how far the obsession with this doctrine has already gone: the crushing of the formidable revolts of the peasants in Germany in the sixteenth century led inevitably to the triumph of the centralized, despotic State, from which dates the centuries-old slavery of the German people. This catastrophe is hailed by Lassalle as a victory for the coming Social Revolution! Why? Because, say the Marxists, the peasants are the natural representatives of reaction, while the modern, military, bureaucratic state, beginning in the second half of the sixteenth century, initiated the slow, but always progressive, transformation of the ancient feudal and land economy into the industrial era of production, in which capital exploits labor. This State, therefore, has been an essential condition for the coming Social Revolution.

It is now understandable why Mr. Engels, following this logic, wrote in a letter to our friend Carlo Cafiero that Bismarck as well as King Victor Emmanuel of Italy (inadvertently) had greatly helped the revolution because both of them created political centralization in their respective countries. I urge the French allies and sympathizers of Mr. Marx to carefully examine how this Marxist concept is being applied in the International.

We who, like Mr. Marx himself, are materialists and deter-

minists, also recognize the inevitable linking of economic and political facts in history. We recognize, indeed, the necessity and inevitable character of all events that occur but we no longer bow before them indifferently, and above all we are very careful about praising them when, by their nature, they show themselves in flagrant contradiction to the supreme end of history. This is a thoroughly human ideal which is found in more or less recognizable form in the instincts and aspirations of the people and in all the religious symbols of all epochs, because it is inherent in the human race, the most social of all the species of animals on earth. This ideal, today better understood than ever, is *the triumph of humanity, the most complete conquest and establishment of personal freedom and development – material, intellectual, and moral – for every individual, through the absolutely unrestricted and spontaneous organization of economic and social solidarity.*

Everything in history that shows itself conformable to that end, from the human point of view – and we can have no other – is good; all that is contrary to it is bad. We know very well, in any case, that what we call good and bad are always the natural results of natural causes, and that consequently one is as inevitable as the other. But in what is properly called nature we recognize many necessities that we are little disposed to bless, such as the necessity of dying when one is bitten by a mad dog. In the same way, in

that immediate continuation of the life of nature called history, we encounter many necessities which we find much more worthy of opprobrium than benediction, and which we believe we should stigmatize with all the energy of which we are capable in the interest of our social and individual morality. We recognize, however, that from the moment they have been accomplished, even the most detestable facts have that character of inevitability which is found in all the phenomena of nature as well as those of history.

To clarify my thought, I shall give some examples. When I study the social and political conditions of the Romans and the Greeks in the period of the decline of antiquity, I conclude that the conquest of Greece by the military and political barbarism of the Romans and the consequent destruction of a comparatively higher standard of human liberty was a natural and inevitable fact. But this does not prevent me from taking, retrospectively and firmly, the side of Greece against Rome in that struggle. For I find that the human race has gained absolutely nothing by the triumph of Rome.

Likewise, that the Christians in their holy fury destroyed all the libraries of the pagans and all their treasures of art, ancient philosophy, and science is an absolutely natural and therefore inevitable fact. But it is impossible for me to see how this fact has in any manner whatsoever furthered our political and social development. I am even very much dis-

posed to doubt the inevitable process of economic facts in which, if one were to believe Mr. Marx, there must be sought to the exclusion of all other considerations the only cause of all of history's moral and intellectual phenomena. Further, I am strongly disposed to think that these acts of holy barbarity, or rather that long series of barbarous acts and crimes which the first Christians, divinely inspired, committed against the human spirit, were among the principal causes of the intellectual and moral degradation, as well as the political and social slavery, which filled that long series of centuries called the Middle Ages. Be sure of this, that if the first Christians had not destroyed the libraries, the museums, and the temples of antiquity, we should not have been condemned today to fight the mass of horrible and shameful absurdities which still clog men's brains to such a degree that I sometimes doubt the possibility of a more humane future.

Continuing my protests against the kinds of historical facts whose inevitability I myself also acknowledge, I pause before the splendor of the Italian republics and before the magnificent awakening of human genius during the Renaissance. Then I see two friends, as ancient as history itself, approaching; the same two serpents which tip till now have devoured everything beautiful and virtuous that mankind has created. They are called the Church and the State, the papacy and the *empire*. Eternal evils and inseparable allies,

embracing each other and together devouring that unfortunate, most beautiful Italy, condemning her to three centuries of death. Well, though I again find it all natural and inevitable, I nevertheless curse both emperor and pope.

Let us pass on to France. After a century of struggle, Catholicism, supported by the State, finally triumphed over Protestantism. Do I not still find in France today some politicians or historians of the fatalist school who, calling themselves revolutionists, consider this victory of Catholicism – a bloody and inhuman victory if ever there was one – a veritable triumph for the cause of the Revolution? Catholicism, they insist, was then the State representing democracy, while Protestantism represented the revolt of the aristocracy against the State and consequently against democracy. This sort of sophism is completely identical to the Marxist sophism, which also considers the triumph of the State to be a victory for social democracy. It is with these disgusting and revolting absurdities that the mind and moral sense of the masses are perverted, habituating them to hail their bloodthirsty exploiters, the masters and servants of the State, as their saviors and emancipators.

It is a thousand times right to say that Protestantism, not as a Calvinist theology but as an energetic and armed protest, represented revolt, liberty, humanity, the destruction of the State; while Catholicism was public order, authority, divine law, the mutual salvation of the Church and the State, the

condemnation of human society to protracted slavery.

Hence, while recognizing the inevitability of the accomplished fact I do not hesitate to say that the victory of Catholicism in France in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a great misfortune for the entire human race. The massacre of Saint Bartholomew and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes were facts as disastrous for France as were, in our times, the defeat and massacre of the people of Paris in the Commune of Paris. I have actually heard very intelligent and very worthy Frenchmen ascribe the defeat of Protestantism in France to the revolutionary nature of the French people. "Protestantism," they allege, "was only a semi-revolution; we need a complete revolution; it is for this reason that the French neither wanted nor could prevent the Reformation. France preferred to remain Catholic till the moment when it could proclaim atheism. This is why the French people, with true Christian resignation, tolerated both the horrors of Saint Bartholomew and the no less abominable revocation of the Edict of Nantes."

These worthy patriots either fail to or do not want to consider one thing. A people who for any reason whatsoever tolerates tyranny will finally lose the salutary habit and even the very instinct of revolt. Once a people loses the inclination for liberty, it necessarily becomes, not only in its external conditions but in the very essence of its own being, a people of slaves. It was because Protestantism was de-

feated in France that the French people lost, or perhaps never acquired, the habit of liberty. It is because this habit is wanting that France today lacks what we call political *consciousness*, and it is because it lacks this consciousness that all the revolutions it has made up till now have failed to achieve its political liberty. With the exception of its great revolutionary days, which are its festival days, the French people remain today as they were yesterday, a people of slaves.

Going on to other cases, I take up the partition of Poland. Here I am very glad, at least on this question, to agree with Mr. Marx; for he, like myself and everyone else, considers this partition a *great crime*. I would only like to know why, given both his fatalistic and his optimistic point of view, he contradicts himself by condemning a great event which already belong to the historical past. Proudhon, whom he loved so much," was much more logical and consistent than Marx. Trying with might and main to establish an historical justification for his conclusion, he wrote an unfortunate pamphlet" in which he first showed quite decisively that the Poland of the nobility must perish, because it carries within itself the germs of its own dissolution. He then attempted to contrast this nobility unfavorably with the Tsarist Empire, which he deemed a harbinger of the triumphant socialist democracy. This was much more than a mistake. I do not hesitate to say, in spite of my tender respect for the memory

of Proudhon, that it was a crime, the crime of a sophist who, in order to win a dispute, dared to insult a martyred nation at the very moment when it was for the hundredth time revolting against its Russian and German debauchers and for the hundredth time lying prostrate under their blows...

Why does Marx, in contradiction to his own ideas, favor the establishment of an independent Polish state? Mr. Marx is not only a learned socialist, he is also a very clever politician and a patriot no less ardent than Bismarck, though he would approach his goals through somewhat different means. And like many of his compatriots, both socialist and otherwise, he desires the establishment of a great Germanic state, one that will glorify the German people and benefit world civilization. Now among the obstacles to the realization of this aim is the Prussian Empire which, with menacing power, poses as the protector of the Slavic peoples against German civilization.

The policy of Bismarck is that of the present; the policy of Marx, who considers himself at least as Bismarck's successor, is that of the future." And when I say that Mr. Marx considers himself the continuation of Bismarck, I am far from defaming Marx. If he did not consider himself as such, he could not have permitted Engels, the confidant of all his thoughts, to write that Bismarck serves the cause of the Social Revolution. He serves it now, inadvertently, in

his own way; Mr. Marx will serve it later, in another way.

Now let us examine the particular character of Mr. Marx's policy. Let us ascertain the essential points in which it differs from the policy of Bismarck. The principal point and, one might say, the only one, is this: Mr. Marx is a democrat, an authoritarian socialist, and a republican. Bismarck is an out-and-out aristocratic, monarchical Junker. The difference is therefore very great, very serious, and both sides are sincere in their differences. On this point, there is no agreement or reconciliation possible between Bismarck and Mr. Marx. Even apart from Marx's lifelong dedication to the cause of social democracy, which he has demonstrated on numerous occasions, his very position and his ambitions are a positive guarantee on this point. In a monarchy, however liberal, or even in a conservative republic like that of Thiers there can be no role for Mr. Marx, and much less so in the Prussian Germanic Empire founded by Bismarck, with a militarist and bigoted bugbear of an emperor as chief, and all the barons and bureaucrats as guardians. Before he can come to power, Mr. Marx will have to sweep all that away. He is therefore forced to be a revolutionary.

The concepts of the form and the conditions of the government, these ideas separate Bismarck from Mr. Marx. One is an out-and-out monarchist and the other is an out-and-out democrat and republican and, into the bargain, a socialist democrat and socialist republican.

Let us now see what unites them. *It is the out-and-out cult of the State.* I have no need to prove it in the case of Bismarck. The proofs are there. He is completely a state's man, and nothing but a state's man. But neither is it difficult to prove that Mr. Marx is also a state's man. He loves government to such a degree that he even wanted to institute one in the International Workingmen's Association; and he worships power so much that he wanted, and still intends today, to impose his dictatorship upon us. His socialist political program is a very faithful expression of his personal attitude. The supreme objective of all his efforts, as is proclaimed in the fundamental statutes of his party in Germany, is the establishment of the great People's State [Volksstaat].

But whoever says state necessarily says a particular limited state, doubtless comprising, if it is very large, many different peoples and countries, but excluding still more. For unless he is dreaming of a universal state, as did Napoleon and the Emperor Charles the Fifth, or the papacy, which dreamed of the Universal Church, Marx will have to content himself with governing a single state. Consequently, whoever says state says a state, and whoever says a state affirms by that the existence of other states, and whoever says other states immediately says: competition, jealousy, truceless and endless war. The simplest logic as well as all history bears witness to this truth.

Any state, under pain of perishing and seeing itself devoured by neighboring states, must tend toward complete power, and having become powerful. it must embark on a career of conquest so that it will not itself be conquered; for two similar but competing powers cannot coexist without trying to destroy each other. Whoever says "conquest," under whatever form or name, says conquered peoples, enslaved and in bondage.

It is in the nature of the State to break the solidarity of the human race. The State cannot preserve itself as an integrated entity and in all its strength unless it sets itself up as the supreme be-all and end-all for its own subjects, though not for the subjects of other unconquered states. This inevitably results in the supremacy of state morality and state interests over universal human reason and morality, thus rupturing the universal solidarity of humanity. The principle of political or state morality is very simple. The State being the supreme objective, everything favorable to the growth of its power is good; everything contrary to it, however humane and ethical, is bad. This morality is called patriotism. The International is the negation of patriotism and consequently the negation of the State. If, therefore. Mr. Marx and his friends of the German Social Democratic party should succeed in introducing the State principle into our program, they would destroy the International.

The State, for its own preservation, must necessarily be

powerful as regards foreign affairs, but if it is so in regard to foreign relations, it will unfailingly be so in regard to domestic matters. The morality of every state must conform to the particular conditions and circumstances of its existence, a morality which restricts and therefore rejects any human and universal morality. It must see to it that all its subjects think and, above all, act in total compliance with the patriotic morality of the State and remain immune to the influence and teachings of true humanistic morality. This makes state censorship absolutely necessary; for too much liberty of thought and opinion is incompatible with the unanimity of adherence demanded by the security of the State, and Mr. Marx, in conformity with his eminently political point of view, considers this censorship reasonable. That this is in reality Mr. Marx's opinion is sufficiently demonstrated by his attempts to introduce censorship into the International, even while masking these efforts with plausible pretexts.

But however vigilant this censorship may be, even if the State were to have an exclusive monopoly over education and instruction for all the people, as Mazzini wished, and as Mr. Marx wishes today, the State can never be sure that prohibited and dangerous thoughts may not somehow be smuggled into the consciousness of its subjects. Forbidden fruit has such an attraction for men, and the demon of revolt, that eternal enemy of the State, awakens so easily in their hearts when they are not entirely stupefied, that nei-

ther the education nor the instruction nor even the censorship of the State sufficiently guarantees its security. It must still have a police, devoted agents who watch over and direct, secretly and unobtrusively, the current of the people's opinions and passions. We have seen that Mr. Marx himself is so convinced of this necessity that he planted his secret agents in all the regions of the International, above all in Italy, France, and Spain. Finally, however perfect from the point of view of preserving the State, of organizing the education and indoctrination of its citizens, of censorship, and of the police, the State cannot be secure in its existence while it does not have an armed force to defend itself against its *enemies at home*.

The State is the government from above downwards of an immense number of men, very different from the point of view of the degree of their culture, the nature of the countries or localities that they inhabit, the occupations they follow, the interests and aspirations directing them – the State is the government of all these by one or another minority. This minority, even if it were a thousand times elected by universal suffrage and controlled in its acts by popular institutions, unless it were endowed with omniscience, omnipresence, and the omnipotence which the theologians attribute to God, could not possibly know and foresee the needs of its people, or satisfy with an even justice those interests which are most legitimate and pressing. There will

always he discontented people because there will always be some who are sacrificed.

Besides, the State, like the Church, is by its very nature a great sacrificer of living beings, It is an arbitrary being in whose heart all the positive, living, unique, and local interests of the people meet, clash, destroy each other, become absorbed into that abstraction called the *common interest* or the *common good* or the *public welfare*, and where all the real wills cancel each other in that abstraction that bears the name will of *the people*. It follows from this that the so-called will of the people is never anything but the negation and sacrifice of all the real wills of the people, just as the so-called public interest is nothing but the sacrifice of their interests. But in order for this omnivorous abstraction to impose itself on millions of men, it must be represented and supported by some real being, some living force. Well, this force has always existed. In the Church it is called the clergy, and in the State the ruling or governing class.

And, in fact, what do we find throughout history? The State has always been the patrimony of some privileged class: a priestly class, an aristocratic class, a bourgeois class. And finally, when all the other classes have exhausted themselves, the State then becomes the patrimony of the bureaucratic class and then falls – or, if you will, rises – to the position of a machine. But in any case it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of the State that there

should be some privileged class devoted to its preservation.

But in the People's State of Marx [See *Critique of the Gotha Program*, 1875, for Marx on "free state"] there will be, we are told, no privileged class at all. All will be equal, not only from the juridical and political point of view but also from the economic point of view. At least this is what is promised, though I very much doubt whether that promise could ever be kept. There will therefore no longer be any privileged class, but there will be a government and, note this well, an extremely complex government. This government will not content itself with administering and governing the masses politically, as all governments do today. It will also administer the masses economically, concentrating in the hands of the State the production and division of wealth, the cultivation of land, the establishment and development of factories, the organization and direction of commerce, and finally the application of capital to production by the only banker – the State. All that will demand an immense knowledge and many heads "overflowing with brains" in this government. It will be the reign of *scientific intelligence*, the most aristocratic, despotic, arrogant, and elitist of all regimes. There will be a new class, a new hierarchy of real and counterfeit scientists and scholars, and the world will be divided into a minority ruling in the name of knowledge, and an immense ignorant majority. And then, woe unto the mass of ignorant ones!

Such a regime will not fail to arouse very considerable discontent in the masses of the people, and in order to keep them in check, the “enlightened” and “liberating” government of Mr. Marx will have need of a not less considerable armed force. For the government must be strong, says Engels, to maintain order among these millions of illiterates whose mighty uprising would be capable of destroying and overthrowing everything, even a government “overflowing with brains.”

You can see quite well that behind all the democratic and socialistic phrases and promises in Marx’s program for the State lies all that constitutes the true despotic and brutal nature of all states, regardless of their form of government. Moreover, in the final reckoning, the People’s State of Marx and the aristocratic-monarchic state of Bismarck are completely identical in terms of their primary domestic and foreign objectives. In foreign affairs there is the same deployment of military force, that is to say, conquest. And in home affairs the same employment of armed force, the last argument of all threatened political leaders against the masses who, tired of always believing, hoping, submitting, and obeying, rise in revolt.

Let us now consider the real national policy of Marx himself. Like Bismarck, he is a German patriot. He desires the greatness and glory of Germany as a state. No one in any case will count it a crime for him to love his country and

his people, and he is so profoundly convinced that the State is the condition *sine qua non* for the prosperity of his country and the emancipation of his people. Thus he naturally desires to see Germany organized into a very powerful state, since weak and small states always run the risk of being swallowed up. Therefore Marx, as a clear and ardent patriot, must wish for the power and expansion of Germany as a state.

But, on the other hand, Marx is a celebrated socialist and, what is more, one of the principal initiators of the International. He does not content himself with working only for the emancipation of the German proletariat. He feels honor bound to work at the same time for the emancipation of the proletariat of all countries. As a German patriot, he wants the power and glory, the domination by Germany; but as a socialist of the International he must wish for the emancipation of all the peoples of the world. How can this contradiction be resolved?

There is only one way – that is to proclaim that a great and powerful German state is an indispensable condition for the emancipation of the whole world; that the national and political triumph of Germany is the triumph of humanity.

This conviction, once vindicated, is not only permissible but, in the name of the most sacred of causes, mandatory, to make the International, and all the federations of other countries serve as a very powerful, effective, and, above all,

popular means for establishing the great pan-Germanic state. And that is precisely what Marx tried at the London Conference in 1871 and with the resolutions passed by his German and French friends at the Hague Congress [1872]. If he did not succeed more fully, it is assuredly not for lack of zeal or great skill on his part, but probably because his fundamental idea was false and its realization impossible.

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YouTube Resources:

Bhattacharya, Debraj. *Karl Marx @ 200*. Educational playlist.

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?
list=PLyIjSBiKoINQfGH4_tU8bUcOrHxYlXTvY](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyIjSBiKoINQfGH4_tU8bUcOrHxYlXTvY)

Important dates in Marx's life

- 1818 Birth of Karl Marx
- 1836 Joining University of Berlin; Engagement to Jenny von Westphalen
- 1841 PhD with the thesis: The Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature
- 1843 Marriage with Jenny
- 1844 Meeting with Engels
- 1847 Joins Communist League
- 1848 First edition of The Manifesto of the Communist Party in German
- 1852 First article for New York Tribune on the British parliamentary elections
- 1864 Involvement with First International
- 1867 First volume of Das Kapital
- 1871 Paris Commune
- 1881 Death of Jenny
- 1883 Death of Karl Marx

