



Lessons of the Five Classics of Marxism-Leninism

ON RELIGION

published by the Comintern (SH)

February 1, 2015

Marx - Engels

ON RELIGION

SELECTION OF WORKS

arranged by Wolfgang Eggers

January 28, 2015

QUOTATIONS

"Communism abolishes all religion !"

(Communist Manifesto)

"Religion is opium for the people."

Religion is a sort of spiritual booze, in which the slaves of capital drown their human image, their demand for a life more or less worthy of man." (Marx)

* * *

Karl Marx on the KORAN:

The Koran and the Mussulman legislation emanating from it reduce the geography and ethnography of the various people to the simple and convenient distinction of two nations and of two countries; those of the Faithful and of the Infidels. The Infidel is "harby," i.e. the enemy. Islamism proscribes the nation of the Infidels, constituting a state of permanent hostility between the Mussulman and the unbeliever." (MEW, VOLUME 13, "DECLARATION OF WAR. — ON THE HISTORY OF THE EASTERN QUESTION"

* * *

"The religious world is but the reflex of the real world." (Marx)

* * *

Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress.

Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people.

The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for their real happiness.

The demand to give up illusions about the existing state of affairs is the demand to give up a state of affairs that needs illusions. The criticism of religion is therefore in embryo the criticism of the vale of tears, the halo of which is religion. (K. Marx)

* * *

The social principles of Christianity are sneaking and hypocritical, and the proletariat is revolutionary. (Karl Marx)

* * *

Your question is itself a product of abstraction. Ask yourself how you arrived at that question... When you ask about creation of nature and man, you are abstracting, in so doing, from man and nature. You postulate them as non-existent, and yet you want me to prove them to you as existing... your abstraction from the existence of nature and man has no meaning. (K. Marx)

As Socialism grows, RELIGION WILL DISAPPEAR. (Karl Marx)

* * *

Bourgeois "freedom of conscience" is nothing but the toleration of all possible kinds of religious freedom of conscience

* * *

Feuerbach consequently does not see that the 'religious sentiment' is itself a **social product**, and that the abstract individual that he analyses belongs in reality to a particular social form.(Karl Marx)

* * *

One of the most difficult tasks confronting philosophers is to descend from the world of thought to the actual world. Language is the immediate actuality of thought. Just as philosophers have given thought an independent existence, so they were bound to make language into an independent realm. This is a secret of philosophical language, in which thoughts in the form of words have their own content. **The problem of descending from the world of thoughts to the actual world is turned into the problem of descending from language to life.** (Karl Marx)

* * *

"All religious bodies without exception are to be treated by the state as private associations.

They are not to receive support from public funds or exercise any influence over public education." (Frederick Engels)

The Commune decreed the separation of the Church from the State, and the abolition of all state payments for religious purposes as well as the transformation of all Church property into national property; a decree excluding from the schools all religious symbols, pictures, dogmas, prayers – in a word, “all that belongs to the sphere of the individual’s conscience” – was ordered to be excluded from the schools.

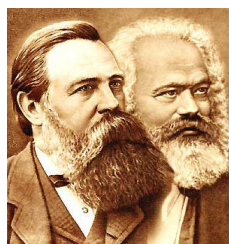
(Frederick Engels)

* * *

All religion, however, is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men’s minds of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which the terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces. (Frederick Engels)

* * *

Herr Dühring, however, cannot wait until religion dies this, its natural, death. He proceeds in more deep-rooted fashion. He out-Bismarcks Bismarck; he decrees sharper May laws not merely against Catholicism, but against all religion whatsoever; he incites his gendarmes of the future against religion, and thereby helps it to martyrdom and a prolonged lease of life. Wherever we turn, we find specifically Prussian socialism. (Frederick Engels)



Marx and Engels

"Communism abolishes all religion !"

(Communist Manifesto)

The charges against Communism made from a religious, a philosophical and, generally, from an ideological standpoint, are not deserving of serious examination.

Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man’s ideas, views, and conception, in one word, man’s consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his

material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?

What else does the history of ideas prove, than that intellectual production changes its character in proportion as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.

When people speak of the ideas that revolutionize society, they do but express that fact that within the old society the elements of a new one have been created, and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps even pace with the dissolution of the old conditions of existence.

When the ancient world was in its last throes, the ancient religions were overcome by Christianity. When Christian ideas succumbed in the eighteenth century to rationalist ideas, feudal society fought its death battle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisie. The ideas of religious liberty and freedom of conscience merely gave expression to the sway of free competition within the domain of knowledge.

"Undoubtedly," it will be said, "religious, moral, philosophical, and juridical ideas have been modified in the course of historical development. But religion, morality, philosophy, political science, and law, constantly survived this change."

"There are, besides, eternal truths, such as Freedom, Justice, etc., that are common to all states of society. But **communism** abolishes eternal truths, it **abolishes all religion**, and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis; it therefore acts in contradiction to all past historical experience."

As the parson has ever gone hand in hand with the landlord, so has Clerical Socialism with Feudal Socialism.

Nothing is easier than to give Christian asceticism a Socialist tinge. Has not Christianity declaimed against private property, against marriage, against the State? Has it not preached in the place of these, charity and poverty, celibacy and mortification of the flesh, monastic life and Mother Church? **Christian Socialism is but the holy water with which the priest consecrates the heart-burnings of the aristocrat.**



Karl Marx

A delightful product of our Christianised science! Who will still deny that it has forged new fetters for the press? Religion, it is said, must not be attacked, whether in general or in particular. Or do you perhaps believe that the words frivolous and hostile have made the new fetters into chains of roses? **Religion can only be attacked in a hostile or a frivolous way, there is no third way. The real, radical cure for the censorship would be its abolition.** (Karl Marx: Comment On the Prussian Censorship Instruction - MEW , Volume 1, page 116)



Karl Marx 1842

It was not the downfall of the old religions that caused the downfall of the ancient states, but the downfall of the ancient states that caused the downfall of the old religions.
(Karl Marx: "Leading Article in No. 179 of Kölnische Zeitung", Volume 1, page 189, 1842)



Karl Marx 1842

I stated that I regard it as inappropriate, indeed even immoral, to smuggle communist and socialist doctrines, hence a new world outlook, into incidental theatrical criticisms, etc., and that I demand a quite different and more thorough discussion of communism, if it should be discussed at all. **I requested further that religion should be criticised in the framework of criticism of political conditions rather than that political conditions should be criticised in the framework of religion, since this is more in accord with the nature of a newspaper and the educational level of the reading public; for religion in itself is without content, it owes its being not to heaven but to the earth, and with the abolition of distorted reality, of which it is the theory, it will collapse of itself**

Finally, I desired that, if there is to be talk about philosophy, there should be less trifling with the *label* "atheism" (which reminds one of children, assuring everyone who is ready to listen to them that they are not afraid of the bogy man), and that instead the content of philosophy should be brought to the people. *Voilà tout.*



Karl Marx

A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right

Introduction December 1843-January 1844;
Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, 7 & 10 February 1844 in Paris

For Germany, the *criticism of religion* has been essentially completed, and the criticism of

religion is the prerequisite of all criticism.

The *profane* existence of error is compromised as soon as its *heavenly oratio pro aris et focis* ["speech for the altars and hearths," i.e., for God and country] has been refuted. Man, who has found only the *reflection* of himself in the fantastic reality of heaven, where he sought a superman, will no longer feel disposed to find the *mere appearance* of himself, the non-man [*Unmensch*], where he seeks and must seek his true reality.

The foundation of irreligious criticism is: **Man makes religion, religion does not make man.** Religion is, indeed, the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet won through to himself, or has already lost himself again. But *man* is no abstract being squatting outside the world. Man is *the world of man* – state, society. This state and this society produce religion, which is an *inverted consciousness of the world*, because they are an *inverted world*. Religion is the general theory of this world, its encyclopaedic compendium, its logic in popular form, its spiritual *point d'honneur*, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn complement, and its universal basis of consolation and justification. It is the *fantastic realization* of the human essence since the *human essence* has not acquired any true reality. The struggle against religion is, therefore, indirectly the struggle *against that world* whose spiritual *aroma* is religion.

Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the *expression* of real suffering and a *protest* against real suffering. **Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.**

The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to *give up a condition that requires illusions*. The criticism of religion is, therefore, *in embryo, the criticism of that vale of tears* of which religion is the *halo*.

Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers on the chain not in order that man shall continue to bear that chain without fantasy or consolation, but so that he shall throw off the chain and pluck the living flower. The criticism of religion disillusiones man, so that he will think, act, and fashion his reality like a man who has discarded his illusions and regained his senses, so that he will move around himself as his own true Sun. Religion is only the illusory Sun which revolves around man as long as he does not revolve around himself.

It is, therefore, the *task of history*, once the *other-world of truth* has vanished, to establish the *truth of this world*. It is the immediate *task of philosophy*, which is in the service of history, to unmask self-estrangement in its *unholy forms* once the *holy form* of human self-estrangement has been unmasked. Thus, the criticism of Heaven turns into the criticism of Earth, the *criticism of religion* into the *criticism of law*, and the *criticism of theology* into the *criticism of politics*.

The following exposition [a full-scale critical study of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* was supposed to follow this introduction] – a contribution to this undertaking – concerns itself not directly with the original but with a copy, with the German *philosophy* of the state and of law. The only reason for this is that it is concerned with *Germany*.

If we were to begin with the German *status quo* itself, the result – even if we were to do it in the only appropriate way, i.e., negatively – would still be an *anachronism*. Even the negation of our present political situation is a dusty fact in the historical junk room of modern nations. If I negate powdered pigtaileds, I am still left with unpowdered pigtaileds. If I negate the situation in Germany in 1843, then according to the French calendar I have barely reached 1789, much less the vital centre of our present age.

Indeed, German history prides itself on having travelled a road which no other nation in the whole of history has ever travelled before, or ever will again. We have shared the

restorations of modern nations without ever having shared their revolutions. We have been restored, firstly, because other nations dared to make revolutions, and, secondly, because other nations suffered counter-revolutions; on the one hand, because our masters were afraid, and, on the other, because they were not afraid. With our shepherds to the fore, we only once kept company with freedom, on the day of its internment.

One school of thought that legitimizes the infamy of today with the infamy of yesterday, a school that stigmatizes every cry of the serf against the knout as mere rebelliousness once the knout has aged a little and acquired a hereditary significance and a history, a school to which history shows nothing but its *a posteriori*, as did the God of Israel to his servant Moses, the *historical school of law* – this school would have invented German history were it not itself an invention of that history. A Shylock, but a cringing Shylock, that swears by its bond, its historical bond, its Christian-Germanic bond, for every pound of flesh cut from the heart of the people.

Good-natured enthusiasts, Germanomaniacs by extraction and free-thinkers by reflexion, on the contrary, seek our history of freedom beyond our history in the ancient Teutonic forests. But, what difference is there between the history of our freedom and the history of the boar's freedom if it can be found only in the forests? Besides, it is common knowledge that the forest echoes back what you shout into it. So peace to the ancient Teutonic forests!

War on the German state of affairs! By all means! They are *below the level of history, they are beneath any criticism*, but they are still an object of criticism like the criminal who is below the level of humanity but still an object for the *executioner*. In the struggle against that state of affairs, criticism is no passion of the head, it is the head of passion. It is not a lancet, it is a weapon. Its object is its *enemy*, which it wants not to refute but to *exterminate*. For the spirit of that state of affairs is refuted. In itself, it is no object *worthy of thought*, it is an existence which is as despicable as it is despised. Criticism does not need to make things clear to itself as regards this object, for it has already settled accounts with it. It no longer assumes the quality of an *end-in-itself*, but only of a *means*. Its essential pathos is *indignation*, its essential work is *denunciation*.

It is a case of describing the dull reciprocal pressure of all social spheres one on another, a general inactive ill-humor, a limitedness which recognizes itself as much as it mistakes itself, within the frame of government system which, living on the preservation of all wretchedness, is itself nothing but *wretchedness in office*.

What a sight! This infinitely proceeding division of society into the most manifold races opposed to one another by petty antipathies, uneasy consciences, and brutal mediocrity, and which, precisely because of their reciprocal ambiguous and distrustful attitude, are all, without exception although with various formalities, treated by their *rulers as conceded existences*. And they must recognize and acknowledge as a concession of heaven the very fact that they are *mastered, ruled, possessed!* And, on the other side, are the rulers themselves, whose greatness is in inverse proportion to their number!

Criticism dealing with this content is criticism in a *hand-to-hand* fight, and in such a fight the point is not whether the opponent is a noble, equal, *interesting* opponent, the point is to *strike* him. The point is not to let the Germans have a minute for self-deception and resignation. The actual pressure must be made more pressing by adding to it consciousness of pressure, the shame must be made more shameful by publicizing it. Every sphere of German society must be shown as the *partie honteuse* of German society: these petrified relations must be forced to dance by singing their own tune to them! The people must be taught to be *terrified* at itself in order to give it *courage*. This will be fulfilling an imperative need of the German nation, and the needs of the nations are in themselves the ultimate reason for their satisfaction.

This struggle against the limited content of the German *status quo* cannot be without interest even for the *modern* nations, for the German *status quo* is the *open completion of the ancien régime* and the *ancien régime* is the *concealed deficiency of the modern state*. The struggle against the German political present is the struggle against the past of the modern nations, and they are still burdened with reminders of that past. It is instructive for them to see the *ancien régime*, which has been through its *tragedy* with them, playing its *comedy* as a German revenant. *Tragic* indeed was the pre-existing power of the world, and freedom, on the other hand, was a personal notion; in short, as long as it believed and had to believe in its own justification. As long as the *ancien régime*, as an existing world order, struggled against a world that was only coming into being, there was on its side a historical error, not a personal one. That is why its downfall was tragic.

On the other hand, the present German regime, an anachronism, a flagrant contradiction of generally recognized axioms, the nothingness of the *ancien régime* exhibited to the world, only imagines that it believes in itself and demands that the world should imagine the same thing. If it believed in its own *essence*, would it try to hide that essence under the *semblance* of an alien essence and seek refuge in hypocrisy and sophism? The modern *ancien régime* is rather only the *comedian* of a world order whose *true heroes* are dead. History is thorough and goes through many phases when carrying an old form to the grave. The last phases of a world-historical form is its *comedy*. The gods of Greece, already tragically wounded to death in Aeschylus's tragedy *Prometheus Bound*, had to re-die a comic death in Lucian's *Dialogues*. Why this course of history? So that humanity should part with its past *cheerfully*. This *cheerful* historical destiny is what we vindicate for the political authorities of Germany.

Meanwhile, once *modern* politico-social reality itself is subjected to criticism, once criticism rises to truly human problems, it finds itself outside the German *status quo*, or else it would reach out for its object *below* its object. An example. The relation of industry, of the world of wealth generally, to the political world is one of the major problems of modern times. In what form is this problem beginning to engage the attention of the Germans? In the form of *protective duties*, of the *prohibitive system*, of *national economy*. Germanomania has passed out of man into matter, and thus one morning our cotton barons and iron heroes saw themselves turned into patriots. People are, therefore, beginning in Germany to acknowledge the sovereignty of monopoly on the inside through lending it *sovereignty on the outside*. People are, therefore, now about to begin, in Germany, what people in France and England are about to end. The old corrupt condition against which these countries are revolting in theory, and which they only bear as one bears chains, is greeted in Germany as the dawn of a beautiful future which still hardly dares to pass from *crafty* theory to the most ruthless practice. Whereas the problem in France and England is: *Political economy*, or the *rule of society over wealth*; in Germany, it is: *National economy*, or the *mastery of private property over nationality*. In France and England, then, it is a case of abolishing monopoly that has proceeded to its last consequences; in Germany, it is a case of proceeding to the last consequences of monopoly. There it is a case of solution, here as yet a case of collision. This is an adequate example of the *German* form of modern problems, an example of how our history, like a clumsy recruit, still has to do extra drill on things that are old and hackneyed in history.

If, therefore, the *whole* German development did not exceed the German *political* development, a German could at the most have the share in the problems-of-the-present that a Russian has. But, when the separate individual is not bound by the limitations of the nation, the nation as a whole is still less liberated by the liberation of one individual. The fact that Greece had a Scythian among its philosophers did not help the Scythians to make a single step towards Greek culture. [An allusion to Anacharsis.]

Luckily, we Germans are not Scythians.

As the ancient peoples went through their pre-history in imagination, in *mythology*, so we Germans have gone through our post-history in thought, in *philosophy*. We are philosophical contemporaries of the present without being its historical contemporaries. German philosophy is the *ideal prolongation* of German history. If therefore, instead of the *oeuvres incompletes* of our real history, we criticize the *oeuvres posthumes* of our ideal history, *philosophy*, our criticism is in the midst of the questions of which the present says: *that is the question*. What, in progressive nations, is a *practical* break with modern state conditions, is, in Germany, where even those conditions do not yet exist, at first a critical break with the philosophical reflexion of those conditions.

German philosophy of right and state is the only *German history* which is *al pari* ["on a level"] with the *official* modern present. The German nation must therefore join this, its dream-history, to its present conditions and subject to criticism not only these existing conditions, but at the same time their abstract continuation. Its future cannot be *limited* either to the immediate negation of its real conditions of state and right, or to the immediate implementation of its ideal state and right conditions, for it has the immediate negation of its real conditions in its ideal conditions, and it has almost *outlived* the immediate implementation of its ideal conditions in the contemplation of neighboring nations. Hence, it is with good reason that the *practical* political party in Germany demands the *negation of philosophy*.

It is wrong, not in its demand but in stopping at the demand, which it neither seriously implements nor can implement. It believes that it implements that negation by turning its back to philosophy and its head away from it and muttering a few trite and angry phrases about it. Owing to the limitation of its outlook, it does not include philosophy in the circle of *German* reality or it even fancies it is *beneath* German practice and the theories that serve it. You demand that real life embryos be made the starting-point, but you forget that the real life embryo of the German nation has grown so far only inside its *cranium*. In a word – **You cannot abolish [aufheben] philosophy without making it a reality.**

The same mistake, but with the factors *reversed*, was made by the *theoretical* party originating from philosophy.

In the present struggle it saw *only the critical struggle of philosophy against the German world*; it did not give a thought to the fact that *philosophy up to the present* itself belongs to this world and is its completion, although an ideal one. Critical towards its counterpart, it was uncritical towards itself when, proceeding from the *premises* of philosophy, it either stopped at the results given by philosophy or passed off demands and results from somewhere else as immediate demands and results of philosophy – although these, provided they are justified, can be obtained only by the *negation of philosophy up to the present*, of philosophy as such. We reserve ourselves the right to a more detailed description of this section: *It thought it could make philosophy a reality without abolishing [aufzuheben] it.*

The criticism of the *German philosophy of state and right*, which attained its most consistent, richest, and last formulation through *Hegel*, is both a critical analysis of the modern state and of the reality connected with it, and the resolute negation of the whole manner of the *German consciousness in politics and right as practiced* hereto, the most distinguished, most universal expression of which, raised to the level of *science*, is the *speculative philosophy* of right itself. If the speculative philosophy of right, that abstract extravagant *thinking* on the modern state, the reality of which remains a thing of the beyond, if only beyond the Rhine, was possible only in Germany, inversely the German thought-image of the modern state which makes abstraction of *real man* was possible only because and insofar as the modern state itself makes abstraction of *real man*, or satisfies the whole of man only in imagination. In politics, the Germans *thought* what other nations

did. Germany was their *theoretical conscience*. The abstraction and presumption of its thought was always in step with the one-sidedness and lowliness of its reality. If, therefore, the *status quo* of German statehood expresses the *completion* of the *ancien régime*, the completion of the thorn in the flesh of the modern state, the *status quo* of German state science expresses the *incompletion of the modern state*, the defectiveness of its flesh itself.

Already as the resolute opponent of the previous form of *German* political consciousness the criticism of speculative philosophy of right strays, not into itself, but into *problems* which there is only one means of solving – *practice*.

It is asked: can Germany attain a practice *à la hauteur des principes* – i.e., a *revolution* which will raise it not only to the *official level* of modern nations, but to the *height of humanity* which will be the near future of those nations?

The weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism of the weapon, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses. Theory is capable of gripping the masses as soon as it demonstrates *ad hominem*, and it demonstrates *ad hominem* as soon as it becomes radical. To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter. But, for man, the root is man himself. The evident proof of the radicalism of German theory, and hence of its practical energy, is that it proceeds from a resolute *positive* abolition of religion. The criticism of religion ends with the teaching that *man is the highest essence for man* – hence, with the *categorical imperative to overthrow all relations* in which man is a debased, enslaved, abandoned, despicable essence, relations which cannot be better described than by the cry of a Frenchman when it was planned to introduce a tax on dogs: Poor dogs! They want to treat you as human beings!

Even historically, theoretical emancipation has specific practical significance for Germany. For Germany's *revolutionary* past is theoretical, it is the *Reformation*. As the revolution then began in the brain of the *monk*, so now it begins in the brain of the *philosopher*.

Luther, we grant, overcame bondage out of *devotion* by replacing it by bondage out of *conviction*. He shattered faith in authority because he restored the authority of faith. He turned priests into laymen because he turned laymen into priests. He freed man from outer religiosity because he made religiosity the inner man. He freed the body from chains because he enchained the heart.

But, if Protestantism was not the true solution of the problem, it was at least the true setting of it. It was no longer a case of the layman's struggle against the *priest outside himself* but of his struggle against his *own priest inside himself*, his priestly nature. And if the Protestant transformation of the German layman into priests emancipated the lay popes, the *princes*, with the whole of their priestly clique, the privileged and philistines, the philosophical transformation of priestly Germans into men will emancipate the *people*. But, *secularization* will not stop at the *confiscation of church estates* set in motion mainly by hypocritical Prussia any more than emancipation stops at princes. The Peasant War, the most radical fact of German history, came to grief because of theology. Today, when theology itself has come to grief, the most unfree fact of German history, our *status quo*, will be shattered against philosophy. On the eve of the Reformation, official Germany was the most unconditional slave of Rome. On the eve of its revolution, it is the unconditional slave of less than Rome, of Prussia and Austria, of country junkers and philistines.

Meanwhile, a major difficulty seems to stand in the way of a *radical* German revolution.

For revolutions require a *passive* element, a material basis. Theory is fulfilled in a people only insofar as it is the fulfilment of the needs of that people. But will the monstrous discrepancy between the demands of German thought and the answers of German reality

find a corresponding discrepancy between civil society and the state, and between civil society and itself? Will the theoretical needs be immediate practical needs? **It is not enough for thought to strive for realization, reality must itself strive towards thought.**

But Germany did not rise to the intermediary stage of political emancipation at the same time as the modern nations. It has not yet reached in practice the stages which it has surpassed in theory. How can it do a *somersault*, not only over its own limitations, but at the same time over the limitations of the modern nations, over limitations which it must in reality feel and strive for as for emancipation from its real limitations? **Only a revolution of radical needs can be a radical revolution** and it seems that precisely the preconditions and ground for such needs are lacking.

If Germany has accompanied the development of the modern nations only with the abstract activity of thought without taking an effective share in the real struggle of that development, it has, on the other hand, shared the *sufferings* of that development, without sharing in its enjoyment, or its partial satisfaction. To the abstract activity on the one hand corresponds the abstract suffering on the other. That is why Germany will one day find itself on the level of European decadence before ever having been on the level of European emancipation. It will be comparable to a *fetish worshipper* pining away with the diseases of Christianity.

If we now consider the *German governments*, we find that because of the circumstances of the time, because of Germany's condition, because of the standpoint of German education, and, finally, under the impulse of its own fortunate instinct, they are driven to combine the *civilized shortcomings of the modern state world*, the advantages of which we do not enjoy, with the *barbaric deficiencies of the ancien régime*, which we enjoy in full; hence, Germany must share more and more, if not in the reasonableness, at least in the unreasonableness of those state formations which are beyond the bounds of its *status quo*. Is there in the world, for example, a country which shares so naively in all the illusions of constitutional statehood without sharing in its realities as so-called constitutional Germany? And was it not perforce the notion of a German government to combine the tortures of censorship with the tortures of the French September laws [1835 anti-press laws] which provide for freedom of the press? As you could find the gods of all nations in the Roman Pantheon, so you will find in the Germans' Holy Roman Empire all the sins of all state forms. That this eclecticism will reach a so far unprecedented height is guaranteed in particular by the *political-aesthetic gourmanderie* of a German king [Frederick William IV] who intended to play all the roles of monarchy, whether feudal or democratic, if not in the person of the people, at least in his *own* person, and if not for the people, at least for *himself*. *Germany, as the deficiency of the political present constituted a world of its own*, will not be able to throw down the specific German limitations without throwing down the general limitation of the political present.

It is not the radical revolution, not the general human emancipation which is a utopian dream for Germany, but rather the partial, the merely political revolution, the revolution which leaves the pillars of the house standing. On what is a partial, a merely political revolution based? On *part of civil society* emancipating itself and attaining *general* domination; on a definite class, proceeding from its *particular situation*; undertaking the general emancipation of society. This class emancipates the whole of society, but only provided the whole of society is in the same situation as this class – e.g., possesses money and education or can acquire them at will.

No class of civil society can play this role without arousing a moment of enthusiasm in itself and in the masses, a moment in which it fraternizes and merges with society in general, becomes confused with it and is perceived and acknowledged as its *general representative*, a moment in which its claims and rights are truly the claims and rights of

society itself, a moment in which it is truly the social head and the social heart. **Only in the name of the general rights of society can a particular class vindicate for itself general domination.** For the storming of this emancipatory position, and hence for the political exploitation of all sections of society in the interests of its own section, revolutionary energy and spiritual self-feeling alone are not sufficient. For the *revolution of a nation*, and the *emancipation of a particular class* of civil society to coincide, for one estate to be acknowledged as the estate of the whole society, all the defects of society must conversely be concentrated in another class, a particular estate must be the estate of the general stumbling-block, the incorporation of the general limitation, a particular social sphere must be recognized as the notorious crime of the whole of society, so that liberation from that sphere appears as general self-liberation. For one estate to be *par excellence* the estate of liberation, another estate must conversely be the obvious estate of oppression. The negative general significance of the French nobility and the French clergy determined the positive general significance of the nearest neighboring and opposed class of the *bourgeoisie*.

But no particular class in Germany has the constituency, the penetration, the courage, or the ruthlessness that could mark it out as the negative representative of society. No more has any estate the breadth of soul that identifies itself, even for a moment, with the soul of the nation, the geniality that inspires material might to political violence, or that revolutionary daring which flings at the adversary the defiant words: *I am nothing but I must be everything*. The main stem of German morals and honesty, of the classes as well as of individuals, is rather that *modest egoism* which asserts its limitedness and allows it to be asserted against itself. The relation of the various sections of German society is therefore not dramatic but epic. Each of them begins to be aware of itself and begins to camp beside the others with all its particular claims not as soon as it is oppressed, but as soon as the circumstances of the time, without the section's own participation, creates a social substratum on which it can in turn exert pressure. Even the *moral self-feeling of the German middle class* rests only on the consciousness that it is the common representative of the philistine mediocrity of all the other classes. It is therefore not only the German kings who accede to the throne *mal à propos*, it is every section of civil society which goes through a defeat before it celebrates victory and develops its own limitations before it overcomes the limitations facing it, asserts its narrow-hearted essence before it has been able to assert its magnanimous essence; thus the very opportunity of a great role has passed away before it is to hand, and every class, once it begins the struggle against the class opposed to it, is involved in the struggle against the class below it. Hence, the higher nobility is struggling against the monarchy, the bureaucrat against the nobility, and the bourgeois against them all, while the proletariat is already beginning to find itself struggling against the bourgeoisie. The middle class hardly dares to grasp the thought of emancipation from its own standpoint when the development of the social conditions and the progress of political theory already declare that standpoint antiquated or at least problematic.

In France, it is enough for somebody to be something for him to want to be everything; in Germany, nobody can be anything if he is not prepared to renounce everything. In France, partial emancipation is the basis of universal emancipation; in Germany, universal emancipation is the *conditio sine qua non* of any partial emancipation. In France, it is the reality of gradual liberation that must give birth to complete freedom, in Germany, the impossibility of gradual liberation. In France, every class of the nation is a *political idealist* and becomes aware of itself at first not as a particular class but as a representative of social requirements generally. The role of *emancipator* therefore passes in dramatic motion to the various classes of the French nation one after the other until it finally comes to the class which implements social freedom no longer with the provision of certain

conditions lying outside man and yet created by human society, but rather organizes all conditions of human existence on the premises of social freedom. On the contrary, in Germany, **where practical life is as spiritless as spiritual life is unpractical, no class in civil society has any need or capacity for general emancipation until it is forced by its immediate condition, by material necessity, by its very chains.**

Where, then, is the *positive* possibility of a German emancipation?

Answer. In the formulation of a class with *radical chains*, a class of civil society which is not a class of civil society, an estate which is the dissolution of all estates, a sphere which has a universal character by its universal suffering and claims no *particular right* because no *particular wrong*, but *wrong generally*, is perpetuated against it; which can invoke no *historical*, but only *human*, title; which does not stand in any one-sided antithesis to the consequences but in all-round antithesis to the premises of German statehood; **a sphere, finally, which cannot emancipate itself without emancipating itself from all other spheres of society and thereby emancipating all other spheres of society, which, in a word, is the complete loss of man and hence can win itself only through the complete re-winning of man.** This dissolution of society as a particular estate is the *proletariat*.

The proletariat is beginning to appear in Germany as a result of the rising *industrial* movement. For, it is not the *naturally arising* poor but the *artificially impoverished*, not the human masses mechanically oppressed by the gravity of society, but the masses resulting from the *drastic dissolution* of society, mainly of the middle estate, that form the proletariat, although, as is easily understood, the naturally arising poor and the Christian-Germanic serfs gradually join its ranks.

By heralding the dissolution of the hereto existing world order, the proletariat merely proclaims the secret of its own existence, for it is the factual dissolution of that world order. By demanding the negation of private property, the proletariat merely raises to the rank of a principle of society what society has raised to the rank of its principle, what is already incorporated in it as the negative result of society without its own participation. The proletarian then finds himself possessing the same right in regard to the world which is coming into being as the German king in regard to the world which has come into being when he calls the people his people, as he calls the horse his horse. By declaring the people his private property, the king merely proclaims that the owner of property is king.

As philosophy finds its material weapon in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its spiritual weapon in philosophy. And once the lightning of thought has squarely struck this ingenuous soil of the people, the emancipation of the *Germans* into *men* will be accomplished.

Let us sum up the result:

The only liberation of Germany which is *practically* possible is liberation from the point of view of *that* theory which declares man to be the supreme being for man. Germany can emancipate itself from the Middle Ages only if it emancipates itself at the same time from the *partial* victories over the *Middle Ages*. In Germany, **no form of bondage can be broken without breaking all forms of bondage.** Germany, which is renowned for its *thoroughness*, cannot make a revolution unless it is a *thorough* one. The *emancipation of the German* is the *emancipation of man*. **The head of this emancipation is philosophy, its heart the proletariat.** Philosophy cannot realize itself without the transcendence [*Aufhebung*] of the proletariat, and the proletariat cannot transcend itself without the realization [*Verwirklichung*] of philosophy.

When all the inner conditions are met, the *day of the German resurrection* will be heralded by the *crowing of the cock of Gaul*.



Karl Marx

Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844

Private Property and Communism

It is easy to see that the entire revolutionary movement necessarily finds both its empirical and its theoretical basis in the movement of private property – more precisely, in that of the economy.

This material, immediately perceptible private property is the material perceptible expression of estranged human life. Its movement – production and consumption – is the perceptible revelation of the movement of all production until now, i.e., the realisation or the reality of man. Religion, family, state, law, morality, science, art, etc., are only particular modes of production, and fall under its general law. The positive transcendence of private property as the appropriation of human life, is therefore the positive transcendence of all estrangement – that is to say, the return of man from religion, family, state, etc., to his human, i.e., social, existence. Religious estrangement as such occurs only in the realm of consciousness, of man's inner life, but economic estrangement is that of real life; its transcendence therefore embraces both aspects. It is evident that the initial stage of the movement amongst the various peoples depends on whether the true recognised life of the people manifests itself more in consciousness or in the external world – is more ideal or real. Communism begins from the outset (Owen) with atheism; but atheism is at first far from being communism; indeed, that atheism is still mostly an abstraction.

The philanthropy of atheism is therefore at first only philosophical, abstract philanthropy, and that of communism is at once real and directly bent on action.

Atheism is a *negation of God*, and postulates *the existence of man* through this negation; but socialism as socialism no longer stands in any need of such a mediation. It proceeds from the *theoretically and practically sensuous consciousness* of man and of nature as the *essence*. Socialism is man's *positive self-consciousness*, no longer mediated through the abolition of religion, just as *real life* is man's positive reality, no longer mediated through the abolition of private property, through *communism*. Communism is the position as the negation of the negation, and is hence the *actual* phase necessary for the next stage of historical development in the process of human emancipation and rehabilitation.

Communism is the necessary form and the dynamic principle of the immediate future, but communism as such is not the goal of human development, the form of human society.



Karl Marx

Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844

Critique of Hegel's Philosophy in General

Feuerbach's great achievement is:

- (1) The proof that philosophy is nothing else but religion rendered into thought and expounded by thought, i.e., another form and manner of existence of the estrangement of the essence of man; hence equally to be condemned;
- (2) The establishment of true materialism and of real science, by making the social relationship of "man to man" the basic principle of the theory;
- (3) His opposing to the negation of the negation, which claims to be the absolute positive, the self-supporting positive, positively based on itself.

Feuerbach explains the Hegelian dialectic (and thereby justifies starting out from the positive facts which we know by the senses) as follows:

Hegel sets out from the estrangement of substance (in logic, from the infinite, abstractly universal) – from the absolute and fixed abstraction; which means, put popularly, that he sets out from religion and theology.

Secondly, he annuls the infinite, and posits the actual, sensuous, real, finite, particular (philosophy, annulment of religion and theology).

Thirdly, he again annuls the positive and restores the abstraction, the infinite – restoration of religion and theology.

Feuerbach thus conceives the negation of the negation only as a contradiction of philosophy with itself – as the philosophy which affirms theology (the transcendent, etc.) after having denied it, and which it therefore affirms in opposition to itself.

error in Hegel:

the vindication of the objective world for man – for example, the realisation that *sensuous* consciousness is not an *abstractly* sensuous consciousness but a *humanly* sensuous consciousness, that religion, wealth, etc., are but the estranged world of *human* objectification, of *man's* essential powers put to work and that they are therefore but the *path* to the true *human* world – this appropriation or the insight into this process appears in Hegel therefore in this form, that *sense, religion, state power, etc.*, are *spiritual* entities; for only *mind* is the *true* essence of man, and the true form of mind is thinking mind, theological, speculative mind.

If I *know* religion as *alienated* human self-consciousness, then what I know in it as religion is not my self-consciousness, but my alienated self-consciousness confirmed in it. I therefore know my self-consciousness that belongs to itself, to its very nature, confirmed not in *religion* but rather in *annihilated* and *superseded* religion.

In Hegel, therefore, the negation of the negation is not the confirmation of the true essence, effected precisely through negation of the pseudo-essence. With him the negation of the negation is the confirmation of the pseudo-essence, or of the self-estranged essence in its denial; or it is the denial of this pseudo-essence as an objective being dwelling outside man and independent of him, and its transformation into the subject.

The true existence of religion, the state, nature, art, is the *philosophy* of religion, of nature, of the state and of art. If, however, the philosophy of religion, etc., is for me the sole true existence of religion then, too, it is only as a *philosopher of religion* that I am truly religious, and so I deny *real* religious sentiment and the really *religious* man. But at the same time I *assert* them, in part within my own existence or within the alien existence which I oppose to them – for this *is* only their *philosophic* expression – and in part I assert them in their distinct original shape, since for me they represent merely the *apparent* other-being, allegories, forms of their own true existence (i.e., of my *philosophical* existence) hidden

under sensuous disguises.

In just the same way, *quality* superseded equals *quantity*, quantity superseded equals *measure*, measure superseded equals *essence*, essence superseded equals *appearance*, appearance superseded equals *actuality*, actuality superseded equals the *concept*, the concept superseded equals *objectivity*, objectivity superseded equals the *absolute idea*, the absolute idea superseded equals *nature*, nature superseded equals *subjective* mind, subjective mind superseded equals *ethical* objective mind, ethical mind superseded equals *art*, art superseded equals *religion*, religion superseded equals *absolute knowledge*.

Atheism, being the supersession of God, is the advent of theoretic humanism, and communism, as the supersession of private property, is the vindication of real human life as man's possession and thus the advent of practical humanism, or atheism is humanism mediated with itself through the supersession of religion, whilst communism is humanism mediated with itself through the supersession of private property. Only through the supersession of this mediation – which is itself, however, a necessary premise – does positively self-deriving humanism, *positive* humanism, come into being.

But atheism and communism are no flight, no abstraction, no loss of the objective world created by man – of man's essential powers born to the realm of objectivity; they are not a returning in poverty to unnatural, primitive simplicity. On the contrary, they are but the first real emergence, the actual realisation for man of man's essence and of his essence as something real.



Karl Marx

On The Jewish Question

Autumn 1843;

First Published: February, 1844 in *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*;

I

**Bruno Bauer,
The Jewish Question,
Braunschweig, 1843**

The German Jews desire emancipation. What kind of emancipation do they desire? *Civic*, *political* emancipation.

Bruno Bauer replies to them: No one in Germany is politically emancipated. We ourselves are not free. How are we to free you? You Jews are *egoists* if you demand a special emancipation for yourselves as Jews. As Germans, you ought to work for the political emancipation of Germany, and as human beings, for the emancipation of mankind, and you should feel the particular kind of your oppression and your shame not as an exception

to the rule, but on the contrary as a confirmation of the rule.

Or do the Jews demand the same status as *Christian subjects of the state*? In that case, they recognize that the *Christian state* is justified and they recognize, too, the regime of general oppression. Why should they disapprove of their special yoke if they approve of the general yoke? Why should the German be interested in the liberation of the Jew, if the Jew is not interested in the liberation of the German?

The *Christian state* knows only *privileges*. In this state, the Jew has the privilege of being a Jew. As a Jew, he has rights which the Christians do not have. Why should he want rights which he does not have, but which the Christians enjoy?

In wanting to be emancipated from the Christian state, the Jew is demanding that the Christian state should give up its *religious* prejudice. Does he, the Jew, give up *his* religious prejudice? Has he, then, the right to demand that someone else should renounce his religion?

By its very nature, the Christian state is incapable of emancipating the Jew; but, adds Bauer, by his very nature the Jew cannot be emancipated. So long as the state is Christian and the Jew is Jewish, the one is as incapable of granting emancipation as the other is of receiving it.

The Christian state can behave towards the Jew only in the way characteristic of the Christian state – that is, by granting privileges, by permitting the separation of the Jew from the other subjects, but making him feel the pressure of all the other separate spheres of society, and feel it all the more intensely because he is in *religious* opposition to the dominant religion. But the Jew, too, can behave towards the state only in a Jewish way – that is, by treating it as something alien to him, by counterposing his imaginary nationality to the real nationality, by counterposing his illusory law to the real law, by deeming himself justified in separating himself from mankind, by abstaining on principle from taking part in the historical movement, by putting his trust in a future which has nothing in common with the future of mankind in general, and by seeing himself as a member of the Jewish people, and the Jewish people as the chosen people.

On what grounds, then, do you Jews want emancipation? On account of your religion? It is the mortal enemy of the state religion. As citizens? In Germany, there are no citizens. As human beings? But you are no more human beings than those to whom you appeal.

Bauer has posed the question of Jewish emancipation in a new form, after giving a critical analysis of the previous formulations and solutions of the question. What, he asks, is the *nature* of the Jew who is to be emancipated and of the Christian state that is to emancipate him? He replies by a critique of the Jewish religion, he analyzes the *religious* opposition between Judaism and Christianity, he elucidates the essence of the Christian state – and he does all this audaciously, trenchantly, wittily, and with profundity, in a style of writing that is as precise as it is pithy and vigorous.

How, then, does Bauer solve the Jewish question? What is the result? The formulation of a question is its solution. The critique of the Jewish question is the answer to the Jewish question. The summary, therefore, is as follows:

We must emancipate ourselves before we can emancipate others.

The most rigid form of the opposition between the Jew and the Christian is the *religious* opposition. How is an opposition resolved? By making it impossible. How is *religious* opposition made impossible? By *abolishing religion*. As soon as Jew and Christian recognize that their respective religions are no more than *different stages in the development of the human mind*, different snake skins cast off by *history*, and that man is the snake who sloughed them, the relation of Jew and Christian is no longer religious but

is only a critical, *scientific*, and human relation. *Science*, then, constitutes their unity. But, contradictions in science are resolved by science itself.

The *German Jew*, in particular, is confronted by the general absence of political emancipation and the strongly marked Christian character of the state. In Bauer's conception, however, the Jewish question has a universal significance, independent of specifically German conditions. It is the question of the relation of religion to the state, of the *contradiction between religious constraint and political emancipation*. Emancipation from religion is laid down as a condition, both to the Jew who wants to be emancipated politically, and to the state which is to effect emancipation and is itself to be emancipated.

"Very well," it is said, and the Jew himself says it, "the Jew is to become emancipated not as a Jew, not because he is a Jew, not because he possesses such an excellent, universally human principle of morality; on the contrary, the *Jew* will retreat behind the *citizen* and be a *citizen*, although he is a Jew and is to remain a Jew. That is to say, he is and remains a *Jew*, although he is a *citizen* and lives in universally human conditions: his Jewish and restricted nature triumphs always in the end over his human and political obligations. The *prejudice* remains in spite of being outstripped by *general* principles. But if it remains, then, on the contrary, it outstrips everything else."

"Only sophistically, only apparently, would the Jew be able to remain a Jew in the life of the state. Hence, if he wanted to remain a Jew, the mere appearance would become the essential and would triumph; that is to say, his *life in the state* would be only a semblance or only a temporary exception to the essential and the rule." ("The Capacity of Present-Day Jews and Christians to Become Free," *Einundzwanzig Bogen*, pp. 57)

Let us hear, on the other hand, how Bauer presents the task of the state.

"France," he says, "has recently shown us" (Proceedings of the Chamber of Deputies, December 26, 1840) "in the connection with the Jewish question – just as it has continually done in all other *political* questions – the spectacle of a life which is free, but which revokes its freedom by law, hence declaring it to be an appearance, and on the other hand contradicting its free laws by its action." (*The Jewish Question*, p. 64)

"In France, universal freedom is not yet the law, the Jewish question too has *not* yet been solved, because legal freedom – the fact that all citizens are equal – is restricted in actual life, which is still dominated and divided by religious privileges, and this lack of freedom in actual life reacts on law and compels the latter to sanction the division of the citizens, who as such are free, into oppressed and oppressors." (p. 65)

When, therefore, would the Jewish question be solved for France?

"The Jew, for example, would have ceased to be a Jew if he did not allow himself to be prevented by his laws from fulfilling his duty to the state and his fellow citizens, that is, for example, if on the Sabbath he attended the Chamber of Deputies and took part in the official proceedings. Every *religious privilege*, and therefore also the monopoly of a privileged church, would have been abolished altogether, and if some or many persons, or even the overwhelming majority, still believed themselves bound to fulfil religious duties, this fulfilment ought to be left to them as a purely private matter." (p. 65)

"There is no longer any religion when there is no longer any privileged religion. Take from religion its exclusive power and it will no longer exist." (p. 66)

"Just as M. Martin du Nord saw the proposal to omit mention of Sunday in the law as a motion to declare that Christianity has ceased to exist, with equal reason (and this reason is very well founded) the declaration that the law of the Sabbath is no longer binding on the Jew would be a proclamation abolishing Judaism." (p. 71)

Bauer, therefore, demands, on the one hand, that the Jew should renounce Judaism, and

that mankind in general should renounce religion, in order to achieve *civic* emancipation. On the other hand, he quite consistently regards the *political* abolition of religion as the abolition of religion as such. The state which presupposes religion is not yet a true, real state.

“Of course, the religious notion affords security to the state. But to what state? To what kind of state?” (p. 97)

At this point, the *one-sided* formulation of the Jewish question becomes evident.

It was by no means sufficient to investigate: Who is to emancipate? Who is to be emancipated? Criticism had to investigate a third point. It had to inquire: *What kind of emancipation* is in question? What conditions follow from the very nature of the emancipation that is demanded? Only the criticism of *political emancipation* itself would have been the conclusive criticism of the Jewish question and its real merging in the “*general question of time*.”

Because Bauer does not raise the question to this level, he becomes entangled in contradictions. He puts forward conditions which are not based on the nature of *political* emancipation itself. He raises questions which are not part of his problem, and he solves problems which leave this question unanswered. When Bauer says of the opponents of Jewish emancipation: “Their error was only that they assumed the Christian state to be the only true one and did not subject it to the same criticism that they applied to Judaism” (op. cit., p. 3), we find that his error lies in the fact that he subjects to criticism *only* the “Christian state,” not the “state as such,” that he does not investigate *the relation of political emancipation to human emancipation* and, therefore, puts forward conditions which can be explained only by uncritical confusion of political emancipation with general human emancipation. If Bauer asks the Jews: Have you, from your standpoint, the right to want *political emancipation*? We ask the converse question: Does the standpoint of *political* emancipation give the right to demand from the Jew the abolition of Judaism and from man the abolition of religion?

The Jewish question acquires a different form depending on the state in which the Jew lives. In Germany, where there is no political state, no state as such, the Jewish question is a purely *theological* one. The Jew finds himself in *religious* opposition to the state, which recognizes Christianity as its basis. This state is a theologian *ex professo*. Criticism here is criticism of theology, a double-edged criticism – criticism of Christian theology and of Jewish theology. Hence, we continue to operate in the sphere of theology, however much we may operate *critically* within it.

In France, a *constitutional* state, the Jewish question is a question of constitutionalism, the question of the *incompleteness of political emancipation*. Since the *semblance* of a state religion is retained here, although in a meaningless and self-contradictory formula, that of a *religion of the majority*, the relation of the Jew to the state retains the *semblance* of a religious, theological opposition.

Only in the North American states – at least, in some of them – does the Jewish question lose its *theological* significance and become a really *secular* question. Only where the political state exists in its completely developed form can the relation of the Jew, and of the religious man in general, to the political state, and therefore the relation of religion to the state, show itself in its specific character, in its purity. The criticism of this relation ceases to be theological criticism as soon as the state ceases to adopt a theological attitude toward religion, as soon as it behaves towards religion as a state – *i.e.*, *politically*. Criticism, then, becomes criticism of the political state. At this point, where the question ceases to be theological, Bauer’s criticism ceases to be critical.

“In the United States there is neither a state religion nor a religion declared to be that of

the majority, nor the predominance of one cult over another. The state stands aloof from all cults." (*Marie ou l'esclavage aux Etats-Unis, etc.*, by G. de Beaumont, Paris, 1835, p. 214)

Indeed, there are some North American states where "the constitution does not impose any religious belief or religious practice as a condition of political rights." (op. cit., p. 225)

Nevertheless, "in the United States people do not believe that a man without religion could be an honest man." (op. cit., p. 224)

Nevertheless, North America is pre-eminently the country of religiosity, as Beaumont, Tocqueville, and the Englishman Hamilton unanimously assure us. The North American states, however, serve us only as an example. The question is: What is the relation of complete political emancipation to religion? If we find that even in the country of complete political emancipation, religion not only exists, but displays a fresh and vigorous vitality, that is proof that the existence of religion is not in contradiction to the perfection of the state. Since, however, the existence of religion is the existence of defect, the source of this defect can only be sought in the nature of the state itself. We no longer regard religion as the *cause*, but only as the manifestation of secular narrowness. Therefore, we explain the religious limitations of the free citizen by their secular limitations. We do not assert that they must overcome their religious narrowness in order to get rid of their secular restrictions, we assert that they will overcome their religious narrowness once they get rid of their secular restrictions. We do not turn secular questions into theological ones. History has long enough been merged in superstition, we now merge superstition in history. The question of the relation of political emancipation to religion becomes for us the question of the relation of political emancipation to human emancipation. We criticize the religious weakness of the political state by criticizing the political state in its secular form, apart from its weaknesses as regards religion. The contradiction between the state and a particular religion, for instance Judaism, is given by us a human form as the contradiction between the state and *particular* secular elements; the contradiction between the state and religion in general as the contradiction between the state and its presuppositions in general.

The political emancipation of the Jew, the Christian, and, in general, of religious man, is the emancipation of the *state* from Judaism, from Christianity, from religion in general. In its own form, in the manner characteristic of its nature, the state as a state emancipates itself from religion by emancipating itself from the state religion – that is to say, by the state as a state not professing any religion, but, on the contrary, asserting itself as a state. The *political* emancipation from religion is not a religious emancipation that has been carried through to completion and is free from contradiction, because political emancipation is not a form of *human* emancipation which has been carried through to completion and is free from contradiction.

The limits of political emancipation are evident at once from the fact that the state can free itself from a restriction without man being really free from this restriction, that the state can be a *free state* [pun on word Freistaat, which also means republic] without man being a *free man*. Bauer himself tacitly admits this when he lays down the following condition for political emancipation:

"Every religious privilege, and therefore also the monopoly of a privileged church, would have been abolished altogether, and if some or many persons, or even the overwhelming majority, still believed themselves bound to fulfil religious duties, this fulfilment ought to be left to them as a purely private matter." [*The Jewish Question*, p. 65]

It is possible, therefore, for the *state* to have emancipated itself from religion even if the *overwhelming majority* is still religious. And the overwhelming majority does not cease to be religious through being religious in private.

But, the attitude of the state, and of the *republic* [free state] in particular, to religion is, after

all, only the attitude to religion of the *men* who compose the state. It follows from this that man frees himself through the *medium of the state*, that he frees himself *politically* from a limitation when, in contradiction with himself, he raises himself above this limitation in an *abstract, limited, and partial* way. It follows further that, by freeing himself *politically*, man frees himself in a *roundabout way*, through an *intermediary*, although an *essential intermediary*. It follows, finally, that man, even if he proclaims himself an atheist through the medium of the state – that is, if he proclaims the state to be atheist – still remains in the grip of religion, precisely because he acknowledges himself only by a roundabout route, only through an *intermediary*. Religion is precisely the recognition of man in a roundabout way, through an intermediary. The state is the intermediary between man and man's freedom. Just as Christ is the intermediary to whom man transfers the burden of all his divinity, all his *religious constraint*, so the state is the intermediary to whom man transfers all his non-divinity and all his *human unconstraint*.

The *political* elevation of man above religion shares all the defects and all the advantages of political elevation in general. The state as a state annuls, for instance, private property, man declares by political means that private property is abolished as soon as the property qualification for the right to elect or be elected is abolished, as has occurred in many states of North America. Hamilton quite correctly interprets this fact from a political point of view as meaning:

“the masses have won a victory over the property owners and financial wealth.” [Thomas Hamilton, *Men and Manners in America*, 2 vols, Edinburgh, 1833, p. 146]

Is not private property abolished in idea if the non-property owner has become the legislator for the property owner? The property qualification for the suffrage is the last political form of giving recognition to private property.

Nevertheless, the political annulment of private property not only fails to abolish private property but even presupposes it. The state abolishes, in its own way, distinctions of birth, social rank, education, occupation, when it declares that birth, social rank, education, occupation, are non-political distinctions, when it proclaims, without regard to these distinction, that every member of the nation is an *equal* participant in national sovereignty, when it treats all elements of the real life of the nation from the standpoint of the state. Nevertheless, the state allows private property, education, occupation, to *act in their way* – *i.e.*, as private property, as education, as occupation, and to exert the influence of their *special* nature. Far from abolishing these real distinctions, the state only exists on the presupposition of their existence; it feels itself to be a political state and asserts its universality only in opposition to these elements of its being. Hegel, therefore, defines the relation of the political state to religion quite correctly when he says:

“In order [...] that the state should come into existence as the self-knowing, moral reality of the mind, its distraction from the form of authority and faith is essential. But this distinction emerges only insofar as the ecclesiastical aspect arrives at a separation within itself. It is only in this way that the state, above the particular churches, has achieved and brought into existence universality of thought, which is the principle of its form” (Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, 1st edition, p. 346).

Of course! Only in this way, *above* the *particular* elements, does the state constitute itself as universality.

The perfect political state is, by its nature, man's species-life, as opposed to his material life. All the preconditions of this egoistic life continue to exist in civil society outside the sphere of the state, but as qualities of civil society. Where the political state has attained its true development, man – not only in thought, in consciousness, but in reality, in life – leads a twofold life, a heavenly and an earthly life: life in the political community, in which he

considers himself a communal being, and life in civil society, in which he acts as a private individual, regards other men as a means, degrades himself into a means, and becomes the plaything of alien powers. The relation of the political state to civil society is just as spiritual as the relations of heaven to earth. The political state stands in the same opposition to civil society, and it prevails over the latter in the same way as religion prevails over the narrowness of the secular world – *i.e.*, by likewise having always to acknowledge it, to restore it, and allow itself to be dominated by it. In his most immediate reality, in civil society, man is a secular being. Here, where he regards himself as a real individual, and is so regarded by others, he is a fictitious phenomenon. In the state, on the other hand, where man is regarded as a species-being, he is the imaginary member of an illusory sovereignty, is deprived of his real individual life and endowed with an unreal universality.

Man, as the adherent of a *particular* religion, finds himself in conflict with his citizenship and with other men as members of the community. This conflict reduces itself to the *secular* division between the *political* state and *civil society*. For man as a *bourgeois* [*i.e.*, as a member of civil society, “bourgeois society” in German], “life in the state” is “only a semblance or a temporary exception to the essential and the rule.” Of course, the *bourgeois*, like the Jew, remains only sophisticatedly in the sphere of political life, just as the *citoyen* [‘citizen’ in French, *i.e.*, the participant in *political* life] only sophisticatedly remains a Jew or a *bourgeois*. But, this sophistry is not personal. It is the *sophistry of the political state* itself. The difference between the merchant and the citizen [*Staatsbürger*], between the day-laborer and the citizen, between the landowner and the citizen, between the merchant and the citizen, between the *living individual* and the *citizen*. The contradiction in which the religious man finds himself with the political man is the same contradiction in which the bourgeois finds himself with the *citoyen*, and the member of civil society with his *political lion’s skin*.

This secular conflict, to which the Jewish question ultimately reduces itself, the relation between the political state and its preconditions, whether these are material elements, such as private property, etc., or spiritual elements, such as culture or religion, the conflict between the general interest and private interest, the schism between the political state and civil society – these secular antitheses Bauer allows to persist, whereas he conducts a polemic against their religious expression.

“It is precisely the basis of civil society, the need that ensures the continuance of this society and guarantees its necessity, which exposes its existence to continual dangers, maintains in it an element of uncertainty, and produces that continually changing mixture of poverty and riches, of distress and prosperity, and brings about change in general.” (p. 8)

Compare the whole section: “Civil Society” (pp. 8-9), which has been drawn up along the basic lines of Hegel’s philosophy of law. Civil society, in its opposition to the political state, is recognized as necessary, because the political state is recognized as necessary.

Political emancipation is, of course, a big step forward. True, it is not the final form of human emancipation in general, but it is the final form of human emancipation within the hitherto existing world order. It goes without saying that we are speaking here of real, practical emancipation.

Man emancipates himself *politically* from religion by banishing it from the sphere of public law to that of private law. Religion is no longer the spirit of the state, in which man behaves – although in a limited way, in a particular form, and in a particular sphere – as a species-being, in community with other men. Religion has become the spirit of *civil society*, of the sphere of egoism, of *bellum omnium contra omnes*. It is no longer the essence of *community*, but the essence of *difference*. It has become the expression of man’s *separation* from his *community*, from himself and from other men – as it was originally. It is only the abstract avowal of specific perversity, *private whimsy*, and arbitrariness. The

endless fragmentation of religion in North America, for example, gives it even *externally* the form of a purely individual affair. It has been thrust among the multitude of private interests and ejected from the community as such. But one should be under no illusion about the limits of political emancipation. The division of the human being into a *public man* and a *private man*, the *displacement* of religion from the state into civil society, this is not a stage of political emancipation but its completion; this emancipation, therefore, neither abolished the *real* religiousness of man, nor strives to do so.

The *decomposition* of man into Jew and citizen, Protestant and citizen, religious man and citizen, is neither a deception directed *against* citizenship, nor is it a circumvention of political emancipation, it is *political emancipation itself*, the *political* method of emancipating oneself from religion. Of course, in periods when the political state as such is born violently out of civil society, when political liberation is the form in which men strive to achieve their liberation, the state can and must go as far as the *abolition of religion*, the *destruction* of religion. But it can do so only in the same way that it proceeds to the abolition of private property, to the maximum, to confiscation, to progressive taxation, just as it goes as far as the abolition of life, the *guillotine*. At times of special self-confidence, political life seeks to suppress its prerequisite, civil society and the elements composing this society, and to constitute itself as the real species-life of man, devoid of contradictions. But, it can achieve this only by coming into *violent* contradiction with its own conditions of life, only by declaring the revolution to be permanent, and, therefore, the political drama necessarily ends with the re-establishment of religion, private property, and all elements of civil society, just as war ends with peace.

Indeed, the perfect Christian state is not the so-called *Christian* state – which acknowledges Christianity as its basis, as the state religion, and, therefore, adopts an exclusive attitude towards other religions. On the contrary, the perfect Christian state is the *atheistic* state, the *democratic* state, the state which relegates religion to a place among the other elements of civil society. The state which is still theological, which still officially professes Christianity as its creed, which still does not dare to proclaim itself *as a state*, has, in its *reality* as a state, not yet succeeded in expressing the *human* basis – of which Christianity is the high-flown expression – in a *secular, human* form. The so-called Christian state is simply nothing more than a non-state, since it is not Christianity as a religion, but only the *human background* of the Christian religion, which can find its expression in actual human creations.

The so-called Christian state is the Christian negation of the state, but by no means the political realization of Christianity. The state which still professes Christianity in the form of religion, does not yet profess it in the form appropriate to the state, for it still has a religious attitude towards religion – that is to say, it is not the *true implementation* of the human basis of religion, because it still relies on the *unreal, imaginary* form of this human core. The so-called Christian state is the *imperfect* state, and the Christian religion is regarded by it as the *supplementation* and *sanctification* of its imperfection. For the Christian state, therefore, religion necessarily becomes a *means*; hence, it is a *hypocritical* state. It makes a great difference whether the *complete* state, because of the defect inherent in the general *nature* of the state, counts religion among its *presuppositions*, or whether the *incomplete* state, because of the defect inherent in its *particular existence* as a defective state, declares that religion is its basis. In the latter case, religion becomes *imperfect politics*. In the former case, the imperfection even of consummate *politics* becomes evident in religion. The so-called Christian state needs the Christian religion in order to complete itself *as a state*. The democratic state, the real state, does not need religion for its political completion. On the contrary, it can disregard religion because in it the human basis of religion is realized in a secular manner. The so-called Christian state, on the other hand, has a political attitude to religion and a religious attitude to politics. By degrading the forms

of the state to mere semblance, it equally degrades religion to mere semblance.

In order to make this contradiction clearer, let us consider Bauer's projection of the Christian state, a projection based on his observation of the Christian-German state.

"Recently," says Bauer, "in order to prove the *impossibility* or *non-existence* of a Christian state, reference has frequently been made to those sayings in the Gospel with which the [present-day] state *not only does not* comply, *but cannot possibly comply, if it does not want to dissolve itself completely* [as a state]." "But the matter cannot be disposed of so easily. What do these Gospel sayings demand? Supernatural renunciation of self, submission to the authority of revelation, a turning-away from the state, the abolition of secular conditions. Well, the Christian state demands and accomplishes all that. It has assimilated the *spirit of the Gospel*, and if it does not reproduce this spirit in the same terms as the Gospel, that occurs only because it expresses this spirit in political forms, *i.e.*, in forms which, it is true, are taken from the political system in this world, but which in the religious rebirth that they have to undergo become degraded to a mere semblance. This is a turning-away from the state while making use of political forms for its realization." (p. 55)

Bauer then explains that the people of a Christian state is only a non-people, no longer having a will of its own, but whose true existence lies in the leader to whom it is subjected, although this leader by his origin and nature is alien to it – *i.e.*, given by God and imposed on the people without any co-operation on its part. Bauer declares that the laws of such a people are not its own creation, but are actual revelations, that its supreme chief needs privileged intermediaries with the people in the strict sense, with the masses, and that the masses themselves are divided into a multitude of particular groupings which are formed and determined by chance, which are differentiated by their interests, their particular passions and prejudices, and obtain permission as a privilege, to isolate themselves from one another, etc. (p. 56)

However, Bauer himself says:

"Politics, if it is to be nothing but religion, ought not to be politics, just as the cleaning of saucepans, if it is to be accepted as a religious matter, ought not to be regarded as a matter of domestic economy." (p. 108)

In the Christian-German state, however, religion is an "economic matter" just as "economic matters" belong to the sphere of religion. The domination of religion in the Christian-German state is the religion of domination.

The separation of the "spirit of the Gospel" from the "letter of the Gospel" is an *irreligious* act. A state which makes the Gospel speak in the language of politics – that is, in another language than that of the Holy Ghost – commits sacrilege, if not in human eyes, then in the eyes of its own religion. The state which acknowledges Christianity as its supreme criterion, and the *Bible* as its *Charter*, must be confronted with the *words* of Holy Scripture, for every word of Scripture is holy. This state, as well as the *human rubbish* on which it is based, is caught in a painful contradiction that is insoluble from the standpoint of religious consciousness when it is referred to those sayings of the Gospel with which it "not only does not comply, *but cannot possibly comply, if it does not want to dissolve itself completely as a state.*" And why does it not want to dissolve itself completely? The state itself cannot give an answer either to itself or to others. In its *own consciousness*, the official Christian state is an *imperative*, the realization of which is unattainable, the state can assert the reality of its existence only by lying to itself, and therefore always remains in its own eyes an object of doubt, an unreliable, problematic object. Criticism is, therefore, fully justified in forcing the state that relies on the Bible into a mental derangement in which it no longer knows whether it is an *illusion* or a *reality*, and in which the infamy of its *secular* aims, for which religion serves as a cloak, comes into insoluble conflict with the

sincerity of its *religious* consciousness, for which religion appears as the aim of the world. This state can only save itself from its inner torment if it becomes the *police agent* of the Catholic Church. In relation to the church, which declares the *secular* power to be its servant, the state is powerless, the secular power which claims to be the rule of the religious spirit is powerless.

It is, indeed, *estrangement* which matters in the so-called Christian state, but not *man*. The only man who counts, the king, is a being specifically different from other men, and is, moreover, a religious being, directly linked with heaven, with God. The relationships which prevail here are still relationships dependent of *faith*. The religious spirit, therefore, is still not really secularized.

But, furthermore, the religious spirit cannot be *really* secularized, for what is it in itself but the *non-secular* form of a stage in the development of the human mind? The religious spirit can only be secularized insofar as the stage of development of the human mind of which it is the religious expression makes its appearance and becomes constituted in its *secular* form. This takes place in the democratic state. Not Christianity, but the *human basis* of Christianity is the basis of this state. Religion remains the ideal, non-secular consciousness of its members, because religion is the ideal form of the *stage of human development* achieved in this state.

The members of the political state are religious owing to the dualism between individual life and species-life, between the life of civil society and political life. They are religious because men treat the political life of the state, an area beyond their real individuality, as if it were their true life. They are religious insofar as religion here is the spirit of civil society, expressing the separation and remoteness of man from man. Political democracy is Christian since in it man, not merely one man but everyman, ranks as *sovereign*, as the highest being, but it is man in his uncivilized, unsocial form, man in his fortuitous existence, man just as he is, man as he has been corrupted by the whole organization of our society, who has lost himself, been alienated, and handed over to the rule of inhuman conditions and elements – in short, man who is not yet a *real* species-being. That which is a creation of fantasy, a dream, a postulate of Christianity, *i.e.*, the sovereignty of man – but man as an alien being different from the real man – becomes, in democracy, tangible reality, present existence, and secular principle.

In the perfect democracy, the religious and theological consciousness itself is in its own eyes the more religious and the more theological because it is apparently without political significance, without worldly aims, the concern of a disposition that shuns the world, the expression of intellectual narrow-mindedness, the product of arbitrariness and fantasy, and because it is a life that is really of the other world. Christianity attains, here, the *practical* expression of its universal-religious significance in that the most diverse world outlooks are grouped alongside one another in the form of Christianity and still more because it does not require other people to profess Christianity, but only religion in general, any kind of religion (cf. Beaumont's work quoted above). The religious consciousness revels in the wealth of religious contradictions and religious diversity.

We have, thus, shown that political emancipation from religion leaves religion in existence, although not a privileged religion. The contradiction in which the adherent of a particular religion finds himself involved in relation to his citizenship is only *one aspect* of the universal *secular contradiction between the political state and civil society*. The consummation of the Christian state is the state which acknowledges itself as a state and disregards the religion of its members. The emancipation of the state from religion is not the emancipation of the real man from religion.

Therefore, we do not say to the Jews, as Bauer does: You cannot be emancipated politically without emancipating yourselves radically from Judaism. On the contrary, we tell

them: Because you can be emancipated politically without renouncing Judaism completely and incontrovertibly, *political emancipation* itself is not *human* emancipation. If you Jews want to be emancipated politically, without emancipating yourselves humanly, the half-hearted approach and contradiction is not in you alone, it is inherent in the *nature* and *category* of political emancipation. If you find yourself within the confines of this category, you share in a general confinement. Just as the state *evangelizes* when, although it is a state, it adopts a Christian attitude towards the Jews, so the Jew *acts politically* when, although a Jew, he demands civic rights.

[*]

But, if a man, although a Jew, can be emancipated politically and receive civic rights, can he lay claim to the so-called *rights of man* and receive them? Bauer *denies* it.

“The question is whether the Jew as such, that is, the Jew who himself admits that he is compelled by his true nature to live permanently in separation from other men, is capable of receiving the *universal rights of man* and of conceding them to others.”

“For the Christian world, the idea of the rights of man was only discovered in the last century. It is not innate in men; on the contrary, it is gained only in a struggle against the historical traditions in which hitherto man was brought up. Thus the rights of man are not a gift of nature, not a legacy from past history, but the reward of the struggle against the accident of birth and against the privileges which up to now have been handed down by history from generation to generation. These rights are the result of culture, and only one who has earned and deserved them can possess them.”

“Can the Jew really take possession of them? As long as he is a Jew, the restricted nature which makes him a Jew is bound to triumph over the human nature which should link him as a man with other men, and will separate him from non-Jews. He declares by this separation that the particular nature which makes him a Jew is his true, highest nature, before which human nature has to give way.”

“Similarly, the Christian as a Christian cannot grant the rights of man.” (p. 19-20)

According to Bauer, man has to sacrifice the “*privilege of faith*” to be able to receive the universal rights of man. Let us examine, for a moment, the so-called rights of man – to be precise, the rights of man in their authentic form, in the form which they have among those who *discovered* them, the North Americans and the French. These rights of man are, in part, *political* rights, rights which can only be exercised in community with others. Their content is *participation* in the *community*, and specifically in the *political* community, in the *life of the state*. They come within the category of *political freedom*, the category of *civic rights*, which, as we have seen, in no way presuppose the incontrovertible and positive abolition of religion – nor, therefore, of Judaism. There remains to be examined the other part of the rights of man – the *droits d’homme*, insofar as these differ from the *droits d’citoyen*.

Included among them is freedom of conscience, the right to practice any religion one chooses. The *privilege of faith* is expressly recognized either as a *right of man* or as the consequence of a right of man, that of liberty.

Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen, 1791, Article 10: “No one is to be subjected to annoyance because of his opinions, even religious opinions.” “The freedom of every man to practice the religion of which he is an adherent.”

Declaration of the Rights of Man, etc., 1793, includes among the rights of man, Article 7: “The free exercise of religion.” Indeed, in regard to man’s right to express his thoughts and opinions, to hold meetings, and to exercise his religion, it is even stated: “The necessity of proclaiming these rights presupposes either the existence or the recent memory of

despotism.” Compare the Constitution of 1795, Section XIV, Article 354.

Constitution of Pennsylvania, Article 9, § 3: “All men have received from nature the imprescriptible right to worship the Almighty according to the dictates of their conscience, and no one can be legally compelled to follow, establish, or support against his will any religion or religious ministry. No human authority can, in any circumstances, intervene in a matter of conscience or control the forces of the soul.”

Constitution of New Hampshire, Article 5 and 6: “Among these natural rights some are by nature inalienable since nothing can replace them. The rights of conscience are among them.” (Beaumont, op. cit., pp. 213,214)

Incompatibility between religion and the rights of man is to such a degree absent from the concept of the rights of man that, on the contrary, a man’s *right to be religious*, in any way he chooses, to practise his own particular religion, is expressly included among the rights of man. The *privilege of faith* is a *universal right of man*.

The *droits de l’homme*, the rights of man, are, as such, distinct from the *droits du citoyen*, the rights of the citizen. Who is *homme* as distinct from *citoyen*? None other than the *member of civil society*. Why is the member of civil society called “man,” simply man; why are his rights called the *rights of man*? How is this fact to be explained? From the relationship between the political state and civil society, from the nature of political emancipation.

Above all, we note the fact that the so-called rights of man, the *droits de l’homme* as distinct from the *droits du citoyen*, are nothing but the rights of a *member of civil society* – i.e., the rights of egoistic man, of man separated from other men and from the community. Let us hear what the most radical Constitution, the Constitution of 1793, has to say:

Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.

Article 2. “These rights, etc., (the natural and imprescriptible rights) are: equality, liberty, security, property.”

What constitutes liberty?

Article 6. “Liberty is the power which man has to do everything that does not harm the rights of others,” or, according to the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* of 1791: “Liberty consists in being able to do everything which does not harm others.”

Liberty, therefore, is the right to do everything that harms no one else. The limits within which anyone can act *without harming* someone else are defined by law, just as the boundary between two fields is determined by a boundary post. It is a question of the liberty of man as an isolated monad, withdrawn into himself. Why is the Jew, according to Bauer, incapable of acquiring the rights of man?

“As long as he is a Jew, the restricted nature which makes him a Jew is bound to triumph over the human nature which should link him as a man with other men, and will separate him from non-Jews.”

But, the right of man to liberty is based not on the association of man with man, but on the separation of man from man. It is the *right* of this separation, the right of the *restricted* individual, withdrawn into himself.

The practical application of man’s right to liberty is man’s right to *private property*.

What constitutes man’s right to private property?

Article 16. (Constitution of 1793): “The right of property is that which every citizen has of enjoying and of disposing at his discretion of his goods and income, of the fruits of his labor and industry.”

The right of man to private property is, therefore, the right to enjoy one's property and to dispose of it at one's discretion (*à son gré*), without regard to other men, independently of society, the right of self-interest. This individual liberty and its application form the basis of civil society. It makes every man see in other men not the realization of his own freedom, but the *barrier* to it. But, above all, it proclaims the right of man

“of enjoying and of disposing at his discretion of his goods and income, of the fruits of his labor and industry.”

There remain the other rights of man: *égalité* and *sûreté*.

Equality, used here in its non-political sense, is nothing but the equality of the *liberté* described above – namely: each man is to the same extent regarded as such a self-sufficient monad. The Constitution of 1795 defines the concept of this equality, in accordance with this significance, as follows:

Article 3 (Constitution of 1795): “Equality consists in the law being the same for all, whether it protects or punishes.”

And security?

Article 8 (Constitution of 1793): “Security consists in the protection afforded by society to each of its members for the preservation of his person, his rights, and his property.”

Security is the highest social concept of civil society, the concept of *police*, expressing the fact that the whole of society exists only in order to guarantee to each of its members the preservation of his person, his rights, and his property. It is in this sense that Hegel calls civil society “the state of need and reason.”

The concept of security does not raise civil society above its egoism. On the contrary, security is the *insurance* of egoism.

None of the so-called rights of man, therefore, go beyond egoistic man, beyond man as a member of civil society – that is, an individual withdrawn into himself, into the confines of his private interests and private caprice, and separated from the community. In the rights of man, he is far from being conceived as a species-being; on the contrary, species-life itself, society, appears as a framework external to the individuals, as a restriction of their original independence. The sole bond holding them together is natural necessity, need and private interest, the preservation of their property and their egoistic selves.

It is puzzling enough that a people which is just beginning to liberate itself, to tear down all the barriers between its various sections, and to establish a political community, that such a people solemnly proclaims (*Declaration* of 1791) the rights of egoistic man separated from his fellow men and from the community, and that indeed it repeats this proclamation at a moment when only the most heroic devotion can save the nation, and is therefore imperatively called for, at a moment when the sacrifice of all the interest of civil society must be the order of the day, and egoism must be punished as a crime. (*Declaration of the Rights of Man*, etc., of 1793) This fact becomes still more puzzling when we see that the political emancipators go so far as to reduce citizenship, and the *political community*, to a mere means for maintaining these so-called rights of man, that, therefore, the *citoyen* is declared to be the servant of egotistic *homme*, that the sphere in which man acts as a communal being is degraded to a level below the sphere in which he acts as a partial being, and that, finally, it is not man as *citoyen*, but man as private individual [*bourgeois*] who is considered to be the *essential* and *true* man.

“The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man.” (*Declaration of the Rights*, etc., of 1791, Article 2)

“Government is instituted in order to guarantee man the enjoyment of his natural and

imprescriptible rights.” (*Declaration*, etc., of 1793, Article 1)

Hence, even in moments when its enthusiasm still has the freshness of youth and is intensified to an extreme degree by the force of circumstances, political life declares itself to be a mere *means*, whose purpose is the life of civil society. It is true that its revolutionary practice is in flagrant contradiction with its theory. Whereas, for example, security is declared one of the rights of man, violation of the privacy of correspondence is openly declared to be the order of the day. Whereas “unlimited freedom of the press” (Constitution of 1793, Article 122) is guaranteed as a consequence of the right of man to individual liberty, freedom of the press is totally destroyed, because “freedom of the press should not be permitted when it endangers public liberty.” (“Robespierre jeune,” *Historie parlementaire de la Révolution française* by Buchez and Roux, vol.28, p. 159) That is to say, therefore: The right of man to liberty ceases to be a right as soon as it comes into conflict with *political* life, whereas in theory political life is only the guarantee of human rights, the rights of the individual, and therefore must be abandoned as soon as it comes into contradiction with its *aim*, with these rights of man. But, practice is merely the exception, theory is the rule. But even if one were to regard revolutionary practice as the correct presentation of the relationship, there would still remain the puzzle of why the relationship is turned upside-down in the minds of the political emancipators and the aim appears as the means, while the means appears as the aim. This optical illusion of their consciousness would still remain a puzzle, although now a psychological, a theoretical puzzle.

The puzzle is easily solved.

Political emancipation is, at the same time, the *dissolution* of the old society on which the state alienated from the people, the sovereign power, is based. What was the character of the old society? It can be described in one word – *feudalism*. The character of the old civil society was *directly political* – that is to say, the elements of civil life, for example, property, or the family, or the mode of labor, were raised to the level of elements of political life in the form of seignior, estates, and corporations. In this form, they determined the relation of the individual to the *state as a whole* – *i.e.*, his *political* relation, that is, his relation of separation and exclusion from the other components of society. For that organization of national life did not raise property or labor to the level of social elements; on the contrary, it completed their *separation* from the state as a whole and constituted them as *discrete* societies within society. Thus, the vital functions and conditions of life of civil society remained, nevertheless, political, although political in the feudal sense – that is to say, they secluded the individual from the state as a whole and they converted the *particular* relation of his corporation to the state as a whole into his general relation to the life of the nation, just as they converted his particular civil activity and situation into his general activity and situation. As a result of this organization, the unity of the state, and also the consciousness, will, and activity of this unity, the general power of the state, are likewise bound to appear as the *particular* affair of a ruler and of his servants, isolated from the people.

The political revolution which overthrew this sovereign power and raised state affairs to become affairs of the people, which constituted the political state as a matter of *general* concern, that is, as a real state, necessarily smashed all estates, corporations, guilds, and privileges, since they were all manifestations of the separation of the people from the community. The political revolution thereby *abolished* the *political character of civil society*. It broke up civil society into its simple component parts; on the one hand, the *individuals*; on the other hand, the *material* and *spiritual* elements constituting the content of the life and social position of these individuals. It set free the political spirit, which had been, as it were, split up, partitioned, and dispersed in the various blind alleys of feudal society. It gathered the dispersed parts of the political spirit, freed it from its intermixture with civil life,

and established it as the sphere of the community, the *general* concern of the nation, ideally independent of those *particular* elements of civil life. A person's *distinct* activity and distinct situation in life were reduced to a merely individual significance. They no longer constituted the general relation of the individual to the state as a whole. Public affairs as such, on the other hand, became the general affair of each individual, and the political function became the individual's general function.

But, the completion of the idealism of the state was at the same time the completion of the materialism of civil society. Throwing off the political yoke meant at the same time throwing off the bonds which restrained the egoistic spirit of civil society. Political emancipation was, at the same time, the emancipation of civil society from politics, from having even the *semblance* of a universal content.

Feudal society was resolved into its basic element – *man*, but man as he really formed its basis – *egoistic* man.

This *man*, the member of civil society, is thus the basis, the precondition, of the *political* state. He is recognized as such by this state in the rights of man.

The liberty of egoistic man and the recognition of this liberty, however, is rather the recognition of the *unrestrained* movement of the spiritual and material elements which form the content of his life.

Hence, man was not freed from religion, he received religious freedom. He was not freed from property, he received freedom to own property. He was not freed from the egoism of business, he received freedom to engage in business.

The establishment of the political state and the dissolution of civil society into independent individuals – whose relation with one another on *law*, just as the relations of men in the system of estates and guilds depended on *privilege* – is accomplished by one and the same act. Man as a member of civil society, unpolitical man, inevitably appears, however, as the *natural* man. The “rights of man” appears as “natural rights,” because conscious activity is concentrated on the *political* act. Egoistic man is the passive result of the dissolved society, a result that is simply found in existence, an object of immediate certainty, therefore a *natural* object. The political revolution resolves civil life into its component parts, without revolutionizing these components themselves or subjecting them to criticism. It regards civil society, the world of needs, labor, private interests, civil law, as the basis of its existence, as a precondition not requiring further substantiation and therefore as its *natural* basis. Finally, man as a member of civil society is held to be man in his sensuous, individual, *immediate* existence, whereas *political* man is only abstract, artificial man, man as an allegorical, juridical person. The real man is recognized only in the shape of the egoistic individual, the true man is recognized only in the shape of the abstract citizen.

Therefore, Rousseau correctly described the abstract idea of political man as follows:

“Whoever dares undertake to establish a people's institutions must feel himself capable of changing, as it were, human nature, of transforming each individual, who by himself is a complete and solitary whole, into a part of a larger whole, from which, in a sense, the individual receives his life and his being, of substituting a limited and mental existence for the physical and independent existence. He has to take from man his own powers, and give him in exchange alien powers which he cannot employ without the help of other men.”

All emancipation is a *reduction* of the human world and relationships to *man himself*.

Political emancipation is the reduction of man, on the one hand, to a member of civil society, to an *egoistic, independent* individual, and, on the other hand, to a *citizen*, a juridical person.

Only when the real, individual man re-absorbs in himself the abstract citizen, and as an individual human being has become a *species-being* in his everyday life, in his particular work, and in his particular situation, only when man has recognized and organized his "own powers" as *social* powers, and, consequently, no longer separates social power from himself in the shape of *political* power, only then will human emancipation have been accomplished.

II

Bruno Bauer,

"The Capacity of Present-day Jews and Christians to Become Free,"

Einundzwanzig Bogen aus der Schweiz, pp. 56-71

It is in this form that Bauer deals with the relation between the Jewish and the Christian religions, and also with their relation to criticism. Their relation to criticism is their relation "to the capacity to become free."

The result arrived at is:

"The Christian has to surmount only one stage, namely, that of his religion, in order to give up religion altogether,"

and therefore become free.

"The Jew, on the other hand, has to break not only with his Jewish nature, but also with the development towards perfecting his religion, a development which has remained alien to him." (p. 71)

Thus, Bauer here transforms the question of Jewish emancipation into a purely religious question. The theological problem as to whether the Jew or the Christian has the better prospect of salvation is repeated here in the enlightened form: which of them is *more capable of emancipation*. No longer is the question asked: Is it Judaism or Christianity that makes a man free? On the contrary, the question is now: Which makes man freer, the negation of Judaism or the negation of Christianity?

"If the Jews want to become free, they should profess belief not in Christianity, but in the dissolution of Christianity, in the dissolution of religion in general, that is to say, in enlightenment, criticism, and its consequences, free humanity." (p. 70)

For the Jew, it is still a matter of a profession of faith, but no longer a profession of belief in Christianity, but of belief in Christianity in dissolution.

Bauer demands of the Jews that they should break with the essence of the Christian religion, a demand which, as he says himself, does not arise out of the development of Judaism.

Since Bauer, at the end of his work on the Jewish question, had conceived Judaism only as crude religious criticism of Christianity, and therefore saw in it "merely" a religious significance, it could be foreseen that the emancipation of the Jews, too, would be transformed into a philosophical-theological act.

Bauer considers that the *ideal*, abstract nature of the Jew, his *religion*, is his *entire* nature. Hence, he rightly concludes:

"The Jew contributes nothing to mankind if he himself disregards his narrow law," if he invalidates his entire Judaism. (p. 65)

Accordingly, the relation between Jews and Christians becomes the following: the sole interest of the Christian in the emancipation of the Jew is a general human interest, a *theoretical* interest. Judaism is a fact that offends the religious eye of the Christian. As

soon as his eye ceases to be religious, this fact ceases to be offensive. The emancipation of the Jew is, in itself, not a task for the Christian.

The Jew, on the other hand, in order to emancipate himself, has to carry out not only his own work, but also that of the Christian – *i.e.*, the *Critique of the Evangelical History of the Synoptics* and the *Life of Jesus*, etc.

“It is up to them to deal with it: they themselves will decide their fate; but history is not to be trifled with.” (p. 71)

We are trying to break with the theological formulation of the question. For us, the question of the Jew’s capacity for emancipation becomes the question: What particular *social* element has to be overcome in order to abolish Judaism? For the present-day Jew’s capacity for emancipation is the relation of Judaism to the emancipation of the modern world. This relation necessarily results from the special position of Judaism in the contemporary enslaved world.

Let us consider the actual, worldly Jew – not the *Sabbath Jew*, as Bauer does, but the *everyday Jew*.

Let us not look for the secret of the Jew in his religion, but let us look for the secret of his religion in the real Jew.

What is the secular basis of Judaism? *Practical* need, *self-interest*. What is the worldly religion of the Jew? *Huckstering*. What is his worldly God? *Money*.

Very well then! Emancipation from *huckstering* and *money*, consequently from practical, real Judaism, would be the self-emancipation of our time.

An organization of society which would abolish the preconditions for huckstering, and therefore the possibility of huckstering, would make the Jew impossible. His religious consciousness would be dissipated like a thin haze in the real, vital air of society. On the other hand, if the Jew recognizes that this *practical* nature of his is futile and works to abolish it, he extricates himself from his previous development and works for *human emancipation* as such and turns against the supreme practical expression of human self-estrangement.

We recognize in Judaism, therefore, a general *anti-social* element of the *present time*, an element which through historical development – to which in this harmful respect the Jews have zealously contributed – has been brought to its present high level, at which it must necessarily begin to disintegrate.

In the final analysis, the *emancipation of the Jews* is the emancipation of mankind from *Judaism*.

The Jew has already emancipated himself in a Jewish way.

“The Jew, who in Vienna, for example, is only tolerated, determines the fate of the whole Empire by his financial power. The Jew, who may have no rights in the smallest German state, decides the fate of Europe. While corporations and guilds refuse to admit Jews, or have not yet adopted a favorable attitude towards them, the audacity of industry mocks at the obstinacy of the material institutions.” (Bruno Bauer, *The Jewish Question*, p. 114)

This is no isolated fact. The Jew has emancipated himself in a Jewish manner, not only because he has acquired financial power, but also because, through him and also apart from him, *money* has become a world power and the practical Jewish spirit has become the practical spirit of the Christian nations. The Jews have emancipated themselves insofar as the Christians have become Jews.

Captain Hamilton, for example, reports:

“The devout and politically free inhabitant of New England is a kind of *Laocoön* who makes not the least effort to escape from the serpents which are crushing him. *Mammon* is his idol which he adores not only with his lips but with the whole force of his body and mind. In his view the world is no more than a Stock Exchange, and he is convinced that he has no other destiny here below than to become richer than his neighbor. Trade has seized upon all his thoughts, and he has no other recreation than to exchange objects. When he travels he carries, so to speak, his goods and his counter on his back and talks only of interest and profit. If he loses sight of his own business for an instant it is only in order to pry into the business of his competitors.”

Indeed, in North America, the practical domination of Judaism over the Christian world has achieved as its unambiguous and normal expression that the *preaching of the Gospel* itself and the Christian ministry have become articles of trade, and the bankrupt trader deals in the Gospel just as the Gospel preacher who has become rich goes in for business deals.

“The man who you see at the head of a respectable congregation began as a trader; his business having failed, he became a minister. The other began as a priest but as soon as he had some money at his disposal he left the pulpit to become a trader. In the eyes of very many people, the religious ministry is a veritable business career.” (Beaumont, op. cit., pp. 185,186)

According to Bauer, it is

“a fictitious state of affairs when in theory the Jew is deprived of political rights, whereas in practice he has immense power and exerts his political influence *en gros*, although it is curtailed *en détail*.” (*Die Judenfrage*, p. 114)

The contradiction that exists between the practical political power of the Jew and his political rights is the contradiction between politics and the power of money in general. Although theoretically the former is superior to the latter, in actual fact politics has become the serf of financial power.

Judaism has held its own *alongside* Christianity, not only as religious criticism of Christianity, not only as the embodiment of doubt in the religious derivation of Christianity, but equally because the practical Jewish spirit, Judaism, has maintained itself and even attained its highest development in Christian society. The Jew, who exists as a distinct member of civil society, is only a particular manifestation of the Judaism of civil society.

Judaism continues to exist not in spite of history, but owing to history.

The Jew is perpetually created by civil society from its own entrails.

What, in itself, was the basis of the Jewish religion? Practical need, egoism.

The monotheism of the Jew, therefore, is in reality the polytheism of the many needs, a polytheism which makes even the lavatory an object of divine law. **Practical need, egoism**, is the principle of *civil society*, and as such appears in pure form as soon as civil society has fully given birth to the political state. The god of *practical need and self-interest* is *money*.

Money is the jealous god of Israel, in face of which no other god may exist. Money degrades all the gods of man – and turns them into commodities. Money is the universal self-established *value* of all things. It has, therefore, robbed the whole world – both the world of men and nature – of its specific value. Money is the estranged essence of man’s work and man’s existence, and this alien essence dominates him, and he worships it.

The god of the Jews has become secularized and has become the god of the world. The bill of exchange is the real god of the Jew. His god is only an illusory bill of exchange.

The view of nature attained under the domination of private property and money is a real

contempt for, and practical debasement of, nature; in the Jewish religion, nature exists, it is true, but it exists only in imagination.

It is in this sense that [in a 1524 pamphlet] Thomas Münzer declares it intolerable

“that all creatures have been turned into property, the fishes in the water, the birds in the air, the plants on the earth; the creatures, too, must become free.”

Contempt for theory, art, history, and for man as an end in himself, which is contained in an abstract form in the Jewish religion, is the real, conscious standpoint, the virtue of the man of money. The species-relation itself, the relation between man and woman, etc., becomes an object of trade! The woman is bought and sold.

The *chimerical* nationality of the Jew is the nationality of the merchant, of the man of money in general.

The groundless law of the Jew is only a religious caricature of groundless morality and right in general, of the purely *formal* rites with which the world of self-interest surrounds itself.

Here, too, man's supreme relation is the *legal* one, his relation to laws that are valid for him not because they are laws of his own will and nature, but because they are the *dominant* laws and because departure from them is *avenged*.

Jewish Jesuitism, the same practical Jesuitism which Bauer discovers in the Talmud, is the relation of the world of self-interest to the laws governing that world, the chief art of which consists in the cunning circumvention of these laws.

Indeed, the movement of this world within its framework of laws is bound to be a continual suspension of law.

Judaism could not develop further as a *religion*, could not develop further theoretically, because the world outlook of practical need is essentially limited and is completed in a few strokes.

By its very nature, the religion of practical need could find its consummation not in theory, but only in *practice*, precisely because its truth is practice.

Judaism could not create a new world; it could only draw the new creations and conditions of the world into the sphere of its activity, because practical need, the rationale of which is self-interest, is passive and does not expand at will, but *finds* itself enlarged as a result of the continuous development of social conditions.

Judaism reaches its highest point with the perfection of civil society, but it is only in the *Christian* world that civil society attains perfection. Only under the dominance of Christianity, which makes *all* national, natural, moral, and theoretical conditions *extrinsic* to man, could civil society separate itself completely from the life of the state, sever all the species-ties of man, put egoism and selfish need in the place of these species-ties, and dissolve the human world into a world of atomistic individuals who are inimically opposed to one another.

Christianity sprang from Judaism. It has merged again in Judaism.

From the outset, the Christian was the theorizing Jew, the Jew is, therefore, the practical Christian, and the practical Christian has become a Jew again.

Christianity had only in semblance overcome real Judaism. It was too *noble-minded*, too spiritualistic to eliminate the crudity of practical need in any other way than by elevation to the skies.

Christianity is the sublime thought of Judaism, Judaism is the common practical

application of Christianity, but this application could only become general after Christianity as a developed religion had completed *theoretically* the estrangement of man from himself and from nature.

Only then could Judaism achieve universal dominance and make alienated man and alienated nature into *alienable*, vendible objects subjected to the slavery of egoistic need and to trading.

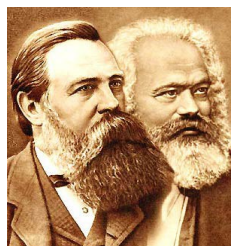
Selling [*verausserung*] is the practical aspect of alienation [*Entausserung*]. Just as man, as long as he is in the grip of religion, is able to objectify his essential nature only by turning it into something *alien*, something fantastic, so under the domination of egoistic need he can be active practically, and produce objects in practice, only by putting his products, and his activity, under the domination of an alien being, and bestowing the significance of an alien entity – money – on them.

In its perfected practice, Christian egoism of heavenly bliss is necessarily transformed into the corporal egoism of the Jew, heavenly need is turned into world need, subjectivism into self-interest. We explain the tenacity of the Jew not by his religion, but, on the contrary, by the human basis of his religion – practical need, egoism.

Since in civil society the real nature of the Jew has been universally realized and secularized, civil society could not convince the Jew of the *unreality* of his *religious* nature, which is indeed only the ideal aspect of practical need. Consequently, not only in the Pentateuch and the Talmud, but in present-day society we find the nature of the modern Jew, and not as an abstract nature but as one that is in the highest degree empirical, not merely as a narrowness of the Jew, but as the Jewish narrowness of society.

Once society has succeeded in abolishing the *empirical* essence of Judaism – huckstering and its preconditions – the Jew will have become *impossible*, because his consciousness no longer has an object, because the subjective basis of Judaism, practical need, has been humanized, and because the conflict between man's individual-sensuous existence and his species-existence has been abolished.

The social emancipation of the Jew is the emancipation of society from Judaism.



Marx and Engels

1844

The Holy Family Chapter VI 3)

d) Critical Battle Against French Materialism

Written: between September and November 1844;

First Published: The book was first published in February 1845, Frankfurt am Main.

“*Spinozism* dominated the eighteenth century both in its later French variety, which made matter into substance, and in deism, which conferred on matter a more spiritual name.... *Spinoza’s French school* and the supporters of deism were but two sects disputing over the true meaning of *his system*.... The simple fate of this Enlightenment was its decline in *romanticism* after being obliged to surrender to the reaction which began after the French movement.”

That is what *Criticism* says.

To the Critical history of French materialism we shall oppose a brief outline of its ordinary, mass-type history. We shall acknowledge with due respect the abyss between history as it really happened and history as it takes place according to the decree of “*Absolute Criticism*”, the creator equally of the old and of the new. And finally, obeying the prescriptions of *Criticism*, we shall make the “Why?”, “Whence?” and “Whither?” of Critical history the “object of a persevering study”.

“Speaking *exactly* and in the *prosaic sense*”, the French Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, and in particular *French materialism*, was not only a struggle against the existing political institutions and the existing religion and theology; it was just as much an *open, clearly expressed* struggle against the *metaphysics of the seventeenth century*, and against all *metaphysics*, in particular that of *Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza and Leibniz*. Philosophy was counterposed to *metaphysics*, just as *Feuerbach*, in his first resolute attack on *Hegel*, counterposed *sober philosophy* to *wild speculation*. Seventeenth century *metaphysics*, driven from the field by the *French Enlightenment*, notably, by French materialism of the eighteenth century, experienced a *victorious and substantial restoration* in *German philosophy*, particularly in the *speculative German philosophy* of the nineteenth century. After *Hegel* linked it in a masterly fashion with all subsequent metaphysics and with German idealism and founded a metaphysical universal kingdom, the attack on theology again corresponded, as in the eighteenth century, to an attack on *speculative metaphysics* and *metaphysics in general*. It will be defeated for ever by *materialism*, which has now been perfected by the work of *speculation* itself and coincides with *humanism*. But just as *Feuerbach* is the representative of *materialism* coinciding with *humanism* in the *theoretical* domain, French and English *socialism* and *communism* represent materialism coinciding with *humanism* in the *practical* domain.

“Speaking *exactly* and in the *prosaic sense*”, there are *two trends* in *French materialism*; one traces its origin to *Descartes*, the other to *Locke*. The latter is *mainly a French* development and leads directly to *socialism*. The former, *mechanical* materialism, merges with French *natural science* proper. The two trends intersect in the course of development. We have no need here to go more deeply into the French materialism that derives directly from *Descartes*, any more than into the French school of *Newton* and the development of French natural science in general.

We shall therefore merely say the following:

Descartes in his *physics* endowed *matter* with self-creative power and conceived *mechanical* motion as the manifestation of its life. He completely separated his *physics* from his *metaphysics*. *Within* his physics, *matter* is the sole *substance*, the sole basis of being and of knowledge.

Mechanical French materialism adopted *Descartes’ physics* in opposition to his metaphysics. His followers were by profession *anti-metaphysicians*, i.e., *physicists*.

This school begins with the *physician Le Roy*, reaches its zenith with the physician *Cabanis*, and the physician *La Mettrie* is its centre. *Descartes* was still living when *Le Roy*,

like *La Mettrie* in the eighteenth century, transposed the Cartesian structure of the animal to the human soul and declared that the soul is a *modus of the body* and *ideas* are *mechanical motions*. Le Roy even thought Descartes had kept his real opinion secret. Descartes protested. At the end of the eighteenth century *Cabanis* perfected Cartesian materialism in his treatise: *Rapport du physique et du moral de l'homme*.

Cartesian materialism still exists today in France. It has achieved great successes in *mechanical natural science* which, "speaking *exactly* and in the *prosaic sense*", will be least of all reproached with *romanticism*.

The *metaphysics* of the seventeenth century, represented in France by *Descartes*, had *materialism* as its *antagonist* from its very birth. The latter's opposition to Descartes was personified by *Gassendi*, the restorer of *Epicurean* materialism. French and English materialism was always closely related to *Democritus* and *Epicurus*. Cartesian metaphysics had another opponent in the *English* materialist *Hobbes*. Gassendi and Hobbes triumphed over their opponent long after their death at the very time when metaphysics was already officially dominant in all French schools.

Voltaire pointed out that the indifference of the French of the eighteenth century to the disputes between the Jesuits and the Jansenists was due less to philosophy than to *Law's* financial speculations. So the downfall of seventeenth-century metaphysics can be explained by the materialistic theory of the eighteenth century only in so far as this theoretical movement itself is explained by the practical nature of French life at that time. This life was turned to the immediate present, to worldly enjoyment and worldly interests, to the *earthly* world. Its anti-theological, anti-metaphysical, materialistic practice demanded corresponding anti-theological, anti-metaphysical, materialistic theories. Metaphysics had *in practice* lost all credit. Here we have only to indicate briefly the *theoretical* course of events.

In the seventeenth century metaphysics (cf. Descartes, Leibniz, and others) still contained a *positive*, secular element. It made discoveries in mathematics, physics and other exact sciences which seemed to come within its scope. This semblance was done away with as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century. The positive sciences broke away from metaphysics and marked out their independent fields. The whole wealth of metaphysics now consisted only of beings of thought and heavenly things, at the very time when real beings and earthly things began to be the centre of all interest. Metaphysics had become insipid. In the very year in which Malebranche and Arnauld, the last great French metaphysicians of the seventeenth century, died, *Helvétius* and *Condillac* were born.

The man who deprived seventeenth-century metaphysics and metaphysics in general of all *credit* in the domain of *theory* was *Pierre Bayle*. His weapon was *scepticism*, which he forged out of metaphysics' own magic formulas. He himself proceeded at first from Cartesian metaphysics. Just as *Feuerbach* by combating speculative theology was driven further to combat *speculative philosophy*, precisely because he recognised in speculation the last drop of theology, because he had to force theology to retreat from pseudo-science to *crude*, repulsive *faith*, so Bayle too was driven by religious doubt to doubt about the metaphysics which was the prop of that faith. He therefore critically investigated metaphysics in its entire historical development. He became its historian in order to write the history of its death. He refuted chiefly *Spinoza* and *Leibniz*.

Pierre Bayle not only prepared the reception of materialism and of the philosophy of common sense in France by shattering metaphysics with his scepticism. He heralded the *atheistic society* which was soon to come into existence by proving that a society consisting only of atheists is *possible*, that an atheist can be a man worthy of respect, and that it is not by atheism but by superstition and idolatry that man debases himself.

To quote a French writer, *Pierre Bayle* was “the last metaphysician in the sense of the seventeenth century and *the first philosopher in the sense of the eighteenth century*”.

Besides the negative refutation of seventeenth-century theology and metaphysics, a *positive, anti-metaphysical* system was required. A book was needed which would systematise and theoretically substantiate the life practice of that time. *Locke's* treatise *An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding* came from across the Channel as if in answer to a call. It was welcomed enthusiastically like a long-awaited guest.

The question arises: Is *Locke* perhaps a disciple of *Spinoza*? “Profane” history can answer:

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

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

The real progenitor of *English materialism* and all *modern experimental* science is *Bacon*. To him natural philosophy is the only true philosophy, and *physics* based upon the experience of the senses is the chiefest part of natural philosophy. *Anaxagoras* and his *homoeomeriae*, *Democritus* and his atoms, he often quotes as his authorities. According to him the *senses* are infallible and the *source* of all knowledge. All science is based on *experience*, and consists in subjecting the data furnished by the senses to a *rational method* of investigation. Induction, analysis, comparison, observation, experiment, are the principal forms of such a rational method. Among the qualities inherent in *matter*, *motion* is the first and foremost, not only in the form of *mechanical* and *mathematical* motion, *but* chiefly in the form of an *impulse*, a *vital spirit*, a *tension* — or a ‘*Qual*’, to use a term of *Jakob Böhme's* — of matter. The primary forms of matter are the living, individualising *forces of being* inherent in it and producing the distinctions between the species.

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

In its further evolution, materialism becomes *one-sided*. *Hobbes* is the man who *systematises Baconian* materialism. Knowledge based upon the senses loses its poetic blossom, it passes into the abstract experience of the *geometrician*. *Physical* motion is sacrificed to *mechanical* or *mathematical* motion; *geometry* is proclaimed as the queen of sciences. Materialism takes to *misanthropy*. If it is to overcome its opponent, *misanthropic*, *fleshless* spiritualism, and that on the latter's own ground, materialism has to chastise its own flesh and turn *ascetic*. Thus it passes into an *intellectual entity*; but thus, too, it evolves all the consistency, regardless of consequences, characteristic of the intellect.

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

is *meaningless*, unless it states that our mind is capable of performing an endless process of addition. Only material things being perceptible, knowable to us, we cannot know *anything* about the existence of God. My own existence alone is certain. Every human passion is a mechanical movement which has a beginning and an end. The objects of impulse are what we call good. Man is subject to the same laws as nature. Power and freedom are identical.

Hobbes had systematised Bacon without, however, furnishing a proof for Bacon's fundamental principle, the origin of all human knowledge and ideas from the world of sensation.

It was *Locke* who, in his *Essay on the Humane Understanding*, supplied this proof.

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

We have already mentioned how opportune Locke's work was for the French. Locke founded the philosophy of *bon sens*, of common sense; i.e., he said indirectly that there cannot be any philosophy at variance with the healthy human senses and reason based on them.

Locke's *immediate* pupil, *Condillac*, who translated him into *French*, at once applied Locke's sensualism against seventeenth-century *metaphysics*. He proved that the French had rightly rejected this metaphysics as a mere botch work of fancy and theological prejudice. He published a refutation of the systems of *Descartes*, *Spinoza*, *Leibniz* and *Malebranche*.

In his *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* he expounded Locke's ideas and proved that not only the soul, but the senses too, not only the art of creating ideas, but also the art of sensuous perception, are matters of *experience* and *habit*. The whole development of man therefore depends on *education* and *external circumstances*. It was only by *eclectic* philosophy that Condillac was ousted from the French schools.

The difference between *French* and *English* materialism reflects the difference between the two nations. The French imparted to English materialism wit, flesh and blood, and eloquence. They gave it the temperament and grace that it lacked. They *civilised* it.

In *Helvétius*, who also based himself on Locke, materialism assumed a really French character. Helvétius conceived it immediately in its application to social life (*Helvétius*, *De l'homme*). The sensory qualities and self-love, enjoyment and correctly understood personal interest are the basis of all morality. The natural equality of human intelligences, the unity of progress of reason and progress of industry, the natural goodness of man, and the omnipotence of education, are the main features in his system.

In *Lamettrie's* works we find a synthesis of Cartesian and English materialism. He makes use of Descartes' physics in detail. His *Man Machine* is a treatise after the model of Descartes' animal-machine. The physical part of Holbach's *Système de la nature* is also a result of the combination of French and English materialism, while the moral part is based essentially on the morality of Helvétius. *Robinet* (*De la nature*), the French materialist who had the most connection with metaphysics and was therefore praised by Hegel, refers explicitly to *Leibniz*.

We need not dwell on Volney, Dupuis, Diderot and others, any more than on the physiocrats, after we have proved the dual origin of French materialism from Descartes' physics and English materialism, and the opposition of French materialism to seventeenth-century *metaphysics*, to the metaphysics of Descartes, Spinoza, Malebranche, and

Leibniz. This opposition only became evident to the Germans after they themselves had come into opposition to *speculative metaphysics*.

Just as *Cartesian* materialism passes into *natural science proper*, the other trend of French materialism leads directly to *socialism* and *communism*.

There is no need for any great penetration to see from the teaching of materialism on the original goodness and equal intellectual endowment of men, the omnipotence of experience, habit and education, and the influence of environment on man, the great significance of industry, the justification of enjoyment, etc., how necessarily materialism is connected with communism and socialism. If man draws all his knowledge, sensation, etc., from the world of the senses and the experience gained in it, then what has to be done is to arrange the empirical world in such a way that man experiences and becomes accustomed to what is truly human in it and that he becomes aware of himself as man. If correctly understood interest is the principle of all morality, man's private interest must be made to coincide with the interest of humanity. If man is unfree in the materialistic sense, i.e., is free not through the negative power to avoid this or that, but through the positive power to assert his true individuality, crime must not be punished in the individual, but the anti-social sources of crime must be destroyed, and each man must be given social scope for the vital manifestation of his being. If man is shaped by environment, his environment must be made human. If man is social by nature, he will develop his true nature only in society, and the power of his nature must be measured not by the power of the separate individual but by the power of society. These and similar propositions are to be found almost literally even in the oldest French materialists. This is not the place to assess them. The apologia of vices by Mandeville, one of Locke's early English followers, is typical of the socialist tendencies of materialism. He proves that in *modern* society vice is *indispensable* and *useful*. [Bernard de. Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*] This was by no means an apologia for modern society.

Fourier proceeds directly from the teaching of the French materialists. The *Babouvists* were crude, uncivilised materialists, but developed communism, too, derives *directly* from *French materialism*. The latter returned to its mother-country, *England*, in the form *Helvétius* gave it. *Bentham* based his system of *correctly understood interest* on *Helvétius'* morality, and *Owen* proceeded from *Bentham's* system to found English communism. Exiled to England, the Frenchman *Cabet* came under the influence of communist ideas there and on his return to France became the most popular, if the most superficial, representative of communism. Like *Owen*, the more scientific French Communists, *Dézamy*, *Gay* and others, developed the teaching of *materialism* as the teaching of *real humanism* and the *logical* basis of *communism*.

Where, then, did Herr Bauer or, *Criticism*, manage to acquire the documents for the Critical history of French materialism?

1) Hegel's [*Vorlesungen über die*] *Geschichte der Philosophie* presents French materialism as the *realisation* of the Substance of Spinoza, which at any rate is far more comprehensible than "the French school of Spinoza".

2) Herr *Bauer* read Hegel's *Geschichte der Philosophie* as saying that French materialism was the *school* of Spinoza. Then, as he found in another of Hegel's works that deism and materialism are *two parties* representing *one and the same* basic principle, he concluded that Spinoza had *two* schools which disputed over the meaning of his system. Herr Bauer could have found the supposed explanation in Hegel's *Phänomenologie*, where it is said:

"Regarding that Absolute Being, *Enlightenment* itself fails out with itself ... and is divided between the views of *two parties*.... The one ... calls *Absolute Being* that predicateless

Absolute ... the other calls it *matter* Both are entirely the *same* notion — the distinction lies not in the objective fact, but purely in the diversity of starting-point adopted by the two developments” (Hegel, *Phänomenologie*, pp. 420, 421, 422)

3) Finally Herr Bauer could find, again in Hegel, that when Substance does not develop into a concept and self-consciousness, it degenerates into “romanticism”. The journal *Hallische Jahrbücher* at one time developed a similar theory.

But at all costs *the “Spirit”* had to decree a “*foolish destiny*” for its “*adversary*”, *materialism*.

Note. French materialism’s connection with Descartes and Locke and the opposition of eighteenth-century philosophy to seventeenth-century metaphysics are presented in detail in most recent *French* histories of philosophy. In this respect, we had only to repeat against Critical Criticism what was already known. But the connection of eighteenth-century materialism with English and French *communism* of the nineteenth century still needs to be presented in detail. We confine ourselves here to quoting a few typical passages from Helvétius, Holbach and Bentham.

1) *Helvétius*. “Man is not wicked, but he is subordinate to his interests. One must not therefore complain of the wickedness of man but of the ignorance of the legislators, who have always placed the particular interest in opposition to the general interest.” — “The moralists have so far had no success because we have to dig into legislation to pull out the roots which create vice. In New Orleans women have the right to repudiate their husbands as soon as they are tired of them. In countries like that women are not faithless, because they have no interest in being so.” — “Morality is but a frivolous science when not combined with politics and legislation The hypocritical moralists can be recognised on the one hand by the equanimity with which they consider vices which undermine the state, and on the other by the fury with which they condemn private vice” — “Human beings are born neither good nor bad but ready to become one or the other according as a common interest unites or divides them.” — “If citizens could not achieve their own particular good without achieving the general good, there would be no vicious people except fools” (*De l’esprit*. 1, Paris, 1822, pp. 117, 240, 241, 249, 251, 369 and 339).

As, according to Helvétius, it is education, by which he means (cf. loc. cit., p. 390) not only education in the ordinary sense but the totality of the individual’s conditions of life, which forms man, if a reform is necessary to abolish the contradiction between particular interests and those of society, so, on the other hand, a transformation of consciousness is necessary to carry out such a reform:

“Great reforms can be implemented only by weakening the stupid respect of peoples for old laws and customs” (loc. cit., p. 260)

or, as he says elsewhere, by abolishing ignorance.

2) *Holbach*. “Man can only love himself in the objects he loves: he can have affection only for himself in the other beings of his-kind.” “Man can never separate himself from himself for a single instant in his life, he cannot lose sight of himself.” “It is always our convenience, our interest ... that makes us hate or love things.” (*Système social*, t. 1, Paris, 1822, 56 pp. 80, 112), but “In his own interest man must love other men, because they are necessary to welfare.... Morality proves to him that of all beings the most necessary to man is man.” (p. 76). “True morality, and true politics as well, is that which seeks to bring men nearer to one another to make them work by united efforts for their common happiness. Any morality which separates our interests from *those of our* associates, is false, senseless, unnatural.” (p. 116). “To love others ... is to merge our interests with *those of our* associates, to work for the common benefit.... Virtue is but the usefulness of men united in *society*”.(p. 77). “A man without desires or passions would cease to be a man.... Perfectly detached from himself, how could one make him decide to

attach himself to others? A man indifferent to everything and having no passions, sufficient to himself, would cease to be a social being.... Virtue is but the communication of good.” (loc. cit., p. 118). “ Religious morality never served to make mortals more sociable.” (loc. cit., p. 36).

3) *Bentham*. We only quote one passage from Bentham in which he opposes “*intérêt général* in the political sense” “The interest of individuals ... must give way to the public interest. But ... what does that mean? Is not each individual part of the public as much as any other? This public interest that you personify is but an abstract term: it represents but the mass of individual interests.... If it were good to sacrifice the fortune of one individual to increase that of others, it would be better to sacrifice that of a second, a third, and so on ad infinitum.... Individual interests are the only real interests.” (Bentham, *Théorie des peines et des récompenses*, Paris, 1826, 3ème 6d., II, p. [229], 230).



Karl Marx

Theses On Feuerbach

1845

Written: by Marx in Brussels in the spring of 1845, under the title “1) *ad* Feuerbach”;

1

The main defect of all hitherto-existing materialism — that of Feuerbach included — is that the Object [*der Gegenstand*], actuality, sensuousness, are conceived only in the form of the object [*Objekts*], or of contemplation [*Anschauung*], but not as human sensuous activity, practice [*Praxis*], not subjectively. Hence it happened that the active side, in opposition to materialism, was developed by idealism — but only abstractly, since, of course, idealism does not know real, sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects [*Objekte*], differentiated from thought-objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as objective [*gegenständliche*] activity. In *The Essence of Christianity* [*Das Wesen des Christenthums*], he therefore regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, while practice is conceived and defined only in its dirty-Jewish form of appearance [*Erscheinungsform*][1]. Hence he does not grasp the significance of ‘revolutionary’, of ‘practical-critical’, activity.

2

The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question

of theory but is a **practical** question. Man must prove the truth, *i.e.*, the reality and power, the this-sidedness [*Diesseitigkeit*] of his thinking, in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question.

3

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of changed circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that the educator must himself be educated. Hence this doctrine is bound to divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society. The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-change [*Selbstveränderung*] can be conceived and rationally understood only as **revolutionary practice**.

4

Feuerbach starts off from the fact of religious self-estrangement [*Selbstentfremdung*], of the duplication of the world into a religious, imaginary world, and a secular [*weltliche*] one. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis. He overlooks the fact that after completing this work, the chief thing still remains to be done. For the fact that the secular basis lifts off from itself and establishes itself in the clouds as an independent realm can only be explained by the inner strife and intrinsic contradictoriness of this secular basis. The latter must itself be understood in its contradiction and then, by the removal of the contradiction, revolutionised. Thus, for instance, once the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the holy family, the former must itself be annihilated [*vernichtet*] theoretically and practically.

5

Feuerbach, not satisfied with **abstract thinking**, wants **sensuous contemplation** [*Anschauung*]; but he does not conceive sensuousness as **practical**, human-sensuous activity.

6

Feuerbach resolves the essence of religion into the essence of man [*menschliche Wesen* = 'human nature']. But the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In reality, it is the ensemble of the social relations. Feuerbach, who does not enter upon a criticism of this real essence is hence obliged:

1. To abstract from the historical process and to define the religious sentiment regarded by itself, and to presuppose an abstract — isolated - human individual.
2. The essence therefore can by him only be regarded as 'species', as an inner 'dumb' generality which unites many individuals only in a **natural** way.

7

Feuerbach consequently does not see that the 'religious sentiment' is itself a **social product**, and that the abstract individual that he analyses belongs in reality to a particular social form.

8

All social life is essentially **practical**. All mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.

9

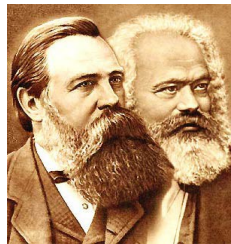
The highest point reached by contemplative [*anschauende*] materialism, that is, materialism which does not comprehend sensuousness as practical activity, is the contemplation of single individuals and of civil society [*bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*].

10

The standpoint of the old materialism is civil society; the standpoint of the new is human society or social humanity.

11

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



Marx and Engels

The German Ideology

1845

We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, **religion**, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. **Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life.** In the first method of approach the starting-point is consciousness taken as the living individual; in the second method, which conforms to real life, it is the real living individuals themselves, and consciousness is considered solely as their consciousness.

Consciousness is, therefore, from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all. Consciousness is at first, of course, merely consciousness concerning the immediate sensuous environment and consciousness of the limited connection with other persons and things outside the individual who is growing self-conscious. At the same time it is consciousness of nature, which first appears to men as a completely alien, all-powerful and unassailable force, with which men's relations are purely animal and by which they are overawed like beasts; it is thus a purely animal consciousness of nature (**natural religion**) just because nature is as yet hardly modified historically. (We see here immediately: this natural religion or this particular relation of men to nature is determined by the form of society and vice versa. Here, as everywhere, the identity of nature and man appears in such a way that the restricted relation of men to nature determines their restricted relation to one another, and their restricted relation to one another determines men's restricted relation to nature.) On the other hand, man's consciousness of the necessity of associating with the individuals around him is the beginning of the consciousness that he is living in society at all. This beginning is as animal as social life itself at this stage. It is mere herd-consciousness, and at this point man is only distinguished from sheep by the fact that with him consciousness takes the place of instinct or that his instinct is a conscious one. This sheep-like or tribal consciousness receives its further development and extension through increased productivity, the increase of needs, and, what is fundamental to both of these, the increase of population. With these there develops the division of labour, which was originally nothing but the division of labour in the sexual act, then that division of labour which develops spontaneously or "naturally" by virtue of natural predisposition (e.g. physical strength), needs, accidents, etc. etc. Division of labour only becomes truly such from the moment when a division of material and mental labour appears. (The first form of ideologists, priests, is concurrent.) From this moment onwards consciousness can really flatter itself that it is something other than consciousness of existing practice, that it really represents something without representing something real; from now on consciousness is in a position to emancipate itself from the world and to proceed to the formation of "pure" theory, theology, philosophy, ethics, etc. But even if this theory, theology, philosophy, ethics, etc. comes into contradiction with the existing relations, this can only occur because existing social relations have come into contradiction with existing forces of production; this, moreover, can also occur in a particular national sphere of relations through the appearance of the contradiction, not within the national orbit, but between this national consciousness and the practice of other nations, i.e. between the national and the general consciousness of a nation (as we see it now in Germany).

In history up to the present it is certainly an empirical fact that separate individuals have, with the broadening of their activity into world-historical activity, become more and more enslaved under a power alien to them (a pressure which they have conceived of as a dirty trick on the part of the so-called universal spirit, etc.), a power which has become more and more enormous and, in the last instance, turns out to be the world market. But it is just as empirically established that, by the overthrow of the existing state of society by the communist revolution (of which more below) and the abolition of private property which is identical with it, this power, which so baffles the German theoreticians, will be dissolved; and that then the liberation of each single individual will be accomplished in the measure in which history becomes transformed into world history. From the above it is clear that the real intellectual wealth of the individual depends entirely on the wealth of his real connections. Only then will the separate individuals be liberated from the various national and local barriers, be brought into practical connection with the material and intellectual

production of the whole world and be put in a position to acquire the capacity to enjoy this all-sided production of the whole earth (the creations of man). *All-round* dependence, this natural form of the world-historical co-operation of individuals, will be transformed by this communist revolution into the control and conscious mastery of these powers, which, born of the action of men on one another, have till now overawed and governed men as powers completely alien to them.

For the mass of men, i.e., the proletariat, these theoretical notions do not exist and hence do not require to be dissolved, and if this mass ever had any theoretical notions, e.g., religion, these have now long been dissolved by circumstances.

Thus if millions of proletarians feel by no means contented with their living conditions, if their "existence" does not in the least correspond to their "essence," then, according to the passage quoted, this is an unavoidable misfortune, which must be borne quietly. The millions of proletarians and communists, however, think differently and will prove this in time, when they bring their "existence" into harmony with their "essence" in a practical way, by means of a revolution. Feuerbach, therefore, never speaks of the world of man in such cases, but always takes refuge in external nature, and moreover in nature which has not yet been subdued by men. But every new invention, every advance made by industry, detaches another piece from this domain, so that the ground which produces examples illustrating such Feuerbachian propositions is steadily shrinking.

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. Insofar, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch. For instance, in an age and in a country where royal power, aristocracy, and bourgeoisie are contending for mastery and where, therefore, mastery is shared, the doctrine of the separation of powers proves to be the dominant idea and is expressed as an "eternal law."

The division of labour, which we already saw above as one of the chief forces of history up till now, manifests itself also in the ruling class as the division of mental and material labour, so that inside this class one part appears as the thinkers of the class (its active, conceptive ideologists, who make the perfecting of the illusion of the class about itself their chief source of livelihood), while the others' attitude to these ideas and illusions is more passive and receptive, because they are in reality the active members of this class and have less time to make up illusions and ideas about themselves. Within this class this cleavage can even develop into a certain opposition and hostility between the two parts, which, however, in the case of a practical collision, in which the class itself is endangered, automatically comes to nothing, in which case there also vanishes the semblance that the ruling ideas were not the ideas of the ruling class and had a power distinct from the power of this class. The existence of revolutionary ideas in a particular period presupposes the existence of a revolutionary class; about the premises for the latter sufficient has already been said above.

Its victory, therefore, benefits also many individuals of the other classes which are not winning a dominant position, but only insofar as it now puts these individuals in a position to raise themselves into the ruling class. When the French bourgeoisie overthrew the power of the aristocracy, it thereby made it possible for many proletarians to raise themselves above the proletariat, but only insofar as they become bourgeois. Every new class, therefore, achieves its hegemony only on a broader basis than that of the class ruling previously, whereas the opposition of the non-ruling class against the new ruling class later develops all the more sharply and profoundly. Both these things determine the fact that the struggle to be waged against this new ruling class, in its turn, aims at a more decided and radical negation of the previous conditions of society than could all previous classes which sought to rule.

In religion people make their empirical world into an entity that is only conceived, imagined, that confronts them as something foreign. This is again in no means to be explained from other concepts, from "self-consciousness" and similar nonsense, but from the entire hitherto existing mode of production and intercourse, which is just as independent of the pure concept as the invention of the self-acting mule and the use of railways are independent of Hegelian philosophy. If he wants to speak of an "essence" of religion, i.e., of a material basis of this inessentiality, then he should look for it neither in the "essence of man", nor in the predicate of God, but in the material world, which each stage of religious development finds in existence. They, the creators, have bowed down before their creations.

The Leipzig Council. III. Saint Max

5. "Stirner" Delighted in His Construction

Saint Max, poor in spirit, believes in the fantastic gas formations of the Christians arising from the decomposition of the ancient world.

The ancient Christian owned nothing in this world and was, therefore, satisfied with his imaginary heavenly property and his divine right to ownership. Instead of making the world the possession of the people, he proclaimed himself and his ragged fraternity to be "God's own possession" (1 Peter 2:9). According to "Stirner", the Christian idea of the world is the world into which the ancient world is actually dissolved, although this is at most [a world] of fantasy into which the world of ancient ideas has [been transformed] and in which the Christian [by faith] can move mountains, can feel [all-powerful] and press forward to a position where the "mechanical impact is ineffective". Since for "Stirner" people are no longer determined by the [external] world, are no longer driven forward by the mechanical impact of the need to produce, since, in general, the mechanical impact, and with it the sexual act as well, has ceased to operate, it is only by a miracle that

\ Matthew 11 :27.— Ed.

b Matthew 5 : 3.—Ed.

they have been able to continue to exist. Of course, for German prigs and schoolmasters with a gaseous content like that of "Stirner", it is far easier to be satisfied with the Christian fantasy about property—which is truly nothing but the property of Christian fantasy—than to describe the transformation of the real property relations and production relations of the ancient world.

That same primitive Christian who, in the imagination of Jacques le bonhomme, was the owner of the ancient world, actually belonged for the most part to the world of owners; he was a slave and could be sold on the market. But "Stirner", delighted in his construction, irrepressibly continues his rejoicing.

"The first property, the first splendour has been won!" (p. 124).

In the same way, Stirner's egoism continues to gain property and splendour and to achieve "complete victories". The theological attitude of the primitive Christian to the ancient world is the perfect prototype of all his property and all his splendour. The following are the grounds given for this property of the Christian:

"The world has lost its divine character ... it has become prosaic, it is my property, which I dispose of as I (viz., the spirit) choose" (p. 124).

This means: the world has lost its divine character, therefore, it is freed from my fantasies for my own consciousness; it has become prosaic, consequently its relation to me is prosaic and it disposes of me in the prosaic way it favours, by no means to please me. Apart from the fact that "Stirner" here actually thinks that in ancient times the prosaic world did not exist and the divine principle held sway in the world, he even falsifies the Christian concept, which continually bemoans its impotence in relation to the world, and itself depicts its victory over the world in its fantasy as merely an ideal one, by transferring it to the day of judgment. Only when a great secular power took possession of Christianity and exploited it, whereupon, of course, it ceased to be unworldly, could Christianity imagine itself to be the owner of the world. Saint Max ascribes to the Christian the same false relation to the ancient world as he ascribes to the youth with regard to the "world of the child"; he puts the egoist in the same relation to the world of the Christian as he puts the man to the world of the youth.

The Christian has now nothing more to do than to become poor in spirit as quickly as possible and perceive the world of spirit in all its vanity—just as he did with the world of things—in order to be able to "dispose as he chooses" of the world of spirit also, whereby he becomes a perfect Christian, an egoist. The attitude of the Christian to the ancient world serves, therefore, as the standard for the attitude of the egoist to the modern world. The preparation for this spiritual poverty was the content of "almost two thousand years" of life—a life whose main epochs, of course, took place only in Germany.

"After various transformations the holy spirit in the course of time became the absolute idea, which again in manifold refractions split up into the various ideas of love of mankind, civic virtue, rationality, etc." (pp. 125, 126).

The German stay-at-home again turns the thing upside-down.

The ideas of love of mankind, etc.—coins whose impressions had already been totally worn away, particularly owing to their great circulation in the eighteenth century—were recast by Hegel in the sublimate of the absolute idea, but after this reminting they were just as little successful in retaining their value abroad as Prussian paper money.

The consistent conclusion—which has already appeared again and again—of Stirner's view of history is as follows:

"Concepts should play the decisive role everywhere, concepts should regulate life, concepts should rule. That is the religious world to which Hegel gave systematic expression" (p. 126), and which our good-natured philistine so much mistakes for the real world that on the following page (p. 127) he can say:

"Now nothing but spirit rules in the world."

Stuck fast in this world of illusion, he can (on p. 128) build first of all an "altar" and then "erect a church" "round this altar", a church whose "walls" have legs for making progress and "move ever farther forward". "Soon this church embraces the

whole earth." He, the unique, and Szeliga, his servant, stand outside, they "wander round these walls, and are driven out to the very edge". "Howling with agonising hunger", Saint Max calls to his servant: "One step more and the world of the holy has conquered." But Szeliga suddenly "sinks into the outermost abyss", which lies above him—a literary miracle! For, since the earth is a sphere, the abyss can only lie above Szeliga as soon as the church embraces the whole earth. So he reverses the laws of gravity, ascends backwards into heaven and thereby reflects honour on "unique" natural science, which is all the easier for him since, according to page 126, "the nature of the thing and the concept of relation" are a matter of indifference to "Stirner", "do not guide him in his treatment or conclusion", and the "relationship into which" Szeliga "entered" with gravity "is itself unique" by virtue of Szeliga's "uniqueness", and by no means "depends" on the nature of gravity or on how "others", for instance, natural scientists, "classify it". "Stirner" moreover objects to Szeliga's "action being separated from the real" Szeliga and "assessed according to human standards".

Having thus arranged for decent accommodation in heaven for his faithful servant, Saint Max passes on to the subject of his own passion. On page 95 he discovers that even the "gallows" has the "colour of the holy"; "people loathe coming into contact with it, there is something uncanny, i.e., unfamiliar, strange about it". In order to transcend this strangeness of the gallows, he transforms it into his own gallows, which he can only do by hanging himself on it.

The lion of Juda makes also this last sacrifice to egoism. The holy Christian allows himself to be nailed to the cross, not to redeem the cross, but to redeem people from their impiety; the unholy Christian hangs himself on the gallows in order to redeem the gallows from holiness or to redeem himself from the strangeness of the gallows.



Karl Marx

THE COMMUNISM OF THE RHEINISCHER BEOBACHTER

Written on September 5, 1847

First published in the Published in full in English for the Deutsche-Brüsseler-Zeitung No. 73, first time September 12, 1847

Brussels, September 5.—

In issue No. 70 of this newspaper an article from the Rheinischer] Beobachter is introduced with the words:

"In issue No. 2t)6 the Rheinischer] Beobachter] preaches communism as follows." Whether or not this comment is intended ironically, Communists must protest against the idea that the Rheinischer Beobachter could preach "communism", and especially against the idea that the article communicated in issue No. 70 of the D[eutsche]-B[rüsseler]-Z[eitung] is communist.

If a certain section of German socialists has continually blustered against the liberal

bourgeoisie, and has done so, in a manner which has benefited nobody but the German governments, and if at present government newspapers like the Rheinischer] Beobachter, basing themselves on the empty phrases of these people, claim that it is not the liberal bourgeoisie but the government which represents the interests of the proletariat, then the Communists have nothing in common with either the former or the latter.

Certain people have admittedly wished to lay the responsibility for this on the German Communists, they have accused them of being in alliance with the government.

This accusation is ludicrous. The government cannot unite with the Communists, nor the Communists with the government, for the simple reason that of all the revolutionary parties in Germany the Communists are by far the most revolutionary, and that the government knows this better than anyone else.

Can Communists unite with a government which has pronounced them guilty of high treason and treats them as such?

Can the government propagate in its press principles, which, in France, are considered to be anarchistic, incendiary and destructive of all social relations, and to which this same government continually ascribes the very same characteristics? It is inconceivable. Let us examine the so-called communism of the Rheinischer Beobachter, and we shall find that it is very innocent.

The article begins:

"If we examine our (!) social condition, then the greatest distress and the most pressing want reveal themselves everywhere (!), and we have to admit that much has been neglected. This is, indeed, a fact, and the only (!) question which arises, is what causes it. We are convinced that our constitution does not bear the responsibility for this, for (!) as far as social conditions are concerned matters are (!) still worse in France and England. Nevertheless (!) liberalism seeks the remedy in representation alone; if the people were represented, it would help itself. This is quite illusory to be sure, but nonetheless (!) extremely (!) plausible."

In this paragraph we see the Beobachter [observer] before us, in the flesh—the way he chews his pen, at a loss for an introduction, speculates, writes, crosses out, writes again, and then finally, after some considerable time, produces the above magnificent passage. In order to arrive at liberalism, his own inherited hobby-horse, he begins with "our social condition", that is, strictly speaking, the social condition of the Beobachter, which may very well have its ^unpleasantnesses.

By means of the extremely trivial observation that our social condition is miserable and that much has been neglected, he arrives, by way of some very thorny sentences, at a point where the only question which arises for him, is what causes it. This question arises for him, however, only to disappear again at once.

The Beobachter does not, in fact, tell us what causes it, neither does he tell us what does not cause it, he tells us merely what he is convinced does not cause it, and that is, of course, the Prussian constitution.

From the Prussian constitution, by means of a bold "for", he arrives at France and England, and from here to Prussian liberalism is for him of course only a trifling leap, which, supported by the least motivated "nevertheless" conceivable, he accomplishes with ease.

And thus at last he has reached his favourite terrain, where he can exclaim, "This is quite illusory to be sure, but nonetheless extremely plausible." But nonetheless extremely!!!

Is it possible that the Communists have sunk so low that the paternity of such utterances, such classical transitions, such questions, arising and disappearing with ease, such remarkable Onlys, Fofs and Nevertheless"s, and above all the

phrase "but nonetheless extremely", should be ascribed to them?

Besides the "Old General", Arnold Ruge, there are only a few men in Germany who can write in this way, and these few are all Consistorial Counsellors in Herr Eichhorn's ministry.

We cannot be required to go into the contents of this introductory passage. It has no content other than the awkwardness of its form, it is merely the portal through which we step into the hall where our observing Consistorial Counsellor is preaching a crusade against liberalism.

Let us listen:

"Liberalism has above all the advantage that its approach to the people takes easier and more pleasant forms than does that of the bureaucracy." (Indeed, not even Herr Dahlmann or Gervinus writes such clumsy and angular prose.) "It speaks of the welfare and the rights of the people. In reality, however, it only pushes the people forward in order thereby to intimidate the government; it considers the people only as cannon fodder in the great onslaught against the power of the government. To Seize the power of the state—this is the true tendency of liberalism, the welfare of the people is only of secondary importance to it."

Does the Herr Consistorial Counsellor believe he has told the people anything new with this? The people, and in particular the communist section of the people, knows very well that the liberal bourgeoisie is only pursuing its own interests and that little reliance should be placed on its sympathy for the people. If, however, the Consistorial Counsellor concludes from this that the liberal bourgeoisie exploits the people for its own ends in so far as the people participates in the political movement, then we must answer him: "That is quite plausible for a Consistorial Counsellor, to be sure, but nonetheless extremely illusory."

The people, or, to replace this broad and vague expression by a definite one, the proletariat, has quite another way of reasoning than the gentlemen of the ecclesiastical ministry permit themselves to imagine. The proletariat does not ask whether the welfare of the people is a matter of secondary or of primary importance to the bourgeoisie, or whether the bourgeoisie wishes to use proletarians as cannon fodder or not. The proletariat does not ask what the bourgeoisie merely wishes to do, but what it must do. It asks whether the present political system, the rule of the bureaucracy, or the one the liberals are striving for, the rule of the bourgeoisie, will offer it the means to achieve its own purposes. To this end it only has to compare the political position of the proletariat in England, France and America with that in Germany to see that the rule of the bourgeoisie does not only place quite new weapons in the hands of the proletariat for the struggle against the bourgeoisie, but that it also secures for it a quite different status, the status of a recognised party.

Does the Herr Consistorial Counsellor then believe that the proletariat, which is more and more adhering to the Communist Party, that the proletariat will be incapable of utilising the freedom of the press and the freedom of association? Let him just read the English and French working men's newspapers, let him just attend some time a single Chartist meeting!

But in the ecclesiastical ministry, where the Rheinischer] Beobachter is edited, they have queer ideas about the proletariat. They think they are dealing with Pomeranian peasants or with Berlin loafers.

They think they have reached the greatest depths of profundity when they promise the people no longer panem et circenses, a but panem et religionemb instead. They delude themselves that the proletariat wishes to be helped, they do not conceive that it expects help from nobody but itself. They do not suspect that the proletariat

sees through all these empty consistorial phrases about the "welfare of the people" and bad social conditions just as well as through the similar phrases of the liberal bourgeoisie.

And why is the welfare of the people only of secondary importance to the bourgeoisie? The Rheinischer] Beobachter replies:

"The United Diet has proved it, the perfidy of liberalism is exposed. The Income Tax was the acid test of liberalism, and it failed the test."

These well-meaning Consistorial Counsellors, imagining in their economic innocence that they can use the Income Tax to throw dust in the eyes of the proletariat!

The Slaughter and Milling Tax directly affects wages, the Income Tax affects the profit of capital. Extremely plausible, Herr Consistorial Counsellor, isn't it? But the capitalists will not and cannot allow their profits to be taxed with impunity. This follows from competition itself. So within a few months after the introduction of the Income Tax, wages will therefore have been reduced to precisely the extent by which they were actually raised by the abolition of the Slaughter and Milling Tax and by the reduced food prices resulting from this.

The level of wages expressed, not in terms of money, but in terms of the means of subsistence necessary to the working man, that is the level of real, not of nominal wages, depends on the relationship between demand and supply. An alteration in the mode of taxation may cause a momentary disturbance, but will not change anything in the long run.

a Bread and games.— Ed.

b Bread and religion.— Ed.

The only economic advantage of the Income Tax is that it is cheaper to levy, and this the Consistorial Counsellor does not mention. Incidentally the proletariat gains nothing from this circumstance either.

What, then, does all this talk about the Income Tax amount to?

In the first place, the proletariat is not at all, or only momentarily, interested in the whole matter.

In the second place, the government, which in levying the Slaughter and Milling Tax comes daily into direct contact with the proletariat and confronts it in a hateful fashion, the government remains in the background where the Income Tax is concerned, and forces the bourgeoisie to assume in full the odious business of pressing down wages.

The Income Tax would thus be of benefit to the government alone, hence the anger of the Consistorial Counsellors at its rejection.

But let us concede even for a moment that the proletariat has an interest in the matter; should this Diet have granted it?

By no means. It ought not to have granted moneys at all, it should have left the financial system exactly as it was so long as the government had not fulfilled all its demands. The refusal of moneys is, in all parliamentary assemblies, the means by which the government is forced to yield to the majority. This consistent refusal of moneys was the only thing in which the Diet behaved energetically, and that is why the disappointed Consistorial Counsellors have to try and render it suspicious in the eyes of the people.

"And yet," the Rheinischer] Beobachter] continues, "the organs of the liberal press quite appropriately raised the matter of the Income Tax."

Quite correct, and it is indeed a purely bourgeois measure. For this very reason, though, the bourgeoisie is able to reject it when it is proposed to it at the wrong time by ministers whom it cannot trust an inch.

We shall, incidentally, add this confession concerning the paternity of the Income Tax to the record; we shall find it useful later on.

After some exceptionally vacuous and confused twaddle the Consistorial Counsellor suddenly stumbles over the proletariat in the following manner:

"What is the proletariat?" (This is yet another of those questions which arise only to remain unanswered.) "It is no exaggeration when we" (that is, the Consistorial Counsellors of the Rheinischer] Beobachter], not, however, the other profane newspapers) "state that one-third of the people has no basis for its existence, and another third is on the decline. The problem of the proletariat is the problem of the great majority of the people, it is the cardinal question."

How rapidly, indeed, these bureaucrats are brought to see reason by a single United Diet with a little opposition! How long is it since the government was prohibiting newspapers from maintaining such exaggerations as that we might have a proletariat in Prussia? Ever since the Trier'sche Zeitung among others—that innocent organ!—

was threatened with closure because it maliciously wished to present the evil circumstances of the proletariat in England and France as existing also in Prussia? Be that as the government wishes. We shall similarly add to the record that the great majority of the people are proletarians.

"The Diet," it is further declared, "considered the question of principle to be the cardinal question, that is, the question of whether or not this exalted assembly should receive state power. And what was the people to receive? No railway, no annuity banks, no tax relief! Thrice happy people!"

Observe how our sleek-pated Consistorial Counsellor is gradually beginning to show his fox's ears. "The Diet considered the question of principle to be the main question." The blessed simplicity of this amiable blind-worm! The question as to whether a loan of 30 millions, an Income Tax providing a revenue not to be determined in advance, an annuity bank by means of which 400 to 500 millions can be raised on the domains—as to whether all this should be put at the disposal of the present dissolute and reactionary government, thus rendering it independent for an eternity, or whether it should be kept short, be rendered submissive to public opinion by the withdrawal of moneys, this our pussy-footing Consistorial Counsellor calls the question of principle!

"And what will the people receive?" asks the sympathetic Consistorial Counsellor.

"No railway"—thus it will also avoid paying any taxes to cover the interest on the loan and the inevitable big losses in the running of this railway.

"No annuity banks!" Our Consistorial Counsellor acts just as if the government wished to give annuities to the proletarians, doesn't he?

But, on the contrary, it wanted to give annuities to the nobility, for which the people would have had to pay. In this way it was to be made easier for the peasants to buy themselves free from compulsory labour service. If the peasants wait a few years more they will probably no longer need to buy themselves free. When the lords of the manor come under the pitchforks of the peasants, and this could easily happen before very long, then corvée system will cease of its own accord.

"No Income Tax." But so long as the Income Tax brings no income to the people, this is a matter of utter indifference to it.

9—1826

"Thrice happy people," continues the Consistorial Counsellor, "you have at least won the question of principle! And if you do not understand what this is, then let your representatives explain it to you; perhaps you will forget your hunger in the course of their lengthy speeches!"

Who still dares to claim that the German press is not free? The Rheinischer]

Beobachter] employs here with complete impunity a turn of phrase which many a French provincial jury would without more ado declare to be an incitement of the various classes of society against one another and cause to be punished.

The Consistorial Counsellor behaves, incidentally, in a terribly awkward manner. He wishes to flatter the people, and does not even credit it with knowing what a question of principle might be. Because he has to feign sympathy for the people's hunger, he takes his revenge by declaring it to be stupid and politically incompetent. The proletariat knows so well what the question of principle is that it does not reproach the Diet for having won it, but for not having won it.

The proletariat reproaches the Diet for having stayed on the defensive, for not having attacked, for not having gone ten times further. It reproaches it with not having behaved decisively enough to make possible the participation of the proletariat in the movement. The proletariat was certainly incapable of showing any interest in the Privileges of the Estates. But a Diet demanding trial by jury, equality before the law, the abolition of the corvée system, freedom of the press, freedom of association and true representation, a Diet having once and for all broken with the past and formulating its demands according to the needs of the present instead of according to the old laws—such a Diet could count on the strongest support from the proletariat.

The Beobachter continues:

"And may God grant that this Diet should not absorb the power of the government, otherwise an insuperable brake will be put upon all social improvements."

The Herr Consistorial Counsellor may calm himself. A Diet that could not even get the better of the Prussian government will be given short shrift by the proletariat when the need arises.

"It has been said," the Consistorial Counsellor observes further, "that the Income Tax leads to revolution, to communism. To revolution, to be sure, that is to say, to a transformation of social relations, to the removal of limitless poverty."

Either the Consistorial Counsellor wishes to mock his readers and merely say that the Income Tax removes limitless poverty in order to replace it with limited poverty, and more of a similar kind of bad Berlin jokes—or he is the greatest and most shameless ignoramus in economic matters alive. He does not know that in England the Income Tax has been in existence for seven years and has not transformed a single social relation, has not removed the least hair's breadth of limitless poverty. He does not know that it is precisely where the most limitless poverty exists in Prussia, in the weaving villages of Silesia and Ravensberg, among the small peasants of Silesia, Posen, the Mosel and the Vistula, that the Class Tax, that is, the Income Tax, is in force.

But who can reply seriously to such absurdities? It is further stated:

"Also to communism, as it happens to be understood.... Where all relations have been so intertwined with one another and brought into flux by trade and industry that the individual loses his footing in the currents of competition, by the nature of the circumstances he is thrown upon the mercy of society which must compensate in respect of the particular for the consequences of the general fluctuations. Hence society has a duty of solidarity in respect of the existence of its members."

And there we are supposed to have the communism of the Rh[einischer] Beobachter] Thus—in a society such as ours, where nobody is secure in his existence, in his position in life, society is duty bound to secure everybody's existence. First the Consistorial Counsellor admits that the existing society cannot do this, and then he demands of it that it should nevertheless perform this impossible feat.

But it should compensate in respect of the particular for that for which it can show

no consideration in its general fluctuations, this is what the Consistorial Counsellor means.

"One-third of the people has no basis for its existence, and another third is on the decline."

Ten million individuals, therefore, are to be individually compensated for. Does the Consistorial Counsellor believe in all seriousness that the pauvre* Prussian government will be able to achieve this?

To be sure, and what is more by means of the Income Tax, which leads to communism, as it happens to be understood by the Rh[einischer] Beobachter. Magnificent. After bemusing us with confused balderdash about alleged communism, after declaring that society has a duty of solidarity in respect of the existence of its members, that it has to care for them, although it cannot do so, after all these aberrations, contradictions and impossible demands, we are urged to accept the Income Tax as the measure which will resolve all contradictions,

a Poor.— Ed.

make all impossibilities possible and restore the solidarity of all members of society.

We refer to Herr von Duesberg's memorandum on the Income Tax, which was presented to the Diet. In this memorandum employment had already been found for the last penny of the revenue from the Income Tax. The hard-pressed government had not a farthing to spare for the compensation in respect of the particular for general fluctuations, for the fulfilment of society's duties of solidarity. And if, instead of ten million, only ten individuals had been through the nature of circumstances thrown upon Herr von Duesberg's mercy, Herr von Duesberg would have rejected all ten of them.

But no, we are mistaken; besides the Income Tax the Herr Consistorial Counsellor has yet another means for introducing communism, as he happens to understand it: "What is the Alpha and Omega of the Christian faith? The dogma of original sin and redemption. And therein lies the association in solidarity of humanity in its highest potential: One for all and all for One."

Thrice happy people!

The cardinal question is solved for all eternity!

Under the double wings of the Prussian eagle and the Holy Ghost, the proletariat will find two inexhaustible springs of life: first, the surplus from the Income Tax above the ordinary and extraordinary needs of the state, which surplus equals zero, and second, the revenues from the heavenly domains of original sin and redemption, which likewise equal zero. These two zeroes provide a splendid basis for the one-third of the people which has no basis for its existence, a powerful support for the other third which is on the decline. Imaginary surpluses, original sin and redemption will undoubtedly satisfy the people's hunger in quite another way than the long speeches of liberal deputies! It is further stated:

"We also pray, in the Lord's prayer: 'Lead us not into temptation.' And what we supplicate for ourselves we ought to practise with regard to our fellow human beings.

Our social conditions undoubtedly tempt man, and the excess of poverty incites to crime."

And we, gentlemen, we bureaucrats, judges and Consistorial Counsellors of the Prussian state, practise this consideration by having people broken on the wheel, beheaded, locked up and flogged to our heart's content, thereby "leading" the proletariat "into the temptation" to have us later similarly broken on the wheel, beheaded, locked up and flogged. Which will not fail to occur.

a Duesberg, von. Denkschrift, betreffend die Aufhebung der Mahl- und Schlachtsteuer, die Beschränkung der Klassensteuer und die Erhebung einer Einkommensteuer.— IEd.

"Such conditions," declares the Consistorial Counsellor, "must not be tolerated by a Christian state, it must remedy them."

Indeed, with absurd blusterings about society's duties of solidarity, with imaginary surpluses and unacceptable bills of exchange on God the Father, Son and Company.

"We can also save ourselves all this tedious talk of communism," opines our observing Consistorial Counsellor.

"If only those who have the vocation for it develop the social principles of Christianity, then the Communists will soon fall silent."

The social principles of Christianity have now had eighteen hundred years to be developed, and need no further development by Prussian Consistorial Counsellors. The social principles of Christianity justified the slavery of antiquity, glorified the serfdom of the Middle Ages and are capable, in case of need, of defending the oppression of the proletariat, even if with somewhat doleful grimaces.

The social principles of Christianity preach the necessity of a ruling and an oppressed class, and for the latter all they have to offer is the pious wish that the former may be charitable.

The social principles of Christianity place the Consistorial Counsellor's compensation for all infamies in heaven, and thereby justify the continuation of these infamies on earth.

The social principles of Christianity declare all the vile acts of the oppressors against the oppressed to be either a just punishment for original sin and other sins, or trials which the Lord, in his infinite wisdom, ordains for the redeemed.

The social principles of Christianity preach cowardice, selfcontempt, abasement, submissiveness and humbleness, in short, all the qualities of the rabble, and the proletariat, which will not permit itself to be treated as rabble, needs its courage, its self-confidence, its pride and its sense of independence even more than its bread.

The social principles of Christianity are sneaking and hypocritical, and the proletariat is revolutionary.

So much for the social principles of Christianity.

Further:

"We have acknowledged social reform to be the most distinguished vocation of the monarchy."

Have we? There has not been a single word of this hitherto.

However, let it stand. And what does the social reform of the monarchy consist in?

In promulgating an Income Tax stolen from the liberal press, which is to provide surpluses the Minister of Finance knows nothing about, in the abortive Land Annuity Banks, in the Prussian Eastern Railway, and in particular in the profits from a vast capital of original sin and redemption!

"The interests of the monarchy itself makes this advisable"—how low, then, the monarchy must have sunk!

"The distress in society demands this"—for the moment it demands protective tariffs far more than dogmas.

"The gospel recommends this"—this is recommended by everything in general, only not by the terrifyingly barren condition of the Prussian State treasury, this abyss, which, within three years, will irrevocably have swallowed up the 15 Russian millions. The gospel recommends a great deal besides, among other things also

castration as the beginning of social reform with oneself (Matth[ew] 19:12).
"The monarchy," declares our Consistorial Counsellor, "is one with the people."
This pronouncement is only another form of the old "l'état c'est moi",^a and precisely the same form, in fact, as was used by Louis XVI against his rebellious estates on June 23, 1789: "If you do not obey, then I shall send you back home"—"et seul je ferai le bonheur de mon peuple" .^b

The monarchy must indeed be very hard-pressed if it decides to make use of this formula, and our learned Consistorial Counsellor certainly knows how the French people thanked Louis XVI for its use on that occasion.

"The throne," the Herr Consistorial Counsellor assures us further, "must rest on the broad foundation of the people, there it stands best."

So long, that is, as those broad shoulders do not, with one powerful heave, throw this burdensome superstructure into the gutter.

"The aristocracy," thus concludes the Herr Consistorial Counsellor, "leaves the monarchy its dignity and gives it a poetical adornment, but removes real power from it. The bourgeoisie robs it of both its power and its dignity, and only gives it a civil list.

The people preserves to the monarchy its power, its dignity and its poetry." In this passage the Herr Consistorial Counsellor has unfortunately taken the boastful appeal To His People, made by Frederick William in his Speech from the Throne,^{9 8} too seriously. Its last word is—overthrow of the aristocracy, overthrow of the bourgeoisie, creation of a monarchy drawing its support from the people.

If these demands were not pure fantasies they would contain in themselves a complete revolution.

We have not the slightest wish to argue in detail that the

a "I am the state" (expression attributed to Louis XIV).— Ed.

"And alone I shall create the happiness of my people." — Ed.

aristocracy cannot be overthrown in any other manner than by the bourgeoisie and the people together, that rule of the people in a country where the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie still exist side by side is a piece of sheer nonsense. One cannot reply to such yarn-spinnings from one of Eichhorn's Consistorial Counsellors with any serious development of ideas.

We merely wish to make some well-intentioned comments to those gentlemen who would like to rescue the apprehensive Prussian monarchy by means of a somersault into the people.

Of all political elements the people is by far the most dangerous for a king. Not the people of which Frederick William speaks, which offers thanks with moist eyes for a kick and a silver penny; this people is completely harmless, for it only exists in the king's imagination. But the real people, the proletarians, the small peasants and the plebs—this is, as Hobbes says, *puer robustus, sed malitiosus*,* a robust, but ill-natured youth, which permits no kings, be they lean or fat, to get the better of him. This people would above all else extort from His Majesty a constitution, together with a universal franchise, freedom of association, freedom of the press and other unpleasant things.

And if it had all this, it would use it to pronounce as rapidly as possible on the power, the dignity and the poetry of the monarchy.

The current worthy occupant of this monarchy could count himself fortunate if the people employed him as a public barker of the Berlin Artisans' Association with a civil list of 250 talers and a cool pale ale daily.

If the Consistorial gentlemen now directing the destiny of the Prussian monarchy

and the Rhein[ischer] Beobachter should doubt this, then let them merely cast a glance at history. History provides a quite different horoscopes for kings who appealed to their people.

Charles I of England also appealed to His People against his estates. He called his people to arms against parliament. The people, however, declared itself to be against the king, threw all the members who did not represent the people out of parliament and finally caused parliament, which had thus become the real representative of the people, to behead the king. Thus ended the appeal of Charles I to his people. This occurred on January 30, 1649, and has its bicentenary in the year 1849.

Louis XVI of France likewise appealed to His People. Three years long he appealed from one section of the people to another, he sought His people, the true people, the people filled with enthusiasm

a Th. Hobbes, Elementa philosophica de cive.— Ed.

for him, and found it nowhere. Finally he found it in the encampment of Koblenz, behind the ranks of the Prussian and Austrian army. This, however, was too much of a good thing for his people in France. On August 10, 1792 it locked up the appellant in the Temple and summoned the National Convention, which represented it in every respect.

This Convention declared itself competent to judge the appeal of the ex-king, and after some consultation the appellant was taken to the Place de la Révolution, where he was guillotined on January 21, 1793.

That is what happens when kings appeal to Their People. Just what happens, however, when Consistorial Counsellors wish to found a democratic monarchy, we shall have to wait and see.

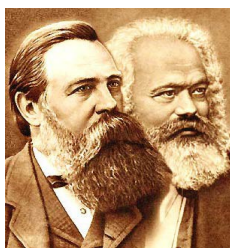


Frederick Engels 1847

Letter to Marx

October 25/26, 1847

As for **the religious question**, we regarded this as altogether secondary, as a question which **should never be allowed to become a pretext for strife between men of the same party.**



Marx and Engels

[REVIEWS FROM THE *NEUE RHEINISCHE ZEITUNG*.
POLITISCH-ÖKONOMISCHE REVUE No. 2]

I

G. FR. DAUMER, *DIE RELIGION DES NEUEN WELTALTERS*.
VERSUCH EINER COMBINATORISCH-APHORISTISCHEN
GRUNDLEGUNG,
2 BDE, HAMBURG, 1850

MEW, Volume 10, page 241 ff

The same shameless superficiality allows Herr Daumer to ignore completely that Christianity was preceded by the total collapse of the ancient "world conditions" of which Christianity was the mere expression; that "completely new world conditions" arose not internally through Christianity but only when the Huns and the Germans fell "externally" on the corpse of the Roman Empire; that after the Germanic invasion the "new world conditions" did not adapt themselves to Christianity but that Christianity itself changed with every new phase of these world conditions. We should like Herr Daumer to give us an example of the old world conditions changing with a new religion without the mightiest "external" and abstract political convulsions setting in at the same time.

It is clear that with every great historical upheaval of social conditions the outlooks and ideas of men, and consequently their religious ideas, are revolutionised. The difference between the present upheaval and all earlier ones lies in the very fact that man has at last found out the secret of this process of historical upheaval and hence, instead of once again exalting this practical, "external", process in the rapturous form of a new religion, divests himself of all religion.

After the gentle moral doctrines of the new world wisdom, which are even superior to Knigge¹ inasmuch as they contain all that is necessary not only on intercourse with men, but also on intercourse with animals—after the Proverbs of Solomon comes the Song of the new Solomon.

"Nature and woman are the really divine, as distinct from the human and man....

The sacrifice of the human to the natural, of the male to the female, is the genuine, the only true meekness and self-externalisation, the highest, nay, the only virtue and piety." (Vol. II, p. 257.)

We see here that the superficiality and ignorance of the speculating founder of a religion is transformed into a very pronounced cowardice. Herr Daumer flees before the historical tragedy that is threatening him too closely to alleged nature, i. e. to a stupid rustic idyll, and preaches the cult of the female to cloak his own womanish resignation.

a G. Fr. Daumer, Hafis, Hamburg, 1846; Mahomed und sein Werk, Hamburg, 1848.— Ed.

A. Knigge, Ueber den Umgang mit Menschen, Hannover, 1804.— Ed.

Herr Daumer's cult of nature, by the way, is a peculiar one. He manages to be reactionary even in comparison with Christianity. He tries to restore the old pre-Christian natural religion in a modernised form.



Frederick Engels 1850

The Peasant War in Germany

Chapter 2

The Main Opposition Groups and their Programmes; Luther and Muenzer

Written: Summer 1850, London;

Published: *Neue Rheinische Zeitung. Revue*;
MEW, Volume 10

The grouping of the numerous and variegated groups into bigger units was at that time made impossible by decentralisation, by local and provincial independence, by industrial and commercial isolation of the provinces from each other, and by poor means of communication. This grouping develops only with the general spread of revolutionary, religious and political ideas, in the course of the Reformation. The various groups of the population which either accept or oppose those ideas, concentrate the nation, very slowly and only approximately indeed, into three large camps, the reactionary or Catholic, the reformist middle-class or Lutheran, and the revolutionary elements. If we discover little logic even in this great division of the nation, if the first two camps include partly the same elements, it is due to the fact that most of the official groupings brought over from the Middle Ages had begun to dissolve and to become decentralised, which circumstance gave to the same groups in different localities a momentary opposing orientation. In the last years we have so often met with similar facts in Germany that we will not be surprised at this apparent mixture of groups and classes under the much more complicated conditions of the Sixteenth Century.

The German ideology of to-day sees in the struggles to which the Middle Ages had succumbed nothing but violent theological bickerings, this notwithstanding our modern experiences. Had the people of that time only been able to reach an understanding concerning the celestial things, say our patriotic historians and wise statesmen, there would have been no ground whatever for struggle over earthly affairs. These ideologists were gullible enough to accept on their face value all the illusions which an epoch maintains about itself, or which the ideologists of a certain period maintained about that period. This class of people, which saw in the revolution of 1789 nothing but a heated debate over the advantages of a constitutional monarchy as compared with absolutism, would see in the July Revolution a practical controversy over the untenability of the empire by the grace of God, and in the 'February Revolution, an attempt at solving the problem of

a republic or monarchy, etc. Of the class struggles which were being fought out in these convulsions, and whose mere expression is being every time written as a political slogan on the banner of these class struggles, our ideologists have no conception even at the present time, although manifestations of them are audible enough not only abroad, but also from the grumbling and the resentment of many thousands of home proletarians. In the so-called religious wars of the Sixteenth Century, very positive material class-interests were at play, and those wars were class wars just as were the later collisions in England and France. If the class struggles of that time appear to bear religious earmarks, if the interests, requirements and demands of the various classes hid themselves behind a religious screen, it little changes the actual situation, and is to be explained by conditions of the time.

The Middle Ages had developed out of raw primitiveness. It had done away with old civilisation, old philosophy, politics and jurisprudence, in order to begin anew in every respect. The only thing which it had retained from the old shattered world was Christianity and a number of half-ruined cities deprived of their civilisation. As a consequence, the clergy retained a monopoly of intellectual education, a phenomenon to be found in every primitive stage of development, and education itself had acquired a predominantly theological nature.

In the hands of the clergy, politics and jurisprudence, as well as other sciences, remained branches of theology, and were treated according to the principles prevailing in the latter. The dogmas of the church were at the same time political axioms, and Bible quotations had the validity of law in every court. Even after the formation of a special class of jurists, jurisprudence long remained under the tutelage of theology. This supremacy of theology in the realm of intellectual activities was at the same time a logical consequence of the situation of the church as the most general force coordinating and sanctioning existing feudal domination.

It is obvious that under such conditions, all general and overt attacks on feudalism, in the first place attacks on the church, all revolutionary, social and political doctrines, necessarily became theological heresies. In order to be attacked, existing social conditions had to be stripped of their aureole of sanctity.

The revolutionary opposition to feudalism was alive throughout all the Middle Ages. According to conditions of the time, it appeared either in the form of mysticism, as open heresy, or of armed insurrection. As mysticism, it is well known how indispensable it was for the reformers of the Sixteenth Century. Muenzer himself was largely indebted to it. The heresies were partly an expression of the reaction of the patriarchal Alpine shepherds against the encroachments of feudalism in their realm (Waldenses, partly an opposition to feudalism of the cities that had out-grown it (The Albigenses, Arnold of Brescia, etc.), and partly direct insurrections of peasants (John Ball, the master from Hungary in Picardy, etc.). We can omit, in this connection, the patriarchal heresy of the Waldenses, as well as the insurrection of the Swiss, which by form and contents, was a reactionary attempt at stemming the tide of historic development, and of a purely local importance. In the other two forms of mediaeval heresy, we find as early as the Twelfth Century the precursors of the great division between the middle-class and the peasant-plebeian opposition which caused the collapse of the peasant war. This division is manifest throughout the later Middle Ages.

The heresy of the cities, which is the actual official heresy of the Middle Ages, directed itself primarily against the clergy, whose riches and political importance it attacked. In the very same manner as the bourgeoisie at present demands a "gouvernement à bon marché" (cheap government), so the middle-class of mediaeval times demanded first of all an "église à bon marché" (cheap church). Reactionary in form, as is every heresy which sees in the further development of church and dogma, only a degeneration, the middle-class heresy demanded the restoration of the ancient simple church constitution and the

abolition of an exclusive class of priests. This cheap arrangement would eliminate the monks, the prelates, the Roman court, in brief, everything which was expensive for the church. In their attack against papacy, the cities, themselves republics although under the protection of monarchs, expressed for the first time in a general form the idea that the normal form of government for the bourgeoisie was the republic. Their hostility towards many a dogma and church law is partly explained by the foregoing and partly by their conditions. Why they were so bitter against celibacy, no one has given a better explanation than Boccaccio. Arnold of Brescia in Italy and Germany, the Albigenses in south France, John Wycliffe in England, Huss and the Calixtines in Bohemia, were the chief representatives of this opposition. That the opposition against feudalism should appear here only as an opposition against religious feudalism, is easily understood when one remembers that, at that time, the cities were already a recognised estate sufficiently capable of fighting lay feudalism with its privileges either by force of arms or in the city assemblies.

Here, as in south France, in England and Bohemia, we find the lower nobility joining hands with the cities in their struggle against the clergy and in their heresies, a phenomenon due to the dependence of the lower nobility upon the cities and to the community of interests of both groups as against the princes and the prelates. The same phenomenon is found in the peasant war.

A totally different character was assumed by that heresy which was a direct expression of the peasant and plebeian demands, and which was almost always connected with an insurrection. This heresy, sharing all the demands of middle-class heresy relative to the clergy, the papacy, and the restoration of the ancient Christian church organisation, went far beyond them. It demanded the restoration of ancient Christian equality among the members of the community, this to be recognised as a rule for the middle-class world as well. From the equality of the children of God it made the implication as to civil equality, and partly also as to equality of property. To make the nobility equal to the peasant, the patricians and the privileged middle-class equal to the plebeians, to abolish serfdom, ground rents, taxes, privileges, and at least the most flagrant differences of property — these were demands put forth with more or less definiteness and regarded as naturally emanating from the ancient Christian doctrine. This peasant-plebeian heresy, in the fullness of feudalism, e. g., among the Albigenses, hardly distinguishable from the middle-class opposition, grew in the course of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries to be a strongly defined party opinion appearing independently alongside the heresy of the middle-class. This is the case with John Ball, preacher of the Wat Tyler insurrection in England alongside the Wycliffe movement. This is also the case with the Taborites alongside the Calixtines in Bohemia. The Taborites showed even a republican tendency under theocratic colouring, a view later developed by the representatives of the plebeians in Germany in the Fifteenth and at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century.

This form of heresy was joined in by the dream visions of the mystic sects, such as the Scourging Friars, the Lollards, etc., which in times of suppression continued the revolutionary tradition.

The plebeians of that time were the only class outside of the existing official society. It was outside the feudal, as well as outside the middle-class organisation. It had neither privileges nor property; it was deprived even of the possessions owned by peasant or petty bourgeois, burdened with crushing duties as much as they might be; it was deprived of property and rights in every respect; it lived in such a manner that it did not even come into direct contact with the existing institutions, which ignored it completely. It was a living symptom of the dissolution of the feudal and guild middle-class societies, and it was at the same time the first precursor of modern bourgeois society.

This position of the plebeians is sufficient explanation as to why the plebeian opposition of that time could not be satisfied with fighting feudalism and the privileged middle-class

alone; why, in fantasy, at least, it reached beyond modern bourgeois society then only in its inception; why, being an absolutely propertyless faction, it questioned institutions, views and conceptions common to every society based on division of classes. The chiliastic dream-visions ancient Christianity offered in this respect a very serviceable starting-point. On the other hand, this reaching out beyond not only the present but also the future, could not help being violently fantastic. At the first practical application, it naturally fell back into narrow limits set by prevailing conditions. The attack on private property, the demand for community of possession had to solve itself into a crude organisation of charity; vague Christian equality could result in nothing but civic equality before the law; abolition of all officialdom transformed itself finally in the organisation of republican governments elected by the people. Anticipation of communism by human fantasy was in reality anticipation of modern bourgeois conditions.

This anticipation of coming stages of historic development, forced in itself, but a natural outcome of the life conditions of the plebeian group, is first to be noted in Germany, in the teachings of Thomas Muenzer and his party. Already the Taborites showed a kind of chiliastic community of property, but this was a purely military measure. Only in the teachings of Muenzer did these communist notions find expression as the desires of a vital section of society. Through him they were formulated with a certain definiteness, and were afterwards found in every great convulsion of the people, until gradually they merged with the modern proletarian movement. Something similar we observe in the Middle Ages, where the struggles of the free peasants against increasing feudal domination merged with the struggles of the serfs and bondsmen for the complete abolition of the feudal system. While the first of the three large camps, the conservative Catholics, embraced all the elements interested in maintaining the existing imperial power, the ecclesiastical and a section of the lay princes, the richer nobility, the prelates and the city patricians — the middle-class moderate Lutheran reform gathered under its banner all the propertied elements of the opposition, the mass of the lower nobility, the middle-class and even a portion of the lay princes who hoped to enrich themselves through the confiscation of the church estates and to seize the opportunity for establishing greater independence from the empire. As to the peasants and plebeians, they grouped themselves around the revolutionary party whose demands and doctrines found their boldest expression in Muenzer.

Luther and Muenzer, in their doctrines, in their characters, in their actions, accurately embodied the tenets of their separate parties.

Between 1517 and 1525, Luther had gone through the same transformations as the German constitutionalists between 1846 and 1849. This has been the case with every middle-class party which, having marched for a while at the head of the movement, has been overwhelmed by the plebeian-proletarian party pressing from the rear.

When in 1517 opposition against the dogmas and the organisation of the Catholic church was first raised by Luther, it still had no definite character. Not exceeding the demands of the earlier middle-class heresy, it did not exclude any trend of opinion which went further. It could not do so because the first moment of the struggle demanded that all opposing elements be united, the most aggressive revolutionary energy be utilised, and the totality of the existing heresies fighting the Catholic orthodoxy be represented. In a similar fashion, our liberal bourgeoisie of 1847 were still revolutionary. They called themselves socialists and communists, and they discussed emancipation of the working class. Luther's sturdy peasant nature asserted itself in the stormiest fashion in the first period of his activities. "If the raging madness [of the Roman churchmen] were to continue, it seems to me no better counsel and remedy could be found against it than that kings and princes apply force, arm themselves, attack those evil people who have poisoned the entire world, and once and for all make an end to this game, with arms, not with words. If thieves are being punished with swords, murderers with ropes, and heretics with fire, why do we not seize, with arms in

hand, all those evil teachers of perdition, those popes, bishops, cardinals, and the entire crew of Roman Sodom? Why do we not wash our hands in their blood?"

This revolutionary ardour did not last long. The lightning thrust by Luther caused a conflagration. A movement started among the entire German people. In his appeals against the clergy, in his preaching of Christian freedom, peasants and plebeians perceived the signal for insurrection. Likewise, the moderate middle-class and a large section of the lower nobility joined him, and even princes were drawn into the torrent. While the former believed the day had come in which to wreak vengeance upon all their oppressors, the latter only wished to break the power of the clergy, the dependence upon Rome, the Catholic hierarchy, and to enrich themselves through the confiscation of church property. The parties became separated from each other, and each found a different spokesman. Luther had to choose between the two. Luther, the protégé of the Elector of Saxony, the respected professor of Wittenberg who had become powerful and famous overnight, the great man who was surrounded by a coterie of servile creatures and flatterers, did not hesitate a moment. He dropped the popular elements of the movement, and joined the train of the middle-class, the nobility and the princes. Appeals to war of extermination against Rome were heard no more. Luther was now preaching peaceful progress and passive resistance. (Cf. To the nobility of the German nation, 1520, etc.) Invited by Hutten to visit him and Sickingen in the castle of Ebern, the centre of the noble conspiracy against clergy and princes, Luther replied: "I should not like to see the Gospel defended by force and bloodshed. The world was conquered by the Word, the Church has maintained itself by the Word, the Church will come into its own again through the Word, and as Antichrist gained ascendancy without violence, so without violence he will fall." Out of this turn of mind, or, to be more exact, out of this definite delineation of Luther's policy, sprang that policy bartering and haggling over institutions and dogmas to be retained or reformed, that ugly diplomatising, conceding, intriguing and compromising, the result of which was the Augsburg Confession, the final draft of the constitution the reformed middle-class church. It was the same petty trading which, in the political field, repeated itself ad nauseam in the recent German national assemblies, unity gatherings, chambers of revision, and in the parliaments of Erfurt. The Philistine middle-class character of the official reformation appeared in these negotiations most clearly. There were valid reasons why Luther, now the recognised representative of middle-class reform, chose to preach lawful progress. The mass of the cities had joined the cause of moderate reform; the lower nobility became more and more devoted to it; one section of the princes joined it, another vacillated. Success was almost certain at least in a large portion of Germany. Under continued peaceful development the other regions could not in the long run withstand the pressure of moderate opposition. Violent convulsions, on the other hand, were bound to result in a conflict between the moderates and the extreme plebeian and peasant party, thus to alienate the princes, the nobility, and a number of cities from the movement and to leave open the alternative of either the middle-class party being overshadowed by the peasants and plebeians, or the entire movement being crushed by Catholic restoration. How middle-class parties, having achieved the slightest victory, attempt to steer their way between the Scylla of revolution and the Charybdis of restoration by means of lawful progress, we have had occasions enough to observe in the events of recent times.

It was in the nature of the then prevailing social and political conditions that the results of every change were advantageous to the princes, increasing their power. Thus it came about that the middle-class reform, having parted ways with the plebeian and peasant elements, fell more and more under the control of the reform princes. Luther's subservience to them increased, and the people knew very well what they were doing when they accused him of having become a slave of the princes as were all the others, and when they pursued him with stones in Orlamuende.

When the peasant war broke out, becoming more predominant in regions with Catholic nobility and princes, Luther strove to maintain a conciliatory position. He resolutely attacked the governments. He said it was due to their oppression that the revolts had started, that not the peasants alone were against them, but God as well. On the other hand, he also said that the revolt was ungodly and against the Gospel. He advised both parties to yield, to reach a peaceful understanding.

Notwithstanding these sincere attempts at conciliation, however, the revolt spread rapidly over large areas, including such sections as were dominated by Protestant Lutheran princes, nobles and cities, and rapidly outgrew the middle-class "circumspect" reform. The most determined faction of the insurgents under Muenzer opened their headquarters in Luther's very proximity, in Thuringia. A few more successes, and Germany would have been one big conflagration, Luther would have been surrounded, perhaps piked as a traitor, and middle-class reform would have been swept away by the tides of a peasant-plebeian revolution. There was no more time for circumspection. In the face of the revolution, all old animosities were forgotten. Compared with the hordes of peasants, the servants of the Roman Sodom were innocent lambs, sweet-tempered children of God. Burgher and prince, noble and clergyman, Luther and the pope united "against the murderous and plundering hordes of the peasants." "They should be knocked to pieces, strangled and stabbed, secretly and openly, by everybody who can do it, just as one must kill a mad dog!" Luther cried. "Therefore, dear gentlemen, hearken here, save there, stab, knock, strangle them at will, and if thou diest, thou art blessed; no better death canst thou ever attain." No false mercy was to be practised in relation to the peasants. "Whoever hath pity on those whom God pities not, whom He wishes punished and destroyed, shall be classed among the rebellious himself." Later, he said, the peasants would learn to thank God when they had to give away one cow in order that they might enjoy the other in peace. Through the revolution, he said, the princes would learn the spirit of the mob which could reign by force only. "The wise man says: 'Cibus, onus et virgam asino.' The heads of the peasants are full of chaff. They do not hearken to the Word, and they are senseless, so they must hearken to the virga and the gun, and this is only just. We must pray for them that they obey. Where they do not, there should not be much mercy. Let the guns roar among them, or else they will make it a thousand times worse."

It is the same language that was used by our late socialist and philanthropic bourgeoisie, when, after the March days the proletariat also demanded its share in the fruits of victory. Luther had given the plebeian movement a powerful weapon — a translation of the Bible. Through the Bible, he contrasted feudal Christianity of his time with moderate Christianity of the first century. In opposition to decaying feudal society, he held up the picture of another society which knew nothing of the ramified and artificial feudal hierarchy. The peasants had made extensive use of this weapon against the forces of the princes, the nobility, and the clergy. Now Luther turned the same weapon against the peasants, extracting from the Bible a veritable hymn to the authorities ordained by God — a feat hardly exceeded by any lackey of absolute monarchy. Princedom by the grace of God, passive resistance, even serfdom, were being sanctioned by the Bible. Thus Luther repudiated not only the peasant insurrection but even his own revolt against religious and lay authority. He not only betrayed the popular movement to the princes, but the middle-class movement as well.

Need we mention other bourgeois who recently gave us examples of repudiating their own past?

Let us now compare the plebeian revolutionary, Muenzer, with the middle-class reformist, Luther.

Thomas Muenzer was born in Stolberg, in the Harz, in 1498. It is said that his father died on the scaffold, a victim of the wilfulness of the Count of Stolberg. In his fifteenth year, Muenzer organised at the Halle school a secret union against the Archbishop of

Magdeburg and the Roman Church in general. His scholarly attainments in the theology of his time brought him early the doctor's degree and the position of chaplain in a Halle nunnery. Here he began to treat the dogmas and rites of the church with the greatest contempt. At mass he omitted the words of the transubstantiation, and ate, as Luther said, the almighty gods unconsecrated. Mediaeval mystics, especially the chiliastic works of Joachim of Calabria, were the main subject of his studies. It seemed to Muenzer that the millennium and the day of judgment over the degenerated church and the corrupted world, as announced and pictured by that mystic, had come in the form of the Reformation and the general restlessness of his time. He preached in his neighbourhood with great success. In 1520 he went to Zwickau as the first evangelist preacher. There he found one of those dreamy chiliastic sects which continued their existence in many localities, hiding behind an appearance of humility and detachment, the rankly growing opposition of the lower strata of society against existing conditions, and with the growth of agitation, beginning to press to the foreground more boldly and with more endurance. It was the sect of the Anabaptists headed by Nicolas Storch. The Anabaptists preached the approach of the Day of judgment and of the millennium; they had "visions, convulsions, and the spirit of prophecy." They soon came into conflict with the council of Zwickau. Muenzer defended them, though he had never joined them unconditionally, and had rather brought them under his own influence. The council took decisive steps against them, they were compelled to leave the city, and Muenzer departed with them. This was at the end of 1521. He then went to Prague and, in order to gain ground, attempted to join the remnants of the Hussite movement. His proclamations, however, made it necessary for him to flee Bohemia also. In 1522, he became preacher at Altstedt in Thuringia. Here he started with reforming the cult. Before even Luther dared to go so far, he entirely abolished the Latin language, and ordered the entire Bible, not only the prescribed Sunday Gospels and epistles, to be read to the people. At the same time, he organised propaganda in his locality. People flocked to him from all directions, and soon Altstedt became the centre of the popular anti-priest movement of entire Thuringia.

Muenzer at that time was still theologian before everything else. He directed his attacks almost exclusively against the priests. He did not, however, preach quiet debate and peaceful progress, as Luther had begun to do at that time, but he continued the early violent preachments of Luther, appealing to the princes of Saxony and the people to rise in arms against the Roman priests. "Is it not Christ who said: 'I have come to bring, not peace, but the sword'? What can you [the princes of Saxony] do with that sword? You can do only one thing: If you wish to be the servants of God, you must drive out and destroy the evil ones who stand in the way of the Gospel. Christ ordered very earnestly (Luke, 19, 27): 'But these mine enemies, that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.' Do not resort to empty assertions that the power of God could do it without aid of our sword, since then it would have to rust in its sheath. We must destroy those who stand in the way of God's revelation, we must do it mercilessly, as Hezekiah, Cyrus, Josiah, Daniel and Elias destroyed the priests of Baal, else the Christian Church will never come back to its origins. We must uproot the weeds in God's vineyard at the time when the crops are ripe. God said in the Fifth Book of Moses, 7, 'Thou shalt not show mercy unto the idolators, but ye shall break down their altars, dash in pieces their graven images and burn them with fire that I shall not be wroth at you.'" But these appeals to the princes were of no avail, whereas the revolutionary agitation among the people grew day by day. Muenzer, whose ideas became more definitely shaped and more courageous, now definitely relinquished the middle-class reformation, and at the same time appeared as a direct political agitator.

His theologic-philosophic doctrine attacked all the main points not only of Catholicism but of Christianity as such. Under the cloak of Christian forms, he preached a kind of pantheism, which curiously resembles the modern speculative mode of contemplation, and

at times even taught open atheism. He repudiated the assertion that the Bible was the only infallible revelation. The only living revelation, he said, was reason, a revelation which existed among all peoples at all times. To contrast the Bible with reason, he maintained, was to kill the spirit by the latter, for the Holy Spirit of which the Bible spoke was not a thing outside of us; the Holy Spirit was our reason. Faith, he said, was nothing else but reason become alive in man, therefore, he said, pagans could also have faith. Through this faith, through reason come to life, man became godlike and blessed, he said. Heaven was to be sought in this life, not beyond, and it was, according to Muenzer, the task of the believers to establish Heaven, the kingdom of God, here on earth. As there is no Heaven in the beyond, so there is no Hell in the beyond, and no damnation, and there are no devils but the evil desires and cravings of man. Christ, he said, was a man, as we are, a prophet and a teacher, and his "Lord's Supper" is nothing but a plain meal of commemoration wherein bread and wine are being consumed with mystic additions.

Muenzer preached these doctrines mostly in a covert fashion, under the cloak of Christian phraseology which the new philosophy was compelled to utilise for some time. The fundamental heretic idea, however, is easily discernible in all his writings, and it is obvious that the biblical cloak was for him of much less importance than it was for many a disciple of Hegel in modern times. Still, there is a distance of three hundred years between Muenzer and modern philosophy.

Muenzer's political doctrine followed his revolutionary religious conceptions very closely, and as his theology reached far beyond the current conceptions of his time, so his political doctrine went beyond existing social and political conditions. As Muenzer's philosophy of religion touched upon atheism, so his political programme touched upon communism, and there is more than one communist sect of modern times which, on the eve of the February Revolution, did not possess a theoretical equipment as rich as that of Muenzer of the Sixteenth Century. His programme, less a compilation of the demands of the then existing plebeians than a genius's anticipation of the conditions for the emancipation of the proletarian element that had just begun to develop among the plebeians, demanded the immediate establishment of the kingdom of God, of the prophesied millennium on earth. This was to be accomplished by the return of the church to its origins and the abolition of all institutions that were in conflict with what Muenzer conceived as original Christianity, which, in fact, was the idea of a very modern church. By the kingdom of God, Muenzer understood nothing else than a state of society without class differences, without private property, and without superimposed state powers opposed to the members of society. All existing authorities, as far as they did not submit and join the revolution, he taught, must be overthrown, all work and all property must be shared in common, and complete equality must be introduced. In his conception, a union of the people was to be organised to realise this programme, not only throughout Germany, but throughout entire Christendom. Princes and nobles were to be invited to join, and should they refuse, the union was to overthrow or kill them, with arms in hand, at the first opportunity.

Muenzer immediately set to work to organise the union. His preachings assumed a still more militant character. He attacked, not only the clergy, but with equal passion the princes, the nobility and the patricians. He pictured in burning colours the existing oppression, and contrasted it with the vision of the millennium of social republican equality which he created out of his imagination. He published one revolutionary pamphlet after another, sending emissaries in all directions, while he personally organised the union in Altstedt and its vicinity.

The first fruit of this propaganda was the destruction St. Mary's Chapel in Mellerbach near Altstedt, according to the command of the Bible (Deut. 7, 5): "Ye shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire." The princes of Saxony came in person to Altstedt quell the upheaval, and they called Muenzer to the castle. There he delivered a sermon, which they had never

heard from Luther, "that easy living flesh of Wittenberg," Muenzer called him. He insisted that the ungodly rulers, especially the priests and monks who treated the Gospel as heresy, must be killed; for confirmation he referred to the New Testament. The ungodly have no right to live, he said, save by the mercy of the chosen ones. If the princes would not exterminate the ungodly, he asserted, God would take their sword from them because the right to wield the sword belongs to the community. The source of the evil of usury, thievery and robbery, he said, were the princes and the masters who had taken all creatures into their private possession — the fishes in the water, the birds in the air, the plants in the soil. And the usurpers, he said, still preached to the poor the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," while they grabbed everything, and robbed and crushed the peasant and the artisan. "When, however, one of the latter commits the slightest transgression," he said, "he has to hang, and Dr. Liar says to all this: Amen." The masters themselves created a situation, he argued, in which the poor man was forced to become their enemy. If they did not remove the causes of the upheaval, how could things improve in times to come? he asked. "Oh, my dear gentlemen, how the Lord will smite with an iron rod all these old pots! When I say so, I am considered rebellious. So be it!" (Cf. Zimmermann's Peasant War, II, p. 75.)

Muenzer had the sermon printed. His Altstedt printer was punished by Duke Johann of Saxony with banishment. His own writings were to be henceforth subjected to the censorship of the ducal government in Weimar. But he paid no heed to this order. He immediately published a very inciting paper in the imperial city of Muehlhausen, wherein he admonished the people "to widen the hole so that all the world may see and comprehend who our fools are who have blasphemously turned our Lord into a painted mannikin." He concluded with the following words: "All the world must suffer a big jolt. The game will be such that the ungodly will be thrown off their seats and the downtrodden will rise." As a motto, Thomas Muenzer, "the man with the hammer," wrote the following on the title page: "Beware, I have put my words into thy mouth; I have lifted thee above the people and above the empires that thou mayest uproot, destroy, scatter and overthrow, and that thou mayest build and plant. A wall of iron against the kings, princes, priests, and for the people hath been erected. Let them fight, for victory is wondrous, and the strong and godless tyrants will perish."

The breach between Muenzer and Luther with his party had taken place long before that. Luther himself was compelled to accept some church reforms which were introduced by Muenzer without consulting him. Luther watched Muenzer's activities with the nettled distrust of a moderate reformer towards an energetic far-aiming radical. Already in the spring of 1524, in a letter to Melanchthon, that model of a hectic stay-at-home Philistine, Muenzer wrote that he and Luther did not understand the movement at all. They were seeking, he said, to choke it by adherence to the letter of the Bible, and their doctrine was worm-eaten. "Dear brethren," he wrote, "stop your delaying and hesitating. The time has come, the summer is knocking at our doors. Do not keep friendship with the ungodly who prevent the Word from exercising its full force. Do not flatter your princes in order that you may not perish With them. Ye tender, bookish scholars, do not be wroth, for I cannot do otherwise."

Luther had more than once invited Muenzer to an open debate. The latter, however, being always ready to accept battle in the presence of the people, did not have the slightest desire to plunge into a theological squabble before the partisan public of the Wittenberg University. He had no desire "to bring the testimony of the spirit before the high school of learning exclusively." If Luther was sincere, he wrote, let him use his influence to stop the chicaneries against his, Muenzer's, printers, and to lift the censorship in order that their controversy might be freely fought out in the press.

When the above-mentioned revolutionary brochure appeared, Luther openly denounced Muenzer. In his "Letter to the Princes of Saxony Against the Rebellious Spirit," he declared

Muenzer to be an instrument of Satan, and demanded of the princes to intervene, and drive the instigators of the upheaval out of the country, since, he said, they did not confine themselves to preaching their evil doctrine, but incited to insurrection, to violent lawless action against the authorities.

On August 1st, Muenzer was compelled to appear before the princes in the castle of Weimar, to defend himself against the accusation of incendiary machinations. There were highly compromising facts quoted against him; his secret union had been traced; his hand was discovered in the Organisation of the pitmen and the peasants. He was being threatened with banishment. Upon returning to Altstedt, he learned Duke Georg of Saxony demanded his extradition. Union letters in his handwriting had been intercepted, wherein he called Georg's subjects to armed resistance against the enemies of the Gospel. The council would have extradited him had he not left the city.

In the meantime, the rising agitation among the peasants and the plebeians had enormously lightened Muenzer's task of propaganda. In the person of the Anabaptists he found invaluable agents. This sect, having no definite dogmas, held together by common opposition against all ruling classes and by the common symbol of second baptism, ascetic in their mode of living, untiring, fanatic and intrepid in propaganda, had grouped itself more closely around Muenzer. Made homeless by constant persecutions, its members wandered over the length and breadth of Germany, announcing everywhere the new gospel wherein Muenzer had made clear to them their own demands and wishes. Numberless Anabaptists were put on the rack, burned or otherwise executed. But the courage and endurance of these emissaries were unshaken, and the success of their activities amidst the rapidly rising agitation of the people was enormous. That was one of the reasons why, on his flight from Thuringia, Muenzer found the ground prepared wherever he turned.

In Nuernberg, a peasant revolt had been nipped in the bud a month previous. Here Muenzer conducted his propaganda under cover. Soon there appeared persons who defended his most audacious theological doctrines of the non-obligatory power of the Bible and the meaninglessness of sacraments, declaring Christ to have been a mere man, and the power of lay authorities to be ungodly. "We see there Satan stalking, the spirit of Altstedt!" Luther exclaimed. In Nuernberg, Muenzer printed his reply to Luther. He accused him of flattering the princes and supporting the reactionary party by his moderate position. "The people will free themselves in spite of everything," he wrote, "and then the fate of Dr. Luther will be that of a captive fox." The city council ordered the paper confiscated, and Muenzer was compelled to leave the city. From there he went through Suabia to Alsace, then to Switzerland, and then back to the Upper Black Forest where the insurrection had started several months before, precipitated largely by the Anabaptist emissaries. There is no doubt that this propaganda trip of Muenzer's added much to the organisation of the people's party, to a clear formulation of its demands and to the final general outbreak of the insurrection in April, 1525. It was through this trip that the dual nature of Muenzer's activities became more and more pronounced — on the one hand, his propaganda among the people whom he approached in the only language then comprehensible to the masses, that of religious prophecy; on the other hand, his contact with the initiated, to whom he could disclose his ultimate aims. Even previous to this journey he had grouped around himself in Thuringia a circle of the most determined persons, not only from among the people, but also from among the lower clergy, a circle whom he had put at the head of the secret Organisation. Now he became the centre of the entire revolutionary movement of southwest Germany, organising connections between Saxony and Thuringia through Franconia and Suabia up to Alsace and the Swiss frontier and counting among his disciples and the heads of the Organisation such men as Hubmaier of Waldshut, Conrad Grebel of Zurich, Franz Rabmann of Griessen, Schappelar of Memmingen, Jakob Wehe of Leipheim, and Dr. Mantel in Stuttgart, the most revolutionary of priests. He kept himself

mostly in Griessen on the Schaffhausen frontier, undertaking journeys through the Hegau, Klettgau, etc. The bloody persecutions undertaken by the alarmed princes and masters everywhere against this new plebeian heresy, aided not a little in fanning the rebellious spirit and closing the ranks of the Organisation. In this way, Muenzer passed five months in upper Germany. When the outbreak of the general movement was at hand, he returned to Thuringia, where he wished to lead the movement personally. There we will find him later.

We shall see how truly the character and the behaviour of the two party heads reflected the position of their respective parties. Luther's indecision, his fear of the movement, assumed serious proportions; his cowardly servility towards the princes corresponded closely to the hesitating, vacillating policy of the middle-classes. The revolutionary energy and decisiveness of Muenzer, on the other hand, was seen in the most advanced faction of the plebeians and peasants. The difference was that while Luther confined himself to an expression of the ideas and wishes of a majority of his class and thereby acquired among it a very cheap popularity, Muenzer, on the contrary, went far beyond the immediate ideas and demands of the plebeians and peasants, organising out of the then existing revolutionary elements a party, which, as far as it stood on the level of his ideas and shared his energy, still represented only a small minority of the insurgent masses.



Frederick Engels 1853

Letter to Karl Marx

IN LONDON

[Manchester, before 28 May 1853]

3. In the South-West, where the Arabs settled, they appear to have been a civilised people like the Egyptians, Assyrians, etc., as is evident from their buildings. This also explains many things about the Mohammedan invasion. So far as the religious fraud is concerned, the ancient inscriptions in the South, in which the ancient Arab national tradition of monotheism (as with the American Indians) still predominates, a tradition of which the Hebrew is only a small part, would seem to indicate that Mohammed's religious revolution, like every religious movement, was formally a reaction, a would-be return to what was old and simple.

It is now quite clear to me that the Jews' so-called Holy Writ is nothing more than a record of ancient Arab religious and tribal traditions, modified by the Jews' early separation from their tribally related but nomadic neighbours. The circumstance of Palestine's being surrounded on the Arabian side by nothing but desert, i.e. the land of the Beduins, explains its separate a more or less development. But the ancient Arabian inscriptions and traditions and the Koran, as well as the ease with which all genealogies, etc., can now be unravelled, show that the main content was Arab, or rather, generally Semitic, as in our

case the Eddasgi and the German heroic saga.



Karl Marx 1853

MARX TO ENGELS

IN MANCHESTER
[London,] 2 June 1853
28 Dean Street, Soho

As regards the Hebrews and Arabs, I found your letter most interesting. It can, by the way, be shown that 1. in the case of all eastern tribes there has been, since the dawn of history, a general relationship between the SETTLEMENT of one section and the continued nomadism of the others. 2. In Mohammed's time the trade route from Europe to Asia underwent considerable modification, and the cities of Arabia, which had had a large share of the trade with India, etc., suffered a commercial decline—a fact which at all events contributed to the process. 3. So far as religion is concerned, the question may be reduced to a general and hence easily answerable one: Why does the history of the East appear as a history of religions?



Frederick Engels 1853

Letter to Karl Marx

IN LONDON
Manchester, 6 June [1853,] evening

The absence of landed property is indeed the key to the whole of the East. Therein lies its political and religious history. But how to explain the fact that orientals never reached the stage of landed property, not even the feudal kind? This is, I think, largely due to the climate, combined with the nature of the land, more especially the great stretches of desert

extending from the Sahara right across Arabia, Persia, India and Tartary, to the highest of the Asiatic uplands. Here artificial irrigation is the first prerequisite for agriculture, and this is the responsibility either of the communes, the provinces or the central government. In the East, the government has always consisted of 3 departments only: Finance (pillage at home), War (pillage at home and abroad), and travaux publics," provision for reproduction. The British government in India has put a somewhat narrower interpretation on nos. 1 and 2 while completely neglecting no. 3, so that Indian agriculture is going to wrack and ruin. Free competition is proving an absolute fiasco there. The fact that the land was made fertile by artificial means and immediately ceased to be so when the conduits fell into disrepair, explains the otherwise curious circumstance that vast expanses are now arid wastes which once were magnificently cultivated (Palmyra, Petra, the ruins in the Yemen, any number of localities in Egypt, Persia, Hindustan); it explains the fact that one single war of devastation could depopulate and entirely strip a country of its civilisation for centuries to come. This, I believe, also accounts for the destruction of southern Arabian trade before Mohammed's time, a circumstance very rightly regarded by you as one of the mainsprings of the Mohammedan revolution.³ I am not sufficiently well acquainted with the history of trade during the first six centuries A.D. to be able to judge to what extent general material conditions in the world made the trade route via Persia to the Black Sea and to Syria and Asia Minor via the Persian Gulf preferable to the Red Sea route. But one significant factor, at any rate, must have been the relative safety of the caravans in the well-ordered Persian Empire under the Sassanids, whereas between 200 and 600 A.D. the Yemen was almost continuously being subjugated, overrun and pillaged by the Abyssinians. By the seventh century the cities of southern Arabia, still flourishing in Roman times, had become a veritable wilderness of ruins; in the course of 500 years what were purely mythical, legendary traditions regarding their origin had been appropriated by the neighbouring Beduins, (cf. the Koran and the Arab historian Novaïri), and the alphabet in which the local inscriptions had been written was almost wholly unknown although there was no other, so that de facto writing had fallen into oblivion. Things of this kind presuppose, not only a SUPERSEDING, probably due to general trading conditions, but outright violent destruction such as could only be explained by the Ethiopian invasion. The expulsion of the Abyssinians did not take place until about 40 years before Mohammed, and was plainly the first act of the Arabs' awakening national consciousness, which was further aroused by Persian invasions from the North penetrating almost as far as Mecca. I shall not be tackling the history of Mohammed himself for a few days yet; so far it seems to me to have the character of a Beduin reaction against the settled, albeit decadent urban fellaheen whose religion by then was also much debased, combining as it did a degenerate form of nature worship with a degenerate form of Judaism and Christianity. Old Bernier's stuffa is really very fine. It's a real pleasure to get back to something written by a sensible, lucid old Frenchman who constantly hits the nail on the head sans avoir l'air de s'en apercevoir!

1

Since I am in any case tied up with the eastern mummery for some weeks, I have made use of the opportunity to learn Persian. I am put off Arabic, partly by my inborn hatred of Semitic languages, partly by the impossibility of getting anywhere, without considerable expenditure of time, in so extensive a language—one which has 4,000 roots and goes back over 2,000-3,000 years. By comparison, Persian is absolute child's play. Were it not for that damned Arabic alphabet in which every half dozen letters looks like every other half dozen and the vowels are not written, I would undertake to learn the entire grammar within 48 hours. This for the better encouragement of Pieper should he feel the urge to imitate me in this poor joke. I have set myself a maximum of three weeks for Persian, so if he stakes two months on it he'll best me anyway. What a pity Weitling can't speak Persian; he would then have his *langue universelle toute trouvée* since it is, to my knowledge, the

only language where 'me' and 'to me' are never at odds, the dative and accusative always being the same.

It is, by the way, rather pleasing to read dissolute old Hafiz in the original lan'guage, which sounds quite passable and, in his grammar,⁰ old Sir William Jones likes to cite as examples dubious Persian jokes, subsequently translated into Greek verse in his *Commentariis poeseos asiaticae*, because even in Latin they seem to him too obscene. These commentaries, Jones' Works, Vol. II, *De poesi erotica*, will amuse you. Persian prose, on the other hand, is deadly dull. E.g. the *Rauzât-us-safâ* by the noble Mirkhond, who recounts the Persian epic in very flowery but vacuous language. Of Alexander the Great, he says that the name Iskander, in the Ionian language, is Akshid Rus (like Iskander, a corrupt version of Alexandros); it means much the same as filusuf, which derives from fila, love, and sufa, wisdom, 'Iskander' thus being synonymous with 'friend of wisdom'.

a F. Bernier, *Voyages contenant la description des états du Grand Mogol, de l'Indoustan, du Royaume de Cachemire*, etc. See also this volume, pp. 332-34. - b without appearing to be aware of it - c universal language ready-made - d W. Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*.

Of a RETIRED king he says: 'He beat the drum of abdication with the drumsticks of retirement', as will père Willich, should he involve himself any more deeply in the literary fray. Willich will also suffer the same fate as King Afrasiab of Turan when deserted by his troops and of whom Mirkhond says: 'He gnawed the nails of horror with the teeth of desperation until the blood of vanquished consciousness welled forth from the finger-tips of shame.'



Karl Marx 1855

Anti-Church Movement

Demonstration in Hyde Park June 25, 1855, London

Published: Neue Oder-Zeitung June 28 1855

It is an old and historically established maxim that obsolete social forces, nominally still in possession of all the attributes of power and continuing to vegetate long after the basis of their existence has rotted away, inasmuch as the heirs are quarrelling among themselves over the inheritance even before the obituary notice has been printed and the testament read -- that these forces once more summon all their strength before their agony of death, pass from the defensive to the offensive, challenge instead of giving way, and seek to draw the most extreme conclusions from premises which have not only been put in question but

already condemned. Such is today the English oligarchy. Such is the *Church*, its twin sister. Countless attempts at reorganization have been made within the Established Church, both the High and the Low, attempts to come to an understanding with the Dissenters and thus to set up a compact force to oppose the profane mass of the nation. There has been a rapid succession of measures of religious coercion. The pious Earl of Shaftesbury, formerly known as Lord Ashley, bewailed the fact in the House of Lords that in England alone five millions had become wholly alienated not only from the Church but from Christianity altogether. "*Compelle intrare*," replies the Established Church. It leaves it to Lord Ashley and similar dissenting, sectarian and hysterical pietists to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for it.

The first measure of Religious coercion was the Beer Bill, which shut down all places of public entertainment on Sundays, except between 6 and 10 p. m. This bill was smuggled through the House at the end of a sparsely attended sitting, after the pietists had bought the support of the big public-house owners of London by guaranteeing them that the license system would continue, that is, that big capital would retain its monopoly. Then came the Sunday Trading Bill, which has now passed its third reading in the Commons and separate clauses of which have just been discussed by commissions in both Houses. This new coercive measure too was ensured the vote of big capital, because only small shopkeepers keep open on Sunday and the proprietors of the big shops are quite willing to do away with the Sunday competition of the small fry by parliamentary means. In both cases there is a conspiracy of the Church with monopoly capital, but in both cases there are religious penal laws against the lower classes to set the consciences of the privileged classes at rest. The *Beer Bill* was as far from hitting the aristocratic clubs as the *Sunday Trading Bill* is from hitting the Sunday occupations of genteel society. The workers get their wages late on Saturday; they are the only ones for whom shops open on Sundays. They are the only ones compelled to make their purchases, small as they are, on Sundays. The new bill is therefore directed against them alone. In the eighteenth century the French aristocracy said: For us, Voltaire; for the people, the mass and the tithes. In the nineteenth century the English aristocracy says: For us, pious phrases; for the people, Christian practice. The classical saint of Christianity mortified his body for the salvation of the souls of the masses; the modern, educated saint mortifies *the bodies of the masses* for the salvation of his own soul.

This alliance of a dissipated, degenerating and pleasure-seeking aristocracy with a church propped up by the filthy profits calculated upon by the big brewers and monopolizing wholesalers was the occasion yesterday of a *mass demonstration* in Hyde Park, the like of which London has not seen since the death of George IV, "the first gentleman of Europe." We were spectators from beginning to end and do not think we are exaggerating in saying that *the English Revolution began yesterday in Hyde Park*. The latest news from the Crimea acted as an effective ferment upon this "*unparliamentary*," "*extra-parliamentary*" and "*anti-parliamentary*" demonstration.

Lord *Robert Grosvenor*, who fathered the Sunday Trading Bill, when reproached on the score of this measure being directed solely against the poor and not against the rich classes, retorted that "the aristocracy was largely refraining from employing its servants and horses on Sundays." The last few days of the past week the following poster, put out by *the Chartists* and affixed to all the walls of London, announced in huge letters:

"*New Sunday Bill* prohibiting newspapers, shaving, smoking, eating and drinking and all kinds of recreation and nourishment, both corporal and spiritual, which the *poor people* still enjoy at the present time. *An open-air meeting* of artisans, workers and '*the lower orders*' generally of the capital will take place in Hyde Park on Sunday afternoon to see how religiously the aristocracy is observing the Sabbath and how anxious it is not to employ its servants and horses on that day, as Lord Robert Grosvenor said in his speech. The

meeting is called for three o'clock on the right bank of the Serpentine" (a small river in Hyde Park), "on the side towards Kensington Gardens. Come and bring your wives and children in order that they may profit by the example their '*bettors*' set them!"

It should be borne in mind, of course, that what *Longchamps* [*Ed.* -- A hippodrome in the outskirts of Paris] means to the Parisians, the road along the Serpentine in Hyde Park means to English high society -- the place where of an afternoon, particularly on Sunday, they parade their magnificent horses and carriages with all their trappings, followed by swarms of lackeys. It will be realized from the above placard that the struggle against clericalism assumes the same character in England as every other serious struggle there -- the character of a *class struggle* waged by the poor against the rich, the people against the aristocracy, the "lower orders" against their "bettors."

At three o'clock approximately 50,000 people had gathered at the spot announced on the right bank of the Serpentine in Hyde Park's immense meadows. Gradually the assembled multitude swelled to a total of at least 200,000 due to additions from the other bank. Milling groups of people could be seen shoved about from place to place. The police, who were present in force, were obviously endeavouring to deprive the organizers of the meeting of what Archimedes had asked for to move the earth, namely, a place to stand upon. Finally a rather large crowd made a firm stand and *Bligh* the Chartist constituted himself chairman on a small eminence in the midst of the throng. No sooner had he begun his harangue than Police Inspector Banks at the head of 40 truncheon-swinging constables explained to him that the Park was the private property of the *Crown* and that no meeting might be held in it. After some *pourparlers* in which Bligh sought to demonstrate to him that parks were public property and in which Banks rejoined he had strict orders to arrest him if he should insist on carrying out his intention, Bligh shouted amidst the bellowing of the masses surrounding him:

"Her Majesty's police declare that Hyde Park is private property of the Crown and that Her Majesty is unwilling to let her land be used by the people for their meetings. So let's move to Oxford Market."

With the ironical cry: "God save the Queen!" the throng broke up to journey to Oxford Market. But meanwhile, Finlen, a member of the Chartist executive, rushed to a tree some distance away followed by a crowd who in a twinkling formed so close and compact a circle around him that the police abandoned their attempt to get at him.

"Six days a week," he said, "we are treated like slaves and now Parliament wants to rob us of the bit of freedom we still have on the seventh. These oligarchs and capitalists allied with sanctimonious parsons wish to do *penance* by mortifying us instead of themselves for the unconscionable murder in the Crimea of the sons of the people."

We left this group to approach another where a speaker stretched out on the ground addressed his audience from this horizontal position. Suddenly shouts could be heard on all sides: "Let's go to the road, to the carriages!" The heaping of insults upon horse riders and occupants of carriages had meanwhile already begun. The constables, who constantly received reinforcements from the city, drove the promenading pedestrians off the carriage road. They thus helped to bring it about that either side of it was tined deep with people, from Apsley House up Rotten-Row along the Serpentine as far as Kensington Gardens -- a distance of more than a quarter of an hour. The spectators consisted of about two-thirds workers and one-third members of the middle class, all with women and children. The procession of elegant ladies and gentlemen; "commoners and Lords," in their high coaches-and-four with liveried lackeys in front and behind, joined, to be sure, by a few mounted venerables slightly under the weather from the effects of wine, did not this time pass by in review but played the role of involuntary actors who were made to run the gauntlet. A babel of jeering, taunting, discordant ejaculations, in which no language is as

rich as English, soon bore down upon them from both sides. As it was an improvised concert, instruments were lacking. The chorus therefore had only its own organs at its disposal and was compelled to confine itself to vocal music. And what a devil's concert it was: a cacophony of grunting, hissing, whistling, squeaking, snarling, growling, croaking, shrieking, groaning, rattling, howling, gnashing sounds! A music that could drive one mad and move a stone. To this must be added outbursts of genuine old-English humour peculiarly mixed with long-contained seething wrath. "Go to church!" were the only articulate sounds that could be distinguished. One lady soothingly offered a prayer-book in Orthodox binding from her carriage in her outstretched hand. "Give it to your horses to read!" came the thundering reply, echoing a thousand voices. When the horses started to shy, rear, buck and finally run away, jeopardizing the lives of their genteel burdens, the contemptuous din grew louder, more menacing, more ruthless. Noble lords and ladies, among them Lady Granville, the wife of a minister and President of the Privy Council, were forced to alight and use their own legs. When elderly gentlemen rode past wearing broad-brimmed hats and otherwise so apparelled as to betray their special claim to perfectitude in matters of belief, the strident outbursts of fury were extinguished, as if in obedience, to a command, by inextinguishable laughter. One of these gentlemen lost his patience. Like Mephistopheles he made an impolite gesture, sticking out his tongue at the enemy. "He is a windbag, a parliamentary man! He fights with his own weapons!" someone shouted on one side of the road. "He is a psalm-singing saint!" was the antistrophe from the opposite side. Meanwhile the metropolitan electric telegraph had informed all police stations that a riot was about to break out in Hyde Park and the police were ordered to the theatre of military operations. Soon one detachment of them after another marched at short intervals through the double file of people, from Apsley House to Kensington Gardens, each received with the popular ditty:

Where are the geese?
Ask the police!

This was a hint at a notorious theft of geese recently committed by a constable in Clerkenwell.

The spectacle lasted three hours. Only English lungs could perform such a feat. During the performance opinions such as, "This is only the beginning!" "That is the first step!" "We hate them!" and the like were voiced by the various groups. While rage was inscribed on the faces of the workers, such smiles of blissful self-satisfaction covered the physiognomies of the middle classes as we had never seen there before. Shortly before the end the demonstration increased in violence. Canes were raised in menace of the carriages and through the welter of discordant noises could be heard the cry of "you rascals!" During the three hours zealous Chartists, men and women, ploughed their way through the throng distributing leaflets which stated in big type:

"Reorganization of Chartism!"

"A big public meeting will take place next Tuesday, June 26th, in the Literary and Scientific Institute in Friar Street, Doctors' Commons, to elect delegates to a conference for the reorganization of Chartism in the capital. Admission free."

Most of the London papers carry today only a brief account of the events in Hyde Park. No leading articles as yet, except in Lord Palmerston's *Morning Post*.

It claims that "a spectacle both disgraceful and dangerous in the extreme has taken place in Hyde Park, an open violation of law and decency -- an illegal interference by physical force in the free action of the Legislature." It urges that "this scene must not be allowed to be repeated the following Sunday, as was threatened."

At the same time, however, it declares that the “fanatical” Lord Grosvenor is solely “responsible” for this mischief, being the man who provoked the “just indignation of the people.” As if Parliament had not adopted Lord Grosvenor’s bill in three readings! Or perhaps he too brought his influence to bear “by physical force on the free action of the Legislature”?



Karl Marx

Capital - Volume One

The religious world is but the reflex of the real world. And for a society based upon the production of commodities, in which the producers in general enter into social relations with one another by treating their products as commodities and values, whereby they reduce their individual private labour to the standard of homogeneous human labour – for such a society, Christianity with its *cultus* of abstract man, more especially in its bourgeois developments, Protestantism, Deism, &c., is the most fitting form of religion. In the ancient Asiatic and other ancient modes of production, we find that the conversion of products into commodities, and therefore the conversion of men into producers of commodities, holds a subordinate place, which, however, increases in importance as the primitive communities approach nearer and nearer to their dissolution. Trading nations, properly so called, exist in the ancient world only in its interstices, like the gods of Epicurus in the Intermundia, or like Jews in the pores of Polish society. Those ancient social organisms of production are, as compared with bourgeois society, extremely simple and transparent. But they are founded either on the immature development of man individually, who has not yet severed the umbilical cord that unites him with his fellowmen in a primitive tribal community, or upon direct relations of subjection. They can arise and exist only when the development of the productive power of labour has not risen beyond a low stage, and when, therefore, the social relations within the sphere of material life, between man and man, and between man and Nature, are correspondingly narrow. This narrowness is reflected in the ancient worship of Nature, and in the other elements of the popular religions. The religious reflex of the real world can, in any case, only then finally vanish, when the practical relations of every-day life offer to man none but perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations with regard to his fellowmen and to Nature.

The life-process of society, which is based on the process of material production, does not strip off its mystical veil until it is treated as production by freely associated men, and is consciously regulated by them in accordance with a settled plan. This, however, demands for society a certain material ground-work or set of conditions of existence which in their turn are the spontaneous product of a long and painful process of development.

* * *

My dialectic method is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To

Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, i.e., the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the Idea,' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea.' With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought. [...]

The mystification which dialectic suffers in Hegel's hands by no means prevents him from being the first to present its general form of working in a comprehensive and conscious manner. With him it is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell. (Capital Volume One, K Marx.)

* * *

Darwin has interested us in the history of Nature's Technology, i.e., in the formation of the organs of plants and animals, which organs serve as instruments of production for sustaining life. Does not the history of the productive organs of man, of organs that are the material basis of all social organisation, deserve equal attention? And would not such a history be easier to compile, since, as Vico says, human history differs from natural history in this, that we have made the former, but not the latter? Technology discloses man's mode of dealing with Nature, the process of production by which he sustains his life, and thereby also lays bare the mode of formation of his social relations, and of the mental conceptions that flow from them. **Every history of religion, even, that fails to take account of this material basis, is uncritical. It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of the misty creations of religion, than, conversely, it is, to develop from the actual relations of life the corresponding celestialised forms of those relations. The latter method is the only materialistic, and therefore the only scientific one. The weak points in the abstract materialism of natural science, a materialism that excludes history and its process, are at once evident from the abstract and ideological conceptions of its spokesmen, whenever they venture beyond the bounds of their own speciality.**

* * *

Moses says: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads the corn." The Christian philanthropists of Germany, on the contrary, fastened a wooden board round the necks of the serfs, whom they used as a motive power for grinding, in order to prevent them from putting flour into their mouths with their hands.

* * *

If the reader reminds me of Malthus, whose "Essay on Population" appeared in 1798, I remind him that this work in its first form is nothing more than a schoolboyish, superficial plagiarism of De Poe, Sir James Steuart, Townsend, Franklin, Wallace, &c., and does not contain a single sentence thought out by himself. The great sensation this pamphlet caused, was due solely to party interest. The French Revolution had found passionate defenders in the United Kingdom; the "principle of population," slowly worked out in the eighteenth century, and then, in the midst of a great social crisis, proclaimed with drums and trumpets as the infallible antidote to the teachings of Condorcet, &c., was greeted with jubilation by the English oligarchy as the great destroyer of all hankerings after human development. Malthus, hugely astonished at his success, gave himself to stuffing into his book materials superficially compiled, and adding to it new matter, not discovered but annexed by him. Note further: Although Malthus was a parson of the English State Church, he had taken the monastic vow of celibacy — one of the conditions of holding a Fellowship in Protestant Cambridge University: "Socios collegiorum maritos esse non permittimus, sed statim postquam quis uxorem duxerit socius collegii desinat esse." ("Reports of Cambridge University Commission," p. 172.) This circumstance favourably distinguishes Malthus from the other Protestant parsons, who have shuffled off the command enjoining

celibacy of the priesthood and have taken, "Be fruitful and multiply," as their special Biblical mission in such a degree that they generally contribute to the increase of population to a really unbecoming extent, whilst they preach at the same time to the labourers the "principle of population." It is characteristic that the economic fall of man, the Adam's apple, the urgent appetite, "the checks which tend to blunt the shafts of Cupid," as Parson Townsend waggishly puts it, that this delicate question was and is monopolised by the Reverends of Protestant Theology, or rather of the Protestant Church. With the exception of the Venetian monk, Ortes, an original and clever writer, most of the population theory teachers are Protestant parsons. For instance, Bruckner, "Théorie du Système animal," Leyde, 1767, in which the whole subject of the modern population theory is exhausted, and to which the passing quarrel between Quesnay and his pupil, the elder Mirabeau, furnished ideas on the same topic; then Parson Wallace, Parson Townsend, Parson Malthus and his pupil, the arch-Parson Thomas Chalmers, to say nothing of lesser reverend scribblers in this line. Originally, Political Economy was studied by philosophers like Hobbes, Locke, Hume; by businessmen and statesmen, like Thomas More, Temple, Sully, De Witt, North, Law, Vanderlint, Cantillon, Franklin; and especially, and with the greatest success, by medical men like Petty, Barbon, Mandeville, Quesnay. Even in the middle of the eighteenth century, the Rev. Mr. Tucker, a notable economist of his time, excused himself for meddling with the things of Mammon. Later on, and in truth with this very "Principle of population," struck the hour of the Protestant parsons. Petty, who regarded the population as the basis of wealth, and was, like Adam Smith, an outspoken foe to parsons, says, as if he had a presentiment of their bungling interference, "that Religion best flourishes when the Priests are most mortified, as was before said of the Law, which best flourisheth when lawyers have least to do." He advises the Protestant priests, therefore, if they, once for all, will not follow the Apostle Paul and "mortify" themselves by celibacy, "not to breed more Churchmen than the Benefices, as they now stand shared out, will receive, that is to say, if there be places for about twelve thousand in England and Wales, it will not be safe to breed up 24,000 ministers, for then the twelve thousand which are unprovided for, will seek ways how to get themselves a livelihood, which they cannot do more easily than by persuading the people that the twelve thousand incumbents do poison or starve their souls, and misguide them in their way to Heaven." (Petty: "A Treatise of Taxes and Contributions," London, 1667, p. 57.) Adam Smith's position with the Protestant priesthood of his time is shown by the following. In "A Letter to A. Smith, L.L.D. On the Life, Death, and Philosophy of his Friend, David Hume. By one of the People called Christians," 4th Edition, Oxford, 1784, Dr. Horne, Bishop of Norwich, reproves Adam Smith, because in a published letter to Mr. Strahan, he "embalmed his friend David" (sc. Hume); because he told the world how "Hume amused himself on his deathbed with Lucian and Whist," and because he even had the impudence to write of Hume: "I have always considered him, both in his life-time and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, as, perhaps, the nature of human frailty will permit." The bishop cries out, in a passion: "Is it right in you, Sir, to hold up to our view as 'perfectly wise and virtuous,' *the character and conduct* of one, who seems to have been possessed with an incurable antipathy to all that is called *Religion*; and who strained every nerve to explode, suppress and extirpate the spirit of it among men, that its very name, if he could effect it, might no more be had in remembrance?" (l. c., p. 8.) "But let not the lovers of truth be discouraged. Atheism cannot be of long continuance." (P. 17.) Adam Smith, "had the atrocious wickedness to propagate atheism through the land (viz., by his "Theory of Moral Sentiments"). Upon the whole, Doctor, your meaning is good; but I think you will not succeed this time. You would persuade us, by the example of *David Hume, Esq.*, that atheism is the only cordial for low spirits, and the proper antidote against the fear of death.... You may smile over *Babylon* in ruins and congratulate the hardened *Pharaoh* on his overthrow in the Red Sea." (l. c., pp.

21, 22.) One orthodox individual, amongst Adam Smith's college friends, writes after his death: "Smith's well-placed affection for Hume ... hindered him from being a Christian.... When he met with honest men whom he liked ... he would believe almost anything they said. Had he been a friend of the worthy ingenious Horrox he would have believed that the moon some times disappeared in a clear sky without the interposition of a cloud.... He approached to republicanism in his political principles." ("The Bee." By James Anderson, 18 Vols., Vol. 3, pp. 166, 165, Edinburgh, 1791-93.) Parson Thomas Chalmers has his suspicions as to Adam Smith having invented the category of "unproductive labourers," solely for the Protestant parsons, in spite of their blessed work in the vineyard of the Lord.



Karl Marx 1871

The Civil War in France.—III

Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the physical force elements of the old Government, the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression, the "parsonpower," by the disestablishment and disendowment of all churches as proprietary bodies. The priests were sent back to the recesses of private life, there to feed upon the alms of the faithful in imitation of their predecessors, the Apostles. The whole of the educational institutions were opened to the people gratuitously, and at the same time cleared of all interference of Church and State. Thus, not only was education made accessible to all, but science itself freed from the fetters which class prejudice and governmental force had imposed upon it.



Frederick Engels 1871

LETTER TO CARLO CAFIERO

July 28, 1971

As for the religious question, we cannot speak about it officially, except when the priests provoke us, but you will detect the spirit of atheism in all our publications. Moreover, we do not admit any society which has the slightest hint of religious allusion in its statutes. Many wanted to apply, but they were all invariably rejected. If our friends in Naples were to form a society of atheists and admitted only atheists, whatever would happen to their propaganda in a city where, as you yourself say, it is not only God that is omnipotent but also St Januarius, who needs to be handled with kid gloves.



Frederick Engels 1874

Emigrant Literature II

ract

... Our Blanquists share the Bakuninists' desire to represent the most far-reaching, most extreme trend. That, by the way, is why they often adopt the same means as the Bakuninists, though with opposite ends in view. The point is, therefore, to be more radical than everybody else as far as atheism is concerned. Fortunately it is easy enough to be an atheist today. Atheism is so near to being self-obvious with European working-class parties nowadays — although in certain countries it is often enough like that of the Spanish Bakuninist who maintained that it was against all socialism to believe in God but that the Virgin Mary was a different matter, every decent socialist ought naturally to believe in her. It can even be said of the German Social-Democratic workers that atheism has already outlived itself with them: this purely negative word no longer has any application as far as they are concerned inasmuch as their opposition to faith in God is no longer one of theory but one of practice; they have *purely and simply finished with God*, they live and think in the world of reality and are therefore materialists. This seems to be the case in France too. If not, nothing would be simpler than to have the splendid French materialistic literature of the past century spread on a large scale among the workers. For in that literature French thought made its greatest achievement both in form and in content and, considering the level of science at that time, it is still infinitely high today as far as content is concerned and has not been equalled as to form. But that cannot be to the liking of our Blanquists. In order to prove that they are the most radical of all they abolish God by decree as was done in 1793:

“Let the Commune free mankind for ever from the ghost of past misery” (God), “from that cause” (non-existing God a cause!) “of their present misery. There is no room for priests in the Commune; every religious manifestation. every religious organization must be prohibited.”

And this demand that men should be changed into atheists *par ordre du mufti* is signed by two members of the Commune who have really had opportunity enough to find out that first a vast amount of things can be ordered on paper without necessarily being carried out, and second, that persecution is the best means of promoting undesirable convictions! This much is sure: the only service that can be rendered to God today is to declare atheism a compulsory article of faith and to outdo Bismarck's *Kirchenkulturkampf* laws by prohibiting religion generally...



Karl Marx 1875

Critique of the Gotha Program.

"Freedom of conscience"!

"Freedom of conscience"! If one desired, at this time of the Kulturkampf to remind liberalism of its old catchwords, it surely could have been done only in the following form: Everyone should be able to attend his religious as well as his bodily needs without the police sticking their noses in. But the Workers' party ought, at any rate in this connection, to have expressed its awareness of the fact that bourgeois "freedom of conscience" is nothing but the toleration of all possible kinds of religious freedom of conscience, and that for its part it endeavours rather to liberate the conscience from the witchery of religion. But one chooses not to transgress the "bourgeois" level.



Frederick Engels 1877

Anti-Dühring

Part I: Philosophy

X. Morality and Law. Equality

Christianity knew only *one* point in which all men were equal: that all were equally born in original sin — which corresponded perfectly to its character as the religion of the slaves and the oppressed. Apart from this it recognised, at most, the equality of the elect, which however was only stressed at the very beginning. The traces of community of goods which are also found in the early stages of the new religion can be ascribed to solidarity among the proscribed rather than to real equalitarian ideas. Within a very short time the establishment of the distinction between priests and laymen put an end even to this incipient Christian equality. — The overrunning of Western Europe by the Germans abolished for centuries all ideas of equality, through the gradual building up of such a complicated social and political hierarchy as had never existed before. But at the same time the invasion drew Western and Central Europe into the course of historical development, created for the first time a compact cultural area, and within this area also for the first time a system of predominantly national states exerting mutual influence on each other and mutually holding each other in check. Thereby it prepared the ground on which alone the question of the equal status of men, of the rights of man, could at a later period be raised.

The feudal Middle Ages also developed in their womb the class which was destined, in the course of its further development, to become the standard-bearer of the modern demand for equality: the bourgeoisie. Originally itself a feudal estate, the bourgeoisie developed the predominantly handicraft industry and the exchange of products within feudal society to a relatively high level, when at the end of the fifteenth century the great maritime discoveries opened to it a new career of wider scope. Trade beyond the confines of Europe, which had previously been carried on only between Italy and the Levant, was now extended to America and India, and soon surpassed in importance both the mutual exchange between the various European countries and the internal trade within each individual country. American gold and silver flooded Europe and forced its way like a disintegrating element into every fissure, rent and pore of feudal society. Handicraft industry could no longer satisfy the rising demand, in the leading industries of the most advanced countries it was replaced by manufacture.

But this mighty revolution in the conditions of the economic life of society was, however, not followed by any immediate corresponding change in its political structure. The political order remained feudal, while society became more and more bourgeois. Trade on a large scale, that is to say, particularly international and, even more so, world trade, requires free owners of commodities who are unrestricted in their movements and as such enjoy equal rights; who may exchange their commodities on the basis of laws that are equal for them all, at least in each particular place. The transition from handicraft to manufacture presupposes the existence of a number of free workers — free on the one hand from the fetters of the guild and on the other from the means whereby they could themselves utilise their labour-power — workers who can contract with the manufacturer for the hire of their labour-power, and hence, as parties to the contract, have rights equal to his. And finally the equality and equal status of all human labour, because and in so far as it is *human* labour, found its unconscious but clearest expression in the law of value of modern bourgeois political economy, according to which the value of a commodity is measured by the socially necessary labour embodied in it. — However, where economic relations required freedom and equality of rights, the political system opposed them at every step with guild restrictions and special privileges. Local privileges, differential duties, exceptional laws of all kinds affected in trade not only foreigners and people living in the colonies, but often enough also whole categories of the nationals of the country concerned; everywhere and ever anew the privileges of the guilds barred the development of manufacture. Nowhere was the road clear and the chances equal for the bourgeois competitors — and yet that this be so was the prime and ever more pressing demand.

The demand for liberation from feudal fetters and the establishment of equality of rights by the abolition of feudal inequalities was bound soon to assume wider dimensions, once the economic advance of society had placed it on the order of the day. If it was raised in the interests of industry and trade, it was also necessary to demand the same equality of rights for the great mass of the peasantry who, in every degree of bondage, from total serfdom onwards, were compelled to give the greater part of their labour-time to their gracious feudal lord without compensation and in addition to render innumerable other dues to him and to the state. On the other hand, it was inevitable that a demand should also be made for the abolition of the feudal privileges, of the freedom from taxation of the nobility, of the political privileges of the separate estates. And as people were no longer living in a world empire such as the Roman Empire had been, but in a system of independent states dealing with each other on an equal footing and at approximately the same level of bourgeois development, it was a matter of course that the demand for equality should assume a general character reaching out beyond the individual state, that freedom and equality should be proclaimed *human rights*. And it is significant of the specifically bourgeois character of these human rights that the American constitution, the first to recognise the rights of man, in the same breath confirms the slavery of the coloured races existing in America: class privileges are proscribed, race privileges sanctified.

As is well known, however, from the moment when the bourgeoisie emerged from feudal burgherdom, when this estate of the Middle Ages developed into a modern class, it was always and inevitably accompanied by its shadow, the proletariat. And in the same way bourgeois demands for equality were accompanied by proletarian demands for equality. From the moment when the bourgeois demand for the abolition of class *privileges* was put forward, alongside it appeared the proletarian demand for the abolition of the *classes themselves* — at first in religious form, leaning towards primitive Christianity, and later drawing support from the bourgeois equalitarian theories themselves. The proletarians took the bourgeoisie at its word: equality must not be merely apparent, must not apply merely to the sphere of the state, but must also be real, must also be extended to the social, economic sphere. And especially since the French bourgeoisie, from the great revolution on, brought civil equality to the forefront, the French proletariat has answered blow for blow with the demand for social, economic equality, and equality has become the battle-cry particularly of the French proletariat.

The demand for equality in the mouth of the proletariat has therefore a double meaning. It is either — as was the case especially at the very start, for example in the Peasant War [see Engels' work *Peasant War in Germany*]— the spontaneous reaction against the crying social inequalities, against the contrast between rich and poor, the feudal lords and their serfs, the surfeiters and the starving; as such it is simply an expression of the revolutionary instinct, and finds its justification in that, and in that only. Or, on the other hand, this demand has arisen as a reaction against the bourgeois demand for equality, drawing more or less correct and more far-reaching demands from this bourgeois demand, and serving as an agitational means in order to stir up the workers against the capitalists with the aid of the capitalists' own assertions; and in this case it stands or falls with bourgeois equality itself. In both cases the real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the *abolition of classes*. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that, of necessity passes into absurdity. We have given examples of this, and shall find enough additional ones when we come to Herr Dühring's fantasies of the future.

The idea of equality, both in its bourgeois and in its proletarian form, is therefore itself a historical product, the creation of which required definite historical conditions that in turn themselves presuppose a long previous history. It is therefore anything but an eternal truth.

Part III Socialism - History

(on Owen)

His advance in the direction of communism was the turning-point in Owen's life. As long as he was simply a philanthropist, he was rewarded with nothing but wealth, applause, honour, and glory. He was the most popular man in Europe. Not only men of his own class, but statesmen and princes listened to him approvingly. But when he came out with his communist theories, that was quite another thing. Three great obstacles seemed to him especially to block the path to social reform: private property, religion, the present form of marriage. He knew what confronted him if he attacked these — outlawry, excommunication from official society, the loss of his whole social position. But nothing of this prevented him from attacking them without fear of consequences, and what he had foreseen happened. Banished from official society, with a conspiracy of silence against him in the press, ruined by his unsuccessful communist experiments in America, in which he sacrificed all his fortune, he turned directly to the working class and continued working in their midst for thirty years.

Part III: Socialism

V. State, Family, Education

What matters is what Herr Dühring wants. And he differs from Frederick II in this, that in the Dühringian future state certainly not everyone will be able to be happy in his own way. The constitution of this future state provides:

“In the free society there can be no religious worship; *for* every member of it has got beyond the primitive childish superstition that there are beings, behind nature or above it, who can be influenced by sacrifices or prayers” {D. Ph. 286}. A “socialitarian system, rightly conceived, *has* therefore ... *to abolish* all the paraphernalia of religious magic, and therewith all the essential elements of religious worship” {D. C. 345}.

Religion is being prohibited.

All religion, however, is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men's minds of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which the terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces. In the beginnings of history it was the forces of nature which were first so reflected, and which in the course of further evolution underwent the most manifold and varied personifications among the various peoples. This early process has been traced back by comparative mythology, at least in the case of the Indo-European peoples, to its origin in the Indian Vedas, and in its further evolution it has been demonstrated in detail among the Indians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Germans and, so far as material is available, also among the Celts, Lithuanians and Slavs. But it is not long before, side by side with the forces of nature, social forces begin to be active — forces which confront man as equally alien and at first equally inexplicable, dominating him with the same apparent natural necessity as the forces of nature themselves. The fantastic figures, which at first only reflected the mysterious forces of nature, at this point acquire social attributes, become representatives of the forces of history. At a still further stage of evolution, all the natural and social attributes of the numerous gods are transferred to *one* almighty god, who is but a reflection of the abstract man. Such was the origin of

monotheism, which was historically the last product of the vulgarised philosophy of the later Greeks and found its incarnation in the exclusively national god of the Jews, Jehovah. In this convenient, handy and universally adaptable form, religion can continue to exist as the immediate, that is, the sentimental form of men's relation to the alien, natural and social, forces which dominate them, so long as men remain under the control of these forces. However, we have seen repeatedly that in existing bourgeois society men are dominated by the economic conditions created by themselves, by the means of production which they themselves have produced, as if by an alien force. The actual basis of the religious reflective activity therefore continues to exist, and with it the religious reflection itself. And although bourgeois political economy has given a certain insight into the causal connection of this alien domination, this makes no essential difference. Bourgeois economics can neither prevent crises in general, nor protect the individual capitalists from losses, bad debts and bankruptcy, nor secure the individual workers against unemployment and destitution. It is still true that man proposes and God (that is, the alien domination of the capitalist mode of production) disposes. Mere knowledge, even if it went much further and deeper than that of bourgeois economic science, is not enough to bring social forces under the domination of society. What is above all necessary for this, is a social *act*. And when this act has been accomplished, when society, by taking possession of all means of production and using them on a planned basis, has freed itself and all its members from the bondage in which they are now held by these means of production which they themselves have produced but which confront them as an irresistible alien force, when therefore man no longer merely proposes, but also disposes — only then will the last alien force which is still reflected in religion vanish; and with it will also vanish the religious reflection itself, for the simple reason that then there will be nothing left to reflect.

Herr Dühring, however, cannot wait until religion dies this, its natural, death. He proceeds in more deep-rooted fashion. He out-Bismarcks Bismarck; he decrees sharper May laws not merely against Catholicism, but against all religion whatsoever; he incites his gendarmes of the future against religion, and thereby helps it to martyrdom and a prolonged lease of life. Wherever we turn, we find specifically Prussian socialism.



Karl Marx 1878

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE OF THE TRIBUNE

December 18, 1878

"You and your followers, Dr. Marx, have been credited with all sorts of incendiary speeches against religion. Of course you would like to see the whole system destroyed, root and branch."

"We know," he replied after a moment's hesitation, "that violent measures against religion are nonsense; but this is an opinion: **as Socialism grows,**

RELIGION WILL DISAPPEAR.

Its disappearance must be done by social development, in which education must play a great part."



Frederick Engels

Dialectics of Nature.

1883

[1873 - 1886]

in Russian and German in the USSR in 1925,
except for *Part Played by Labour*, 1896 and *Natural Science and the Spirit World*, 1898;

1. INTRODUCTION

MODERN natural science, which alone has achieved an all-round systematic and scientific development, as contrasted with the brilliant natural-philosophical intuitions of antiquity and the extremely important but sporadic discoveries of the Arabs, which for the most part vanished without results - this modern natural science dates, like all more recent history, from that mighty epoch which we Germans term the Reformation, from the national misfortune that overtook us at that time, and which the French term the Renaissance and the Italians the Cinquecento, although it is not fully expressed by any of these names. It is the epoch which had its rise in the last half of the fifteenth century. Royalty, with the support of the burghers of the towns, broke the power of the feudal nobility and established the great monarchies, based essentially on nationality, within which the modern European nations and modern bourgeois society came to development. And while the burghers and nobles were still fighting one another, the peasant war in Germany pointed prophetically to future class struggles, not only by bringing on to the stage the peasants in revolt - that was no longer anything new - but behind them the beginnings of the modern proletariat, with the red flag in their hands and the demand for common ownership of goods on their lips. In the manuscripts saved from the fall of Byzantium, in the antique statues dug out of the ruins of Rome, a new world was revealed to the astonished West, that of ancient Greece: the ghosts of the Middle Ages vanished before its shining forms; Italy rose to an undreamt-of flowering of art, which seemed like a reflection of classical antiquity and was never attained again. In Italy, France, and Germany a new literature arose, the first, modern literature; shortly afterwards came the classical epochs of English and Spanish literature. The bounds of the old orbis terrarum were pierced. Only now for the first time was the world really discovered and the basis laid for subsequent world trade and the transition from handicraft to manufacture, which in its turn formed the starting-point for modern large scale industry. The dictatorship of the Church over men's minds was shattered; it was directly cast off by the majority of the Germanic peoples, who adopted Protestantism, while among the Latins a cheerful spirit of free thought, taken over from the Arabs and nourished by the newly-discovered Greek philosophy, took root more and more and prepared the way for the materialism of the eighteenth century.

It was the greatest progressive revolution that mankind has so far experienced, a time which called for giants and produced giants - giants in power of thought, passion, and character, in universality and learning. The men who founded the modern rule of the bourgeoisie had anything but bourgeois limitations. On the contrary, the adventurous character of the time inspired them to a greater or less degree. There was hardly any man of importance then living who had not travelled extensively, who did not command four or five languages, who did not shine in a number of fields. Leonardo da Vinci was not only a great painter but also a great mathematician, mechanic, and engineer, to whom the most diverse branches of physics are indebted for important discoveries. Albrecht Durer was painter, engraver, sculptor, and architect, and in addition invented a system of fortification embodying many of the ideas that much later were again taken up by Montalembert and the modern German science of fortification. Machiavelli was statesman, historian, poet, and at the same time the first notable military author of modern times. Luther not only cleaned the Augean stable of the Church but also that of the German language; he created modern German prose and composed the text and melody of that triumphal hymn which became the Marseillaise of the sixteenth century. The heroes of that time had not yet come under the servitude of the division of labour, the restricting effects of which, with its production of oneness, we so often notice in their successors. But

what is especially characteristic of them is that they almost all pursue their lives and activities in the midst of the contemporary movements, in the practical struggle; they take sides and join in the fight, one by speaking and writing, another with the sword, many with both. Hence the fullness and force of character that makes them complete men. Men of the study are the exception - either persons of second or third rank or cautious philistines who do not want to burn their fingers.

At that time natural science also developed in the midst of the general revolution and was itself thoroughly revolutionary; it had to win in struggle its right of existence. Side by side with the great Italians from whom modern philosophy dates, it provided its martyrs for the stake and the prisons of the Inquisition. And it is characteristic that Protestants outdid Catholics in persecuting the free investigation of nature. Calvin had Servetus burnt at the stake when the latter was on the point of discovering the circulation of the blood, and indeed he kept him roasting alive during two hours; for the Inquisition at least it sufficed to have Giordano Bruno simply burnt alive.

The revolutionary act by which natural science declared its independence and, as it were, repeated Luther's burning of the Papal Bull was the publication of the immortal work by which Copernicus, though timidly and, so to speak, only from his deathbed, threw down the gauntlet to ecclesiastical authority in the affairs of nature. The emancipation of natural science from theology dates from this act, although the fighting out of the particular antagonistic claims has dragged out up to our day and in many minds is still far from completion. Thenceforward, however, the development of the sciences proceeded with giant strides, and, it might be said, gained in force in proportion to the square of the distance (in time) from its point of departure. It was as if the world were to be shown that henceforth the reciprocal law of motion would be as valid for the highest product of organic matter, the human mind, as for inorganic substance.

The main work in the first period of natural science that now opened lay in mastering the material immediately at hand. In most fields a start had to be made from the very beginning. Antiquity had bequeathed Euclid and the Ptolemaic solar system; the Arabs had left behind the decimal notation, the beginnings of algebra, the modern numerals, and alchemy; the Christian Middle Ages nothing at all. Of necessity, in this situation the most fundamental natural science, the mechanics of terrestrial and heavenly bodies, occupied first place, and alongside of it, as handmaiden to it, the discovery and perfecting of mathematical methods. Great work was achieved here. At the end of the period characterised by Newton and Linnaeus we find these branches of science brought to a certain perfection. The basic features of the most essential mathematical methods were established; analytical geometry by Descartes especially, logarithms by Napier, and the differential and integral calculus by Leibniz and perhaps Newton. The same holds good of the mechanics of rigid bodies, the main laws of which were made clear once for all. Finally in the astronomy of the solar system Kepler discovered the laws of planetary movement and Newton formulated them from the point of view of the general laws of motion of matter. The other branches of natural science were far removed even from this preliminary perfection. Only towards the end of the period did the mechanics of fluid and gaseous bodies receive further treatment. Physics proper had still not gone beyond its first beginnings, with the exception of optics, the exceptional progress of which was due to the practical needs of astronomy. By the phlogistic theory, chemistry for the first time emancipated itself from alchemy. Geology had not yet gone beyond the embryonic stage of mineralogy; hence paleontology could not yet exist at all. Finally, in the field of biology the essential preoccupation was still with the collection and first sifting of the immense

material, not only botanical and zoological but also anatomical and even physiological. There could as yet be hardly any talk of the comparison of the various forms of life, of the investigation of their geographical distribution and their climatic, etc., living conditions. Here only botany and zoology arrived at an approximate completion owing to Linnæus.

But what especially characterises this period is the elaboration of a peculiar general outlook, in which the central point is the view of the absolute immutability of nature. In whatever way nature itself might have come into being, once present it remained as it was as long as it continued to exist. The planets and their satellites, once set in motion by the mysterious "first impulse", circled on and on in their predestined ellipses for all eternity, or at any rate until the end of all things. The stars remained for ever fixed and immovable in their places, keeping one another therein by "universal gravitation". The earth had persisted without alteration from all eternity, or, alternatively, from the first day of its creation. The "five continents" of the present day had always existed, and they had always had the same mountains, valleys, and rivers, the same climate, and the same flora and fauna, except in so far as change or cultivation had taken place at the hand of man. The species of plants and animals had been established once for all when they came into existence; like continually produced like, and it was already a good deal for Linnaeus to have conceded that possibly here and there new species could have arisen by crossing. In contrast to the history of mankind, which develops in time, there was ascribed to the history of nature only an unfolding in space. All change, all development in nature, was denied. Natural science, so revolutionary at the outset, suddenly found itself confronted by an out-and-out conservative nature in which even to-day everything was as it had been at the beginning and in which - to the end of the world or for all eternity - everything would remain as it had been since the beginning.

High as the natural science of the first half of the eighteenth century stood above Greek antiquity in knowledge and even in the sifting of its material, it stood just as deeply below Greek antiquity in the theoretical mastery of this material, in the general outlook on nature. For the Greek philosophers the world was essentially something that had emerged from chaos, something that had developed, that had come into being. For the natural scientists of the period that we are dealing with it was something ossified, something immutable, and for most of them something that had been created at one stroke. Science was still deeply enmeshed in theology. Everywhere it sought and found its ultimate resort in an impulse from outside that was not to be explained from nature itself. Even if attraction, by Newton pompously baptised as "universal gravitation", was conceived as an essential property of matter, whence comes the unexplained tangential force which first gives rise to the orbits of the planets? How did the innumerable varieties of animals and plants arise? And how, above all, did man arise, since after all it was certain that he was not present from all eternity? To such questions natural science only too frequently answered by making the creator of all things responsible. Copernicus, at the beginning of the period, writes a letter renouncing theology; Newton closes the period with the postulate of a divine first impulse. The highest general idea to which this natural science attained was that of the purposiveness of the arrangements of nature, the shallow teleology of Wolff, according to which cats were created to eat mice, mice to be eaten by cats, and the whole of nature to testify to the wisdom of the creator. It is to the highest credit of the philosophy of the time that it did not let itself be led astray by the restricted state of contemporary natural knowledge, and that - from Spinoza right to the great French materialists - it insisted on explaining the world from the world itself and left the justification in detail to the natural science of the future.

I include the materialists of the eighteenth century in this period because no natural scientific material was available to them other than that above described. Kant's epoch-making work remained a secret to them, and Laplace came long after them. We should not forget that this obsolete outlook on nature, although riddled through and through by the progress of science, dominated the entire first half of the nineteenth century, and in substance is even now still taught in all schools. 1

The first breach in this petrified outlook on nature was made not by a natural scientist but by a philosopher. In 1755 appeared Kant's *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels* [General Natural History and Theory of the Heavens]. The question of the first impulse was abolished; the earth and the whole solar system appeared as something that had come into being in the course of time. If the great majority of the natural scientists had had a little less of the repugnance to thinking that Newton expressed in the warning: "Physics, beware of metaphysics!", they would have been compelled from this single brilliant discovery of Kant's to draw conclusions that would have spared them endless deviations and immeasurable amounts of time and labour wasted in false directions. For Kant's discovery contained the point of departure for all further progress. If the earth were something that had come into being, then its present geological, geographical, and climatic state, and its plants and animals likewise, must be something that had come into being; it must have had a history not only of co-existence in space but also of succession in time. If at once further investigations had been resolutely pursued in this direction, natural science would now be considerably further advanced than it is. But what good could come of philosophy? Kant's work remained without immediate results, until many years later Laplace and Herschel expounded its contents and gave them a deeper foundation, thereby gradually bringing the "nebular hypothesis" into favour. Further discoveries finally brought it victory; the most important of these were: the proper motion of the fixed stars, the demonstration of a resistant medium in universal space, the proof furnished by spectral analysis of the chemical identity of the matter of the universe and the existence of such glowing nebular masses as Kant had postulated.

It is, however, permissible to doubt whether the majority of natural scientists would so soon have become conscious of the contradiction of a changing earth that bore immutable organisms, had not the dawning conception that nature does not just exist, but comes into being and passes away, derived support from another quarter. Geology arose and pointed out, not only the terrestrial strata formed one after another and deposited one upon another, but also the shells and skeletons of extinct animals and the trunks, leaves, and fruits of no longer existing plants contained in these strata. It had finally to be acknowledged that not only the earth as a whole but also its present surface and the plants and animals living on it possessed a history in time. At first the acknowledgement occurred reluctantly enough. Cuvier's theory of the revolutions of the earth was revolutionary in phrase and reactionary in substance. In place of a single divine creation, he put a whole series of repeated acts of creation, making the miracle an essential natural agent. Lyell first brought sense into geology by substituting for the sudden revolutions due to the moods of the creator the gradual effects of a slow transformation of the earth. 2

Lyell's theory was even more incompatible than any of its predecessors with the assumption of constant organic species. Gradual transformation of the earth's surface and of all conditions of life led directly to gradual transformation of the organisms and their adaptation to the changing environment, to the mutability of species. But tradition is a power not only in the Catholic Church but also in natural science. For years, Lyell himself did not see the contradiction, and his pupils still less. This is only to be explained by the

division of labour that had meanwhile become dominant in natural science, which more or less restricted each person to his special sphere, there being only a few whom it did not rob of a comprehensive view. Meanwhile physics had made mighty advances, the results of which were summed up almost simultaneously by three different persons in the year 1842, an epoch-making year for this branch of natural investigation. Mayer in Heilbronn and Joule in Manchester demonstrated the transformation of heat into mechanical energy and of mechanical energy into heat. The determination of the mechanical equivalent of heat put this result beyond question. Simultaneously, by simply working up the separate physical results already arrived at, Grove - not a natural scientist by profession, but an English lawyer - proved that all so-called physical energy, mechanical energy, heat, light, electricity magnetism, indeed even so-called chemical energy, become transformed into one another under definite conditions without any loss of energy occurring, and so proved post factum along physical lines Descartes' principle that the quantity of motion present in the world is constant. With that the special physical energies, the as it were immutable "species" of physics, were resolved into variously differentiated forms of the motion of matter, convertible into one another according to definite laws. The fortuitousness of the existence of a number of physical energies was abolished from science by the proof of their interconnections and transitions. Physics, like astronomy before it, had arrived at a result that necessarily pointed to the eternal cycle of matter in motion as the ultimate reality.

The wonderfully rapid development of chemistry, since Lavoisier, and especially since Dalton, attacked the old ideas of nature from another aspect. The preparation by inorganic means of compounds that hitherto had been produced only in the living organism proved that the laws of chemistry have the same validity for organic as for inorganic bodies, and to a large extent bridged the gulf between inorganic and organic nature, a gulf that even Kant regarded as for ever impassable.

Finally, in the sphere of biological research also the scientific journeys and expeditions that had been systematically organised since the middle of the previous century, the more thorough exploration of the European colonies in all parts of the world by specialists living there, and further the progress of paleontology, anatomy, and physiology in general, particularly since the systematic use of the microscope and the discovery of the cell, had accumulated so much material that the application of the comparative method became possible and at the same time indispensable. On the one hand the conditions of life of the various floras and faunas were determined by means of comparative physical geography; on the other hand the various organisms were compared with one another according to their homologous organs, and this not only in the adult condition but at all stages of development. The more deeply and exactly this research was carried on, the more did the rigid system of an immutable, fixed organic nature crumble away at its touch. Not only did the separate species of plants and animals become more and more inextricably intermingled, but animals turned up, such as *Amphioxus* and *Lepidosiren*, that made a mockery of all previous classification, and finally organisms were encountered of which it was not possible to say whether they belonged to the plant or animal kingdom. More and more the gaps in the paleontological record were filled up, compelling even the most reluctant to acknowledge the striking parallelism between the evolutionary history of the organic world as a whole and that of the individual organism, the Ariadne's thread that was to lead the way out of the labyrinth in which botany and zoology appeared to have become more and more deeply lost. It was characteristic that, almost simultaneously with Kant's attack on the eternity of the solar system, C. F. Wolff in 1759 launched the first attack on the fixity of species and proclaimed the theory of descent. But what in his case was still only a brilliant anticipation took firm shape in the hands of Oken, Lamarck, Baer, and was victoriously carried through by Darwin in 1859, exactly a hundred years later. Almost

simultaneously it was established that protoplasm and the cell, which had already been shown to be the ultimate morphological constituents of all organisms, occurred independently as the lowest forms of organic life. This not only reduced the gulf between inorganic and organic nature to a minimum but removed one of the most essential difficulties that had previously stood in the way of the theory of descent of organisms. The new conception of nature was complete in its main features; all rigidity was dissolved, all fixity dissipated, all particularity that had been regarded as eternal became transient, the whole of nature shown as moving in eternal flux and cyclical course.

Thus we have once again returned to the point of view of the great founders of Greek philosophy, the view that the whole of nature, from the smallest element to the greatest, from grains of sand to suns, from protista to men, has its existence in eternal coming into being and passing away, in ceaseless flux, in un-resting motion and change, only with the essential difference that what for the Greeks was a brilliant intuition, is in our case the result of strictly scientific research in accordance with experience, and hence also it emerges in a much more definite and clear form. It is true that the empirical proof of this motion is not wholly free from gaps, but these are insignificant in comparison with what has already been firmly established, and with each year they become more and more filled up. And how could the proof in detail be otherwise than defective when one bears in mind that the most essential branches of science —trans-planetary astronomy, chemistry, geology— have a scientific existence of barely a hundred years, and the comparative method in physiology one of barely fifty years, and that the basic form of almost all organic development, the cell, is a discovery not yet forty years old?

The innumerable suns and solar systems of our island universe, bounded by the outermost stellar rings of the Milky Way, developed from swirling, glowing masses of vapour, the laws of motion of which will perhaps be disclosed after the observations of some centuries have given us an insight into the proper motion of the stars. Obviously, this development did not proceed everywhere at the same rate. Recognition of the existence of dark bodies, not merely planetary in nature, hence extinct suns in our stellar system, more and more forces itself on astronomy (Mädler); on the other hand (according to Secchi) a part of the vaporous nebular patches belong to our stellar system as suns not yet fully formed, whereby it is not excluded that other nebulae, as Mädler maintains, are distant independent island universes, the relative stage of development of which must be determined by the spectroscope.

How a solar system develops from an individual nebular mass has been shown in detail by Laplace in a manner still unsurpassed; subsequent science has more and more confirmed him.

On the separate bodies so formed - suns as well as planets and satellites - the form of motion of matter at first prevailing is that which we call heat. There can be no question of chemical compounds of the elements even at a temperature like that still possessed by the sun; the extent to which heat is transformed into electricity or magnetism under such conditions, continued solar observations will show; it is already as good as proved that the mechanical motion taking place in the sun arises solely from the conflict of heat with gravity.

The smaller the individual bodies, the quicker they cool down, the satellites, asteroids, and meteors first of all, just as our moon has long been extinct. The planets cool more slowly, the central body slowest of all.

With progressive cooling the interplay of the physical forms of motion which become transformed into one another comes more and more to the forefront until finally a point is reached from when on chemical affinity begins to make itself felt, the previously chemically indifferent elements become differentiated chemically one after another, obtain chemical

properties, and enter into combination with one another. These compounds change continually with the decreasing temperature, which affects differently not only each element but also each separate compound of the elements, changing also with the consequent passage of part of the gaseous matter first to the liquid and then the solid state, and with the new conditions thus created.

The period when the planet has a firm shell and accumulations of water on its surface coincides with that when its intrinsic heat diminishes more and more in comparison to the heat emitted to it from the central body. Its atmosphere becomes the arena of meteorological phenomena in the sense in which we now understand the word; its surface becomes the arena of geological changes in which the deposits resulting from atmospheric precipitation become of ever greater importance in comparison to the slowly decreasing external effects of the hot fluid interior.

If, finally, the temperature becomes so far equalised that over a considerable portion of the surface at least it does not exceed the limits within which protein is capable of life, then, if other chemical conditions are favourable, living protoplasm is formed. What these conditions are, we do not yet know, which is not to be wondered at since so far not even the chemical formula of protein has been established - we do not even know how many chemically different protein bodies there are - and since it is only about ten years ago that the fact became known that completely structureless protein exercises all the essential functions of life, digestion, excretion, movement, contraction, reaction to stimuli, and reproduction.

Thousands of years may have passed before the conditions arose in which the next advance could take place and this formless protein produce the first cell by formation of nucleus and cell membrane. But this first cell also provided the foundation for the morphological development of the whole organic world; the first to develop, as it is permissible to assume from the whole analogy of the palæontological record, were innumerable species of non-cellular and cellular protista, of which *Eozoon canadense* alone has come down to us, and of which some were gradually differentiated into the first plants and others into the first animals. And from the first animals were developed, essentially by further differentiation, the numerous classes, orders, families, genera, and species of animals; and finally mammals, the form in which the nervous system attains its fullest development; and among these again finally that mammal in which nature attains consciousness of itself - man.

Man too arises by differentiation. Not only individually, by differentiation from a single egg cell to the most complicated organism that nature produces - no, also historically. When after thousands of years of struggle the differentiation of hand from foot, and erect gait, were finally established, man became distinct from the monkey and the basis was laid for the development of articulate speech and the mighty development of the brain that has since made the gulf between man and monkey an unbridgeable one. The specialisation of the hand - this implies the tool, and the tool implies specific human activity, the transforming reaction of man on nature, production. Animals in the narrower sense also have tools, but only as limbs of their bodies: the ant, the bee, the beaver; animals also produce, but their productive effect on surrounding nature in relation to the latter amounts to nothing at all. Man alone has succeeded in impressing his stamp on nature, not only by shifting the plant and animal world from one place to another, but also by so altering the aspect and climate of his dwelling place, and even the plants and animals themselves, that the consequences of his activity can disappear only with the general extinction of the terrestrial globe. And he has accomplished this primarily and essentially by means of the hand. Even the steam engine, so far his most powerful tool for the transformation of nature, depends, because it is a tool, in the last resort on the hand. But step by step with the development of the hand went that of the brain; first of all consciousness of the

conditions for separate practically useful actions, and later, among the more favoured peoples and arising from the preceding, insight into the natural laws governing them. And with the rapidly growing knowledge of the laws of nature the means for reacting on nature also grew; the hand alone would never have achieved the steam engine if the brain of man had not attained a correlative development with it, and parallel to it, and partly owing to it.

With men we enter history. Animals also have a history, that of their derivation and gradual evolution to their present position. This history, however, is made for them, and in so far as they themselves take part in it, this occurs without their knowledge or desire. On the other hand, the more that human beings become removed from animals in the narrower sense of the word, the more they make their own history consciously, the less becomes the influence of unforeseen effects and uncontrolled forces of this history, and the more accurately does the historical result correspond to the aim laid down in advance. If, however, we apply this measure to human history, to that of even the most developed peoples of the present day, we find that there still exists here a colossal disproportion between the proposed aims and the results arrived at, that unforeseen effects predominate, and that the uncontrolled forces are far more powerful than those set into motion according to plan. And this cannot be otherwise as long as the most essential historical activity of men, the one which has raised them from bestiality to humanity and which forms the material foundation of all their other activities, namely the production of their requirements of life, that is to-day social production, is above all subject to the interplay of unintended effects from uncontrolled forces and achieves its desired end only by way of exception and, much more frequently, the exact opposite. In the most advanced industrial countries we have subdued the forces of nature and pressed them into the service of mankind; we have thereby infinitely multiplied production, so that a child now produces more than a hundred adults previously did. And what is the result? Increasing overwork and increasing misery of the masses, and every ten years a great collapse. Darwin did not know what a bitter satire he wrote on mankind, and especially on his countrymen, when he showed that free competition, the struggle for existence, which the economists celebrate as the highest historical achievement, is the normal state of the animal kingdom. Only conscious organisation of social production, in which production and distribution are carried on in a planned way, can lift mankind above the rest of the animal world as regards the social aspect, in the same way that production in general has done this for men in their aspect as species. Historical evolution makes such an organisation daily more indispensable, but also with every day more possible. From it will date a new epoch of history, in which mankind itself, and with mankind all branches of its activity, and especially natural science, will experience an advance that will put everything preceding it in the deepest shade.

Nevertheless, "all that comes into being deserves to perish". Millions of years may elapse, hundreds of thousands of generations be born and die, but inexorably the time will come when the declining warmth of the sun will no longer suffice to melt the ice thrusting itself forward from the poles; when the human race, crowding more and more about the equator, will finally no longer find even there enough heat for life; when gradually even the last trace of organic life will vanish; and the earth, an extinct frozen globe like the moon, will circle in deepest darkness and in an ever narrower orbit about the equally extinct sun, and at last fall into it. Other planets will have preceded it, others will follow it; instead of the bright, warm solar system with its harmonious arrangement of members, only a cold, dead sphere will still pursue its lonely path through universal space. And what will happen to our solar system will happen sooner or later to all the other systems of our island universe; it will happen to all the other innumerable island universes, even to those the light of which will never reach the earth while there is a living human eye to receive it.

And when such a solar system has completed its life history and succumbs to the fate of

all that is finite, death, what then? Will the sun's corpse roll on for all eternity through infinite space, and all the once infinitely diverse, differentiated natural forces pass for ever into one single form of motion, attraction? "Or" - as Secchi asks - "do forces exist in nature which can re-convert the dead system into its original state of an incandescent nebula and re-awake it to new life? We do not know".

At all events we do not know in the sense that we know that $2 \times 2 = 4$, or that the attraction of matter increases and decreases according to the square of the distance. In theoretical natural science, however, which as far as possible builds up its view of nature into a harmonious whole, and without which nowadays even the most thoughtless empiricist cannot get anywhere, we have very often to reckon with incompletely known magnitudes; and logical consistency of thought must at all times help to get over defective knowledge. Modern natural science has had to take over from philosophy the principle of the indestructibility of motion; it cannot any longer exist without this principle. But the motion of matter is not merely crude mechanical motion, mere change of place, it is heat and light, electric and magnetic stress, chemical combination and dissociation, life and, finally, consciousness. To say that matter during the whole unlimited time of its existence has only once, and for what is an infinitesimally short period in comparison to its eternity, found itself able to differentiate its motion and thereby to unfold the whole wealth of this motion, and that before and after this remains restricted for eternity to mere change of place - this is equivalent to maintaining that matter is mortal and motion transitory. The indestructibility of motion cannot be merely quantitative, it must also be conceived qualitatively; matter whose purely mechanical change of place includes indeed the possibility under favourable conditions of being transformed into heat, electricity, chemical action, or life, but which is not capable of producing these conditions from out of itself, such matter has forfeited motion; motion which has lost the capacity of being transformed into the various forms appropriate to it may indeed still have dynamis but no longer energeia, and so has become partially destroyed. Both, however, are unthinkable.

This much is certain: there was a time when the matter of our island universe had transformed a quantity of motion - of what kind we do not yet know - into heat, such that there could be developed from it the solar systems appertaining to (according to Mädler) at least twenty million stars, the gradual extinction of which is likewise certain. How did this transformation take place? We know just as little as Father Secchi knows whether the future caput mortuum of our solar system will once again be converted into the raw material of a new solar system. But here either we must have recourse to a creator, or we are forced to the conclusion that the incandescent raw material for the solar system of our universe was produced in a natural way by transformations of motion which are by nature inherent in moving matter, and the conditions of which therefore also must be reproduced by matter, even if only after millions and millions of years and more or less by chance but with the necessity that is also inherent in chance.

The possibility of such a transformation is more and more being conceded. The view is being arrived at that the heavenly bodies are ultimately destined to fall into one another, and one even calculates the amount of heat which must be developed on such collisions. The sudden flaring up of new stars, and the equally sudden increase in brightness of familiar ones, of which we are informed by astronomy, is most easily explained by such collisions. Not only does our group of planets move about the sun, and our sun within our island universe, but our whole island universe also moves in space in temporary, relative equilibrium with the other island universes, for even the relative equilibrium of freely moving bodies can only exist where the motion is reciprocally determined; and it is assumed by many that the temperature in space is not everywhere the same. Finally, we know that, with the exception of an infinitesimal portion, the heat of the innumerable suns of our island universe vanishes into space and fails to raise the temperature of space even

by a millionth of a degree centigrade. What becomes of all this enormous quantity of heat? Is it for ever dissipated in the attempt to heat universal space, has it ceased to exist practically, and does it only continue to exist theoretically, in the fact that universal space has become warmer by a decimal fraction of a degree beginning with ten or more noughts? The indestructibility of motion forbids such an assumption, but it allows the possibility that by the successive falling into one another of the bodies of the universe all existing mechanical motion will be converted into heat and the latter radiated into space, so that in spite of all "indestructibility of force" all motion in general would have ceased. (Incidentally it is seen here how inaccurate is the term "indestructibility of force" instead of "indestructibility of motion".) Hence we arrive at the conclusion that in some way, which it will later be the task of scientific research to demonstrate, the heat radiated into space must be able to become transformed into another form of motion, in which it can once more be stored up and rendered active. Thereby the chief difficulty in the way of the reconversion of extinct suns into incandescent vapour disappears.

For the rest, the eternally repeated succession of worlds in infinite time is only the logical complement to the co-existence of innumerable worlds in infinite space - a principle the necessity of which has forced itself even on the anti-theoretical Yankee brain of Draper. 3

It is an eternal cycle in which matter moves, a cycle that certainly only completes its orbit in periods of time for which our terrestrial year is no adequate measure, a cycle in which the time of highest development, the time of organic life and still more that of the life of beings conscious of nature and of themselves, is just as narrowly restricted as the space in which life and self-consciousness come into operation; a cycle in which every finite mode of existence of matter, whether it be sun or nebular vapour, single animal or genus of animals, chemical combination or dissociation, is equally transient, and wherein nothing is eternal but eternally changing, eternally moving matter and the laws according to which it moves and changes. But however often, and however relentlessly, this cycle is completed in time and space, however many millions of suns and earths may arise and pass away, however long it may last before the conditions for organic life develop, however innumerable the organic beings that have to arise and to pass away before animals with a brain capable of thought are developed from their midst, and for a short span of time find conditions suitable for life, only to be exterminated later without mercy, we have the certainty that matter remains eternally the same in all its transformations, that none of its attributes can ever be lost, and therefore, also, that with the same iron necessity that it will exterminate on the earth its highest creation, the thinking mind, it must somewhere else and at another time again produce it.

Notes

1.

How tenaciously even in 1861 this view could be held by a man whose scientific achievements had provided highly important material for abolishing it is shown by the following classic words: "All the arraignments of our solar system, so far as we are capable of comprehending them, aim at preservation of what exists and at unchanging continuance. Just as since the most ancient times no animal and no plant on the earth has become more perfect or in any way different, just as we find in all organisms only stages alongside of one another and not following one another, just as our own race has always remained the same in corporeal respects - so even the greatest diversity in the co-existing heavenly bodies does not justify us in assuming that these forms are merely different stages of development; it is rather that everything created is equally perfect in itself." (Madler, Popular Astronomy Berlin, 1881, 5th edition, p. 316.)

2.

The defect of Lyell's view - at least in its first form - lay in conceiving the forces at work on the earth as constant, both in quality and quantity. The cooling of the earth does not exist for him; the earth does not develop in a definite direction but merely changes in an inconsequent fortuitous manner.

3.

"The multiplicity of worlds in infinite space leads to the conception of a succession of worlds in infinite time." J. W. Draper, History of the Intellectual Development of Europe, 1864. Vol. 2, p. 325.

The Part played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man

Written: in May-June 1876;
First published: in Die Neue Zeit 1895-06;

This article was intended to introduce a larger work which Engels planned to call Die drei Grundformen der Knechtschaft – Outline of the General Plan. Engels never finished it, nor even this intro, which breaks off at the end. It would be included in Dialectics of Nature.

I

Labour is the source of all wealth, the political economists assert. And it really is the source – next to nature, which supplies it with the material that it converts into wealth. But it is even infinitely more than this. It is the prime basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself.

Many hundreds of thousands of years ago, during an epoch, not yet definitely determinable, of that period of the earth's history known to geologists as the Tertiary period, most likely towards the end of it, a particularly highly-developed race of anthropoid apes lived somewhere in the tropical zone – probably on a great continent that has now sunk to the bottom of the Indian Ocean. [1] Darwin has given us an approximate description of these ancestors of ours. They were completely covered with hair, they had beards and pointed ears, and they lived in bands in the trees.

First, owing to their way of living which meant that the hands had different functions than the feet when climbing, these apes began to lose the habit of using their hands to walk and adopted a more and more erect posture. This was the decisive step in the transition from ape to man.

All extant anthropoid apes can stand erect and move about on their feet alone, but only in case of urgent need and in a very clumsy way. Their natural gait is in a half-erect posture and includes the use of the hands. The majority rest the knuckles of the fist on the ground and, with legs drawn up, swing the body through their long arms, much as a cripple moves on crutches. In general, all the transition stages from walking on all fours to walking on two legs are still to be observed among the apes today. The latter gait, however, has never become more than a makeshift for any of them.

It stands to reason that if erect gait among our hairy ancestors became first the rule and then, in time, a necessity, other diverse functions must, in the meantime, have devolved upon the hands. Already among the apes there is some difference in the way the hands and the feet are employed. In climbing, as mentioned above, the hands and feet have different uses. The hands are used mainly for gathering and holding food in the same way as the fore paws of the lower mammals are used. Many apes use their hands to build themselves nests in the trees or even to construct roofs between the branches to protect themselves against the weather, as the chimpanzee, for example, does. With their hands they grasp sticks to defend themselves against enemies, or bombard their enemies with fruits and stones. In captivity they use their hands for a number of simple operations copied from human beings. It is in this that one sees the great gulf between the undeveloped hand of even the most man-like apes and the human hand that has been highly perfected by hundreds of thousands of years of labour. The number and general arrangement of the bones and muscles are the same in both hands, but the hand of the lowest savage can perform hundreds of operations that no simian hand can imitate – no simian hand has ever fashioned even the crudest stone knife.

The first operations for which our ancestors gradually learned to adapt their hands during the many thousands of years of transition from ape to man could have been only very simple ones. The lowest savages, even those in whom regression to a more animal-like condition with a simultaneous physical degeneration can be assumed, are nevertheless far superior to these transitional beings. Before the first flint could be fashioned into a knife by human hands, a period of time probably elapsed in comparison with which the historical period known to us appears insignificant. But the decisive step had been taken, the hand had become free and could henceforth attain ever greater dexterity; the greater flexibility thus acquired was inherited and increased from generation to generation.

Thus the hand is not only the organ of labour, it is also the product of labour. Only by labour, by adaptation to ever new operations, through the inheritance of muscles, ligaments, and, over longer periods of time, bones that had undergone special development and the ever-renewed employment of this inherited finesse in new, more and more complicated operations, have given the human hand the high degree of perfection required to conjure into being the pictures of a Raphael, the statues of a Thorwaldsen, the music of a Paganini.

But the hand did not exist alone, it was only one member of an integral, highly complex organism. And what benefited the hand, benefited also the whole body it served; and this in two ways.

In the first place, the body benefited from the law of correlation of growth, as Darwin called it. This law states that the specialised forms of separate parts of an organic being are always bound up with certain forms of other parts that apparently have no connection with them. Thus all animals that have red blood cells without cell nuclei, and in which the head is attached to the first vertebra by means of a double articulation (condyles), also without exception possess lacteal glands for suckling their young. Similarly, cloven hoofs in mammals are regularly associated with the possession of a multiple stomach for rumination. Changes in certain forms involve changes in the form of other parts of the body, although we cannot explain the connection. Perfectly white cats with blue eyes are always, or almost always, deaf. The gradually increasing perfection of the human hand, and the commensurate adaptation of the feet for erect gait, have undoubtedly, by virtue of such correlation, reacted on other parts of the organism. However, this action has not as yet been sufficiently investigated for us to be able to do more here than to state the fact in general terms.

Much more important is the direct, demonstrable influence of the development of the hand

on the rest of the organism. It has already been noted that our simian ancestors were gregarious; it is obviously impossible to seek the derivation of man, the most social of all animals, from non-gregarious immediate ancestors. Mastery over nature began with the development of the hand, with labour, and widened man's horizon at every new advance. He was continually discovering new, hitherto unknown properties in natural objects. On the other hand, the development of labour necessarily helped to bring the members of society closer together by increasing cases of mutual support and joint activity, and by making clear the advantage of this joint activity to each individual. In short, men in the making arrived at the point where they had something to say to each other. Necessity created the organ; the undeveloped larynx of the ape was slowly but surely transformed by modulation to produce constantly more developed modulation, and the organs of the mouth gradually learned to pronounce one articulate sound after another.

Comparison with animals proves that this explanation of the origin of language from and in the process of labour is the only correct one. The little that even the most highly-developed animals need to communicate to each other does not require articulate speech. In its natural state, no animal feels handicapped by its inability to speak or to understand human speech. It is quite different when it has been tamed by man. The dog and the horse, by association with man, have developed such a good ear for articulate speech that they easily learn to understand any language within their range of concept. Moreover they have acquired the capacity for feelings such as affection for man, gratitude, etc., which were previously foreign to them. Anyone who has had much to do with such animals will hardly be able to escape the conviction that in many cases they now feel their inability to speak as a defect, although, unfortunately, it is one that can no longer be remedied because their vocal organs are too specialised in a definite direction. However, where vocal organs exist, within certain limits even this inability disappears. The buccal organs of birds are as different from those of man as they can be, yet birds are the only animals that can learn to speak; and it is the bird with the most hideous voice, the parrot, that speaks best of all. Let no one object that the parrot does not understand what it says. It is true that for the sheer pleasure of talking and associating with human beings, the parrot will chatter for hours at a stretch, continually repeating its whole vocabulary. But within the limits of its range of concepts it can also learn to understand what it is saying. Teach a parrot swear words in such a way that it gets an idea of their meaning (one of the great amusements of sailors returning from the tropics); tease it and you will soon discover that it knows how to use its swear words just as correctly as a Berlin costermonger. The same is true of begging for titbits.

First labour, after it and then with it speech – these were the two most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man, which, for all its similarity is far larger and more perfect. Hand in hand with the development of the brain went the development of its most immediate instruments – the senses. Just as the gradual development of speech is inevitably accompanied by a corresponding refinement of the organ of hearing, so the development of the brain as a whole is accompanied by a refinement of all the senses. The eagle sees much farther than man, but the human eye discerns considerably more in things than does the eye of the eagle. The dog has a far keener sense of smell than man, but it does not distinguish a hundredth part of the odours that for man are definite signs denoting different things. And the sense of touch, which the ape hardly possesses in its crudest initial form, has been developed only side by side with the development of the human hand itself, through the medium of labour.

The reaction on labour and speech of the development of the brain and its attendant senses, of the increasing clarity of consciousness, power of abstraction and of conclusion, gave both labour and speech an ever-renewed impulse to further development. This

development did not reach its conclusion when man finally became distinct from the ape, but on the whole made further powerful progress, its degree and direction varying among different peoples and at different times, and here and there even being interrupted by local or temporary regression. This further development has been strongly urged forward, on the one hand, and guided along more definite directions, on the other, by a new element which came into play with the appearance of fully-fledged man, namely, society.

Hundreds of thousands of years – of no greater significance in the history of the earth than one second in the life of man [Engels note: A leading authority in this respect, Sir William Thomson, has calculated that little more than a hundred million years could have elapsed since the time when the earth had cooled sufficiently for plants and animals to be able to live on it.] – certainly elapsed before human society arose out of a troupe of tree-climbing monkeys. Yet it did finally appear. And what do we find once more as the characteristic difference between the troupe of monkeys and human society? Labour. The ape herd was satisfied to browse over the feeding area determined for it by geographical conditions or the resistance of neighbouring herds; it undertook migrations and struggles to win new feeding grounds, but it was incapable of extracting from them more than they offered in their natural state, except that it unconsciously fertilised the soil with its own excrement. As soon as all possible feeding grounds were occupied, there could be no further increase in the ape population; the number of animals could at best remain stationary. But all animals waste a great deal of food, and, in addition, destroy in the germ the next generation of the food supply. Unlike the hunter, the wolf does not spare the doe which would provide it with the young the next year; the goats in Greece, that eat away the young bushes before they grow to maturity, have eaten bare all the mountains of the country. This “predatory economy” of animals plays an important part in the gradual transformation of species by forcing them to adapt themselves to other than the usual food, thanks to which their blood acquires a different chemical composition and the whole physical constitution gradually alters, while species that have remained unadapted die out. There is no doubt that this predatory economy contributed powerfully to the transition of our ancestors from ape to man. In a race of apes that far surpassed all others in intelligence and adaptability, this predatory economy must have led to a continual increase in the number of plants used for food and the consumption of more and more edible parts of food plants. In short, food became more and more varied, as did also the substances entering the body with it, substances that were the chemical premises for the transition to man.

But all that was not yet labour in the proper sense of the word. Labour begins with the making of tools. And what are the most ancient tools that we find – the most ancient judging by the heirlooms of prehistoric man that have been discovered, and by the mode of life of the earliest historical peoples and of the rawest of contemporary savages? They are hunting and fishing implements, the former at the same time serving as weapons. But hunting and fishing presuppose the transition from an exclusively vegetable diet to the concomitant use of meat, and this is another important step in the process of transition from ape to man. A meat diet contained in an almost ready state the most essential ingredients required by the organism for its metabolism. By shortening the time required for digestion, it also shortened the other vegetative bodily processes that correspond to those of plant life, and thus gained further time, material and desire for the active manifestation of animal life proper. And the farther man in the making moved from the vegetable kingdom the higher he rose above the animal. Just as becoming accustomed to a vegetable diet side by side with meat converted wild cats and dogs into the servants of man, so also adaptation to a meat diet, side by side with a vegetable diet, greatly contributed towards giving bodily strength and independence to man in the making. The meat diet, however, had its greatest effect on the brain, which now received a far richer flow of the materials necessary for its nourishment and development, and which, therefore,

could develop more rapidly and perfectly from generation to generation. With all due respect to the vegetarians man did not come into existence without a meat diet, and if the latter, among all peoples known to us, has led to cannibalism at some time or other (the forefathers of the Berliners, the Weletabians or Wilzians, used to eat their parents as late as the tenth century), that is of no consequence to us today.

The meat diet led to two new advances of decisive importance – the harnessing of fire and the domestication of animals. The first still further shortened the digestive process, as it provided the mouth with food already, as it were, half-digested; the second made meat more copious by opening up a new, more regular source of supply in addition to hunting, and moreover provided, in milk and its products, a new article of food at least as valuable as meat in its composition. Thus both these advances were, in themselves, new means for the emancipation of man. It would lead us too far afield to dwell here in detail on their indirect effects notwithstanding the great importance they have had for the development of man and society.

Just as man learned to consume everything edible, he also learned to live in any climate. He spread over the whole of the habitable world, being the only animal fully able to do so of its own accord. The other animals that have become accustomed to all climates – domestic animals and vermin – did not become so independently, but only in the wake of man. And the transition from the uniformly hot climate of the original home of man to colder regions, where the year was divided into summer and winter, created new requirements – shelter and clothing as protection against cold and damp, and hence new spheres of labour, new forms of activity, which further and further separated man from the animal.

By the combined functioning of hand, speech organs and brain, not only in each individual but also in society, men became capable of executing more and more complicated operations, and were able to set themselves, and achieve, higher and higher aims. The work of each generation itself became different, more perfect and more diversified. Agriculture was added to hunting and cattle raising; then came spinning, weaving, metalworking, pottery and navigation. Along with trade and industry, art and science finally appeared. Tribes developed into nations and states. Law and politics arose, and with them that fantastic reflection of human things in the human mind – religion. In the face of all these images, which appeared in the first place to be products of the mind and seemed to dominate human societies, the more modest productions of the working hand retreated into the background, the more so since the mind that planned the labour was able, at a very early stage in the development of society (for example, already in the primitive family), to have the labour that had been planned carried out by other hands than its own. All merit for the swift advance of civilisation was ascribed to the mind, to the development and activity of the brain. Men became accustomed to explain their actions as arising out of thought instead of their needs (which in any case are reflected and perceived in the mind); and so in the course of time there emerged that idealistic world outlook which, especially since the fall of the world of antiquity, has dominated men's minds. It still rules them to such a degree that even the most materialistic natural scientists of the Darwinian school are still unable to form any clear idea of the origin of man, because under this ideological influence they do not recognise the part that has been played therein by labour.

Animals, as has already been pointed out, change the environment by their activities in the same way, even if not to the same extent, as man does, and these changes, as we have seen, in turn react upon and change those who made them. In nature nothing takes place in isolation. Everything affects and is affected by every other thing, and it is mostly because this manifold motion and interaction is forgotten that our natural scientists are prevented from gaining a clear insight into the simplest things. We have seen how goats have prevented the regeneration of forests in Greece; on the island of St. Helena, goats and pigs brought by the first arrivals have succeeded in exterminating its old vegetation

almost completely, and so have prepared the ground for the spreading of plants brought by later sailors and colonists. But animals exert a lasting effect on their environment unintentionally and, as far as the animals themselves are concerned, accidentally. The further removed men are from animals, however, the more their effect on nature assumes the character of premeditated, planned action directed towards definite preconceived ends. The animal destroys the vegetation of a locality without realising what it is doing. Man destroys it in order to sow field crops on the soil thus released, or to plant trees or vines which he knows will yield many times the amount planted. He transfers useful plants and domestic animals from one country to another and thus changes the flora and fauna of whole continents. More than this. Through artificial breeding both plants and animals are so changed by the hand of man that they become unrecognisable. The wild plants from which our grain varieties originated are still being sought in vain. There is still some dispute about the wild animals from which our very different breeds of dogs or our equally numerous breeds of horses are descended.

It goes without saying that it would not occur to us to dispute the ability of animals to act in a planned, premeditated fashion. On the contrary, a planned mode of action exists in embryo wherever protoplasm, living albumen, exists and reacts, that is, carries out definite, even if extremely simple, movements as a result of definite external stimuli. Such reaction takes place even where there is yet no cell at all, far less a nerve cell. There is something of the planned action in the way insect-eating plants capture their prey, although they do it quite unconsciously. In animals the capacity for conscious, planned action is proportional to the development of the nervous system, and among mammals it attains a fairly high level. While fox-hunting in England one can daily observe how unerringly the fox makes use of its excellent knowledge of the locality in order to elude its pursuers, and how well it knows and turns to account all favourable features of the ground that cause the scent to be lost. Among our domestic animals, more highly developed thanks to association with man, one can constantly observe acts of cunning on exactly the same level as those of children. For, just as the development history of the human embryo in the mother's womb is only an abbreviated repetition of the history, extending over millions of years, of the bodily development of our animal ancestors, starting from the worm, so the mental development of the human child is only a still more abbreviated repetition of the intellectual development of these same ancestors, at least of the later ones. But all the planned action of all animals has never succeeded in impressing the stamp of their will upon the earth. That was left for man.

In short, the animal merely uses its environment, and brings about changes in it simply by its presence; man by his changes makes it serve his ends, masters it. This is the final, essential distinction between man and other animals, and once again it is labour that brings about this distinction.

Let us not, however, flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human victories over nature. For each such victory nature takes its revenge on us. Each victory, it is true, in the first place brings about the results we expected, but in the second and third places it has quite different, unforeseen effects which only too often cancel the first. The people who, in Mesopotamia, Greece, Asia Minor and elsewhere, destroyed the forests to obtain cultivable land, never dreamed that by removing along with the forests the collecting centres and reservoirs of moisture they were laying the basis for the present forlorn state of those countries. When the Italians of the Alps used up the pine forests on the southern slopes, so carefully cherished on the northern slopes, they had no inkling that by doing so they were cutting at the roots of the dairy industry in their region; they had still less inkling that they were thereby depriving their mountain springs of water for the greater part of the year, and making it possible for them to pour still more furious torrents on the plains during the rainy seasons. Those who spread the potato in Europe were not aware that with these

farinaceous tubers they were at the same time spreading scrofula. Thus at every step we are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over a foreign people, like someone standing outside nature – but that we, with flesh, blood and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to learn its laws and apply them correctly.

And, in fact, with every day that passes we are acquiring a better understanding of these laws and getting to perceive both the more immediate and the more remote consequences of our interference with the traditional course of nature. In particular, after the mighty advances made by the natural sciences in the present century, we are more than ever in a position to realise, and hence to control, also the more remote natural consequences of at least our day-to-day production activities. But the more this progresses the more will men not only feel but also know their oneness with nature, and the more impossible will become the senseless and unnatural idea of a contrast between mind and matter, man and nature, soul and body, such as arose after the decline of classical antiquity in Europe and obtained its highest elaboration in Christianity.

It required the labour of thousands of years for us to learn a little of how to calculate the more remote natural effects of our actions in the field of production, but it has been still more difficult in regard to the more remote social effects of these actions. We mentioned the potato and the resulting spread of scrofula. But what is scrofula compared to the effects which the reduction of the workers to a potato diet had on the living conditions of the popular masses in whole countries, or compared to the famine the potato blight brought to Ireland in 1847, which consigned to the grave a million Irishmen, nourished solely or almost exclusively on potatoes, and forced the emigration overseas of two million more? When the Arabs learned to distil spirits, it never entered their heads that by so doing they were creating one of the chief weapons for the annihilation of the aborigines of the then still undiscovered American continent. And when afterwards Columbus discovered this America, he did not know that by doing so he was giving a new lease of life to slavery, which in Europe had long ago been done away with, and laying the basis for the Negro slave trade. The men who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries laboured to create the steam-engine had no idea that they were preparing the instrument which more than any other was to revolutionise social relations throughout the world. Especially in Europe, by concentrating wealth in the hands of a minority and dispossessing the huge majority, this instrument was destined at first to give social and political domination to the bourgeoisie, but later, to give rise to a class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat which can end only in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the abolition of all class antagonisms. But in this sphere too, by long and often cruel experience and by collecting and analysing historical material, we are gradually learning to get a clear view of the indirect, more remote social effects of our production activity, and so are afforded an opportunity to control and regulate these effects as well.

This regulation, however, requires something more than mere knowledge. It requires a complete revolution in our hitherto existing mode of production, and simultaneously a revolution in our whole contemporary social order.

All hitherto existing modes of production have aimed merely at achieving the most immediately and directly useful effect of labour. The further consequences, which appear only later and become effective through gradual repetition and accumulation, were totally neglected. The original common ownership of land corresponded, on the one hand, to a level of development of human beings in which their horizon was restricted in general to what lay immediately available, and presupposed, on the other hand, a certain superfluity of land that would allow some latitude for correcting the possible bad results of this primeval type of economy. When this surplus land was exhausted, common ownership

also declined. All higher forms of production, however, led to the division of the population into different classes and thereby to the antagonism of ruling and oppressed classes. Thus the interests of the ruling class became the driving factor of production, since production was no longer restricted to providing the barest means of subsistence for the oppressed people. This has been put into effect most completely in the capitalist mode of production prevailing today in Western Europe. The individual capitalists, who dominate production and exchange, are able to concern themselves only with the most immediate useful effect of their actions. Indeed, even this useful effect – inasmuch as it is a question of the usefulness of the article that is produced or exchanged – retreats far into the background, and the sole incentive becomes the profit to be made on selling.

Classical political economy, the social science of the bourgeoisie, in the main examines only social effects of human actions in the fields of production and exchange that are actually intended. This fully corresponds to the social organisation of which it is the theoretical expression. As individual capitalists are engaged in production and exchange for the sake of the immediate profit, only the nearest, most immediate results must first be taken into account. As long as the individual manufacturer or merchant sells a manufactured or purchased commodity with the usual coveted profit, he is satisfied and does not concern himself with what afterwards becomes of the commodity and its purchasers. The same thing applies to the natural effects of the same actions. What cared the Spanish planters in Cuba, who burned down forests on the slopes of the mountains and obtained from the ashes sufficient fertiliser for one generation of very highly profitable coffee trees – what cared they that the heavy tropical rainfall afterwards washed away the unprotected upper stratum of the soil, leaving behind only bare rock! In relation to nature, as to society, the present mode of production is predominantly concerned only about the immediate, the most tangible result; and then surprise is expressed that the more remote effects of actions directed to this end turn out to be quite different, are mostly quite the opposite in character; that the harmony of supply and demand is transformed into the very reverse opposite, as shown by the course of each ten years' industrial cycle – even Germany has had a little preliminary experience of it in the "crash"; that private ownership based on one's own labour must of necessity develop into the expropriation of the workers, while all wealth becomes more and more concentrated in the hands of non-workers; that [... the manuscript breaks off here.]

Notes

1.

In the 1870s, when this was written, British zoogeographer Philip Lutley Sclater put forth the theory that a continent (he called "Lemuria") existed which reached from modern Madagascar to India and Sumatra – and this continent has since submerged beneath the Indian Ocean.

Natural Science and the Spirit World

[1]

THE dialectics that has found its way into popular consciousness finds expression in the old saying that extremes meet. In accordance with this we should hardly err in looking for the most extreme degree of fantasy, credulity, and superstition, not in that trend of natural science which, like the German philosophy of nature, tries to force the objective world into the framework of its subjective thought, but rather in the opposite trend, which, relying on mere experience, treats thought with sovereign disdain and really has gone to the furthest extreme in emptiness of thought. This school prevails in England. Its father, the much lauded Francis Bacon, already advanced the demand that his new empirical-inductive method should be pursued to attain by its means, above all, longer life, rejuvenation – to a certain extent, alteration of stature and features, transformation of one body into another, the production of new species, power over the air and the production of storms. He complains that such investigations have been abandoned, and in his natural history he actually gives recipes for making gold and performing various miracles. Similarly Isaac Newton in his old age greatly busied himself with expounding the revelation of St. John. So it is not to be wondered at if in recent years English empiricism in the person of some of its representatives – and not the worst of them – should seem to have fallen a hopeless victim to the spirit-rapping and spirit-seeing imported from America.

The first natural scientist belonging here is the very eminent zoologist and botanist, Alfred Russell Wallace, the man who simultaneously with Darwin put forward the theory of the evolution of species by natural selection. In his little work, *On Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, London, Burns, 1875, he relates that his first experiences in this branch of natural knowledge date from 1844, when he attended the lectures of Mr. Spencer Hall on mesmerism and as a result carried out similar experiments on his pupils. "I was extremely interested in the subject and pursued it with ardour." He not only produced magnetic sleep together with the phenomena of articular rigidity, and local loss of sensation, he also confirmed the correctness of Gall's map of the skull, because on touching any one of Gall's organs the corresponding activity was aroused in the magnetised patient and exhibited by appropriate and lively gestures. Further, he established that his patient, merely by being touched, partook of all the sensations of the operator; he made him drunk with a glass of water as soon as he told him that it was brandy. He could make one of the young men so stupid, even in the waking condition, that he no longer knew his own name, a feat, however, that other schoolmasters are capable of accomplishing without any mesmerism. And so on.

Now it happens that I also saw this Mr. Spencer Hall in the winter of 1843-4 in Manchester. He was a very mediocre charlatan, who travelled the country under the patronage of some parsons and undertook magnetico-phrenological performances with a young girl in order to prove thereby the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the incorrectness of the materialism that was being preached at that time by the Owenites in all big towns. The lady was sent into a magnetico-sleep and then, as soon as the operator touched any part of the skull corresponding to one of Gall's organs, she gave a bountiful display of theatrical, demonstrative gestures and poses representing the activity of the organ concerned; for instance, for the organ of philoprogenitiveness she fondled and kissed an imaginary baby, etc. Moreover, the good Mr. Hall had enriched Gall's geography of the skull with a new island of Barataria: right at the top of the skull he had discovered an organ of veneration, on touching which his hypnotic miss sank on to her knees, folded her hands in prayer, and depicted to the astonished, philistine audience an angel wrapt in veneration. That was the climax and conclusion of the exhibition. The existence of God had been proved.

The effect on me and one of my acquaintances was exactly the same as on Mr. Wallace; the phenomena interested us and we tried to find out how far we could reproduce them. A wideawake young boy of 12 years old offered himself as subject. Gently gazing into his

eyes, or stroking, sent him without difficulty into the hypnotic condition. But since we were rather less credulous than Mr. Wallace and set to work with rather less fervour, we arrived at quite different results. Apart from muscular rigidity and loss of sensation, which were easy to produce, we found also a state of complete passivity of the will bound up with a peculiar hypersensitivity of sensation. The patient, when aroused from his lethargy by any external stimulus, exhibited very much greater liveliness than in the waking condition. There was no trace of any mysterious relation to the operator; anyone else could just as easily set the sleeper into activity. To set Gall's cranial organs into action was the least that we achieved; we went much further, we could not only exchange them for one another, or make their seat anywhere in the whole body, but we also fabricated any amount of other organs, organs of singing, whistling, piping, dancing, boxing, sewing, cobbling, tobacco-smoking, etc., and we could make their seat wherever we wanted. Wallace made his patients drunk on water, but we discovered in the great toe an organ of drunkenness which only had to be touched in order to cause the finest drunken comedy to be enacted. But it must be well understood, no organ showed a trace of action until the patient was given to understand what was expected of him; the boy soon perfected himself by practice to such an extent that the merest indication sufficed. The organs produced in this way then retained their validity for later occasions of putting to sleep, as long as they were not altered in the same way. The patient had even a double memory, one for the waking state and a second quite separate one for the hypnotic condition. As regards the passivity of the will and its absolute subjection to the will of a third person, this loses all its miraculous appearance when we bear in mind that the whole condition began with the subjection of the will of the patient to that of the operator, and cannot be restored without it. The most powerful magician of a magnetiser in the world will come to the end of his resources as soon as his patient laughs him in the face.

While we with our frivolous scepticism thus found that the basis of magnetico-phrenological charlatanry lay in a series of phenomena which for the most part differ only in degree from those of the waking state and require no mystical interpretation, Mr. Wallace's "ardour" led him into a series of self-deceptions, in virtue of which he confirmed Gall's map of the skull in all its details and noted a mysterious relation between operator and patient.[2] Everywhere in Mr. Wallace's account, the sincerity of which reaches the degree of naïveté, it becomes apparent that he was much less concerned in investigating the factual background of charlatanry than in reproducing all the phenomena at all costs. Only this frame of mind is needed for the man who was originally a scientist to be quickly converted into an "adept" by means of simple and facile self-deception. Mr. Wallace ended up with faith in magnetico-phrenological miracles and so already stood with one foot in the world of spirits.

He drew the other foot after him in 1865. On returning from his twelve years of travel in the tropical zone, experiments in table-turning introduced him to the society of various "mediums." How rapid his progress was, and how complete his mastery of the subject, is testified to by the above-mentioned booklet. He expects us to take for good coin not only all the alleged miracles of Home, the brothers Davenport, and other "mediums" who all more or less exhibit themselves for money and who have for the most part been frequently exposed as impostors, but also a whole series of allegedly authentic spirit histories from early times. The Pythonesses of the Greek oracle, the witches of the Middle Ages, were all "mediums," and Iamblichus[3] in his *De divinatione* already described quite accurately "the most astonishing phenomena of modern spiritualism."

Just one example to show how lightly Mr. Wallace deals with the scientific corroboration and authentication of these miracles. It is certainly a strong assumption that we should believe that the aforesaid spirits should allow themselves to be photographed, and we have surely the right to demand that such spirit photographs should be authenticated in

the most indubitable manner before we accept them as genuine. Now Mr. Wallace recounts on p.187 that in March, 1872, a leading medium, Mrs. Guppy, née Nicholls, had herself photographed together with her husband and small boy at Mr. Hudson's in Notting Hill, and on two different photographs a tall female figure, finely draped in white gauze robes, with somewhat Eastern features, was to be seen behind her in a pose as if giving a benediction. "Here, then, one of two things are absolutely certain.[4] Either there was a living intelligent, but invisible being present, or Mr. and Mrs. Guppy, the photographer, and some fourth person planned a wicked imposture and have maintained it ever since. Knowing Mr. and Mrs. Guppy so well as I do, I feel an absolute conviction that they are as incapable of an imposture of this kind as any earnest inquirer after truth in the department of natural science." [5]

Consequently, either deception or spirit photography. Quite so. And, if deception, either the spirit was already on the photographic plates, or four persons must have been concerned, or three if we leave out as weak-minded or duped old Mr. Guppy who died in January, 1875, at the age of 84 (it only needed that he should be sent behind the Spanish screen of the background). That a photographer could obtain a "model" for the spirit without difficulty does not need to be argued. But the photographer Hudson, shortly afterwards, was publicly prosecuted for habitual falsification of spirit photographs, so Mr. Wallace remarks in mitigation: "One thing is clear, if an imposture has occurred, it was at once detected by spiritualists themselves." Hence there is not much reliance to be placed on the photographer. Remains Mrs. Guppy, and for her there is only the "absolute conviction" of our friend Wallace and nothing more. Nothing more? Not at all. The absolute trustworthiness of Mrs. Guppy is evidenced by her assertion that one evening, early in June, 1871, she was carried through the air in a state of unconsciousness from her house in Highbury Hill Park to 69, Lamb's Conduit Street – three English miles as the crow flies – and deposited in the said house of No. 69 on the table in the midst of a spiritualistic séance. The doors of the room were closed, and although Mrs. Guppy was one of the stoutest women in London, which is certainly saying a good deal, nevertheless her sudden incursion did not leave behind the slightest hole either in the doors or in the ceiling. (Reported in the London .Echo, June 8, 1871.) And if anyone still does not believe in the genuineness of spirit photography, there's no helping him.

The second eminent adept among English natural scientists is Mr. William Crookes, the discoverer of the chemical element thallium and of the radiometer (in Germany also called "Lichtmühle" [light-mill]). Mr. Crookes began to investigate spiritualistic manifestations about 1871, and employed for this purpose a number of physical and mechanical appliances, spring balances, electric batteries, etc. Whether he brought to his task the main apparatus required, a sceptically critical mind, or whether he remained to the end in a fit state for working, we shall see. At any rate, within a not very long period, Mr. Crookes was just as completely captivated as Mr. Wallace. "For some years," he relates, "a young lady, Miss Florence Cook, has exhibited remarkable mediumship, which latterly culminated in the production of an entire female form purporting to be of spiritual origin, and which appeared barefooted and in white flowing robes while she lay entranced in dark clothing and securely bound in a cabinet or adjoining room." This spirit, which called itself Katie, and which looked remarkably like Miss Cook, was one evening suddenly seized round the waist by Mr. Volckmann – the present husband of Mrs. Guppy – and held fast in order to see whether it was not indeed Miss Cook in another edition. The spirit proved to be a quite sturdy damsel, it defended itself vigorously, the onlookers intervened, the gas was turned out, and when, after some scuffling, peace was reestablished and the room re-lit, the spirit had vanished and Miss Cook lay bound and unconscious in her corner. Nevertheless, Mr. Volckmann is said to maintain up to the present day that he had seized hold of Miss Cook and nobody else. In order to establish this scientifically, Mr. Varley, a well-known

electrician, on the occasion of a new experiment, arranged for the current from a battery to flow through the medium, Miss Cook, in such a way that she could not play the part of the spirit without interrupting the current. Nevertheless, the spirit made its appearance. It was, therefore, indeed a being different from Miss Cook. To establish this further was the task of Mr. Crookes. His first step was to win the confidence of the spiritualistic lady. This confidence, so he says himself in the *Spiritualist*, June 5, 1874, "increased gradually to such an extent that she refused to give a séance unless I made the arrangements. She said that she always wanted me to be near her and in the neighbourhood of the cabinet; I found that – when this confidence had been established and she was sure that I would not break any promise made to her – the phenomena increased considerably in strength and there was freely forthcoming evidence that would have been unobtainable in any other way. She frequently consulted me in regard to the persons present at the séances and the places to be given them, for she had recently become very nervous as a result of certain ill-advised suggestions that, besides other more scientific methods of investigation, force also should be applied."

The spirit lady rewarded this confidence, which was as kind as it was scientific, in the highest measure. She even made her appearance – which can no longer surprise us – in Mr. Crookes' house, played with his children and told them "anecdotes from her adventures in India," treated Mr. Crookes to an account of "some of the bitter experiences of her past life," allowed him to take her by the arm so that he could convince himself of her evident materiality, allowed him to take her pulse and count the number of her respirations per minute, and finally allowed herself to be photographed next to Mr. Crookes. "This figure," says Mr. Wallace, "after she had been seen, touched, photographed, and conversed with, vanished absolutely out of a small room from which there was no other exit than an adjoining room filled with spectators" – which was not such a great feat, provided that the spectators were polite enough to show as much faith in Mr. Crookes, in whose house this happened, as Mr. Crookes did in the spirit.

Unfortunately these "fully authenticated phenomena" are not immediately credible even for spiritualists. We saw above how the very spiritualistic Mr. Volckmann permitted himself to make a very material grab. And now a clergyman, a member of the committee of the "British National Association of Spiritualists," has also been present at a séance with Miss Cook, and he established the fact without difficulty that the room through the door of which the spirit came and disappeared communicated with the outer world by a second door. The behaviour of Mr. Crookes, who was also present, gave "the final death blow to my belief that there might be something in the manifestations." (*Mystic London*, by the Rev. C. Maurice Davies, London, Tinsley Brothers).[6] And, over and above that, it came to light in America how "Katies" were "materialised." A married couple named Holmes held séances in Philadelphia in which likewise a "Katie" appeared and received bountiful presents from the believers. However, one sceptic refused to rest until he got on the track of the said Katie, who, anyway, had already gone on strike once because of lack of pay; he discovered her in a boarding-house as a young lady of unquestionable flesh and bone, and in possession of all the presents that had been given to the spirit.

Meanwhile the Continent also had its scientific spiritseers. A scientific association at St. Petersburg – I do not know exactly whether the University or even the Academy itself – charged the Councillor of State, Aksakov, and the chemist, Butlerov, to examine the basis of the spiritualistic phenomena, but it does not seem that very much came of this. On the other hand – if the noisy announcements of the spiritualists are to be believed – Germany has now also put forward its man in the person of Professor Zöllner in Leipzig.

For years, as is well known, Herr Zöllner has been hard at work on the "fourth dimension" of space, and has discovered that many things that are impossible in a space of three dimensions, are a simple matter of course in a space of four dimensions. Thus, in the latter

kind of space, a closed metal sphere can be turned inside out like a glove, without making a hole in it; similarly a knot can be tied in an endless string or one which has both ends fastened, and two separate closed rings can be interlinked without opening either of them, and many more such feats. According to the recent triumphant reports from the spirit world, it is said now that Professor Zöllner has addressed himself to one or more mediums in order with their aid to determine more details of the locality of the fourth dimension. The success is said to have been surprising. After the session the arm of the chair, on which he rested his arm while his hand never left the table, was found to have become interlocked with his arm, a string that had both ends sealed to the table was found tied into four knots, and so on. In short, all the miracles of the fourth dimension are said to have been performed by the spirits with the utmost ease. It must be borne in mind: *relata refero*, I do not vouch for the correctness of the spirit bulletin, and if it should contain any inaccuracy, Herr Zöllner ought to be thankful that I am giving him the opportunity to make a correction. If, however, it reproduces the experiences of Herr Zöllner without falsification, then it obviously signifies a new era both in the science of spiritualism and that of mathematics. The spirits prove the existence of the fourth dimension, just as the fourth dimension vouches for the existence of spirits. And this once established, an entirely new, immeasurable field is opened to science. All previous mathematics and natural science will be only a preparatory school for the mathematics of the fourth and still higher dimensions, and for the mechanics, physics, chemistry, and physiology of the spirits dwelling in these higher dimensions. Has not Mr. Crookes scientifically determined how much weight is lost by tables and other articles of furniture on their passage into the fourth dimension – as we may now well be permitted to call it – and does not Mr. Wallace declare it proven that fire there does no harm to the human body? And now we have even the physiology of the spirit bodies! They breathe, they have a pulse, therefore lungs, heart, and a circulatory apparatus, and in consequence are at least as admirably equipped as our own in regard to the other bodily organs. For breathing requires carbohydrates which undergo combustion in the lungs, and these carbohydrates can only be supplied from without; hence, stomach, intestines, and their accessories – and if we have once established so much, the rest follows without difficulty. The existence of such organs, however, implies the possibility of their falling a prey to disease, hence it may still come to pass that Herr Virchow will have to compile a cellular pathology of the spirit world. And since most of these spirits are very handsome young ladies, who are not to be distinguished in any respect whatsoever from terrestrial damsels, other than by their supra-mundane beauty, it could not be very long before they come into contact with “men who feel the passion of love”; and since, as established by Mr. Crookes from the beat of the pulse, “the female heart is not absent,” natural selection also has opened before it the prospect of a fourth dimension, one in which it has no longer any need to fear of being confused with wicked social-democracy.

Enough. Here it becomes palpably evident which is the most certain path from natural science to mysticism. It is not the extravagant theorising of the philosophy of nature, but the shallowest empiricism that spurns all theory and distrusts all thought. It is not a priori necessity that proves the existence of spirits, but the empirical observations of Messrs. Wallace, Crookes, and Co. If we trust the spectrum-analysis observations of Crookes, which led to the discovery of the metal thallium, or the rich zoological discoveries of Wallace in the Malay Archipelago, we are asked to place the same trust in the spiritualistic experiences and discoveries of these two scientists. And if we express the opinion that, after all, there is a little difference between the two, namely, that we can verify the one but not the other, then the spirit-seers retort that this is not the case, and that they are ready to give us the opportunity of verifying also the spirit phenomena.

Indeed, dialectics cannot be despised with impunity. However great one's contempt for all

theoretical thought, nevertheless one cannot bring two natural facts into relation with one another, or understand the connection existing between them, without theoretical thought. The only question is whether one's thinking is correct or not, and contempt of theory is evidently the most certain way to think naturalistically, and therefore incorrectly. But, according to an old and well-known dialectic law, incorrect thinking, carried to its logical conclusion, inevitably arrives at the opposite of its point of departure. Hence, the empirical contempt of dialectics on the part of some of the most sober empiricists is punished by their being led into the most barren of all superstitions, into modern spiritualism.

It is the same with mathematics. The ordinary metaphysical mathematicians boast with enormous pride of the absolute irrefutability of the results of their science. But these results include also imaginary magnitudes, which thereby acquire a certain reality. When one has once become accustomed to ascribe some kind of reality outside of our minds to $\sqrt{-1}$, or to the fourth dimension, then it is not a matter of much importance if one goes a step further and also accepts the spirit world of the mediums. It is as Ketteler said about Döllinger[7]: "The man has defended so much nonsense in his life, he really could have accepted infallibility into the bargain!"

In fact, mere empiricism is incapable of refuting the spiritualists. In the first place, the "higher" phenomena always show themselves only when the "investigator" concerned is already so far in the toils that he now only sees what he is meant to see or wants to see – as Crookes himself describes with such inimitable naïveté. In the second place, however, the spiritualist cares nothing that hundreds of alleged facts are exposed as imposture and dozens of alleged mediums as ordinary tricksters. As long as every single alleged miracle has not been explained away, they have still room enough to carry on, as indeed Wallace says clearly enough in connection with the falsified spirit photographs. The existence of falsifications proves the genuineness of the genuine ones.

And so empiricism finds itself compelled to refute the importunate spirit-seers not by means of empirical experiments, but by theoretical considerations, and to say, with Huxley[8]: "The only good that I can see in the demonstration of the truth of 'spiritualism' is to furnish an additional argument against suicide. Better live a crossing-sweeper than die and be made to talk twaddle by a 'medium' hired at a guinea a séance!"

Notes

1.

From a manuscript of Engels probably written in 1878, and first published in the "Illustrierter Neue Welt-Kalender für das Jahr 1898."

2.

As already said, the patients perfect themselves by practice. It is therefore quite possible that, when the subjection of the will has become habitual, the relation of the participants becomes more intimate, individual phenomena are intensified and are reflected weakly even in the waking state. [Note by F. Engels.]

3.

See Appendix II, p. 368.

4.

The spirit world is superior to grammar. A joker once caused the spirit of the grammarian

Lindley Murray to testify. To the question whether he was there, he answered: "I are."
(American for I am.) The medium was from America. [Note by F. Engels.]

5.

See Appendix II, p. 369.

6.

See Appendix II, p. 370.

7.

A catholic scholar who did not accept the dogma of papal infallibility.

8.

See Appendix II, p. 370.

Source: Dialectics of Nature, pp. 184-201;
First Published: by Progress Publishers, 1934, 6th printing 1974;

[From the History of Science]

* * *

The successive development of the separate branches of natural science should be studied. First of all, astronomy, which, if only on account of the seasons, was absolutely indispensable for pastoral and agricultural peoples. Astronomy can only develop with the aid of mathematics. Hence this also had to be tackled. – Further, at a certain stage of agriculture and in certain regions (raising of water for irrigation in Egypt), and especially with the origin of towns, big building structures and the development of handicrafts, mechanics also arose. This was soon needed also for navigation and war. – Moreover, it requires the aid of mathematics and so promotes the latter's development. Thus, from the very beginning the origin and development of the sciences has been determined by production.

Throughout antiquity, scientific investigation proper remained restricted to these three branches, and indeed in the form of exact, systematic research it occurs for the first time in the post-classical period (the Alexandrines, Archimedes, etc.). In physics and chemistry, which were as yet hardly separated in men's minds (theory of the elements, absence of the concept of a chemical element), in botany, zoology, human and animal anatomy, it had only been possible until then to collect facts and arrange them as systematically as possible. Physiology was sheer guess-work, as soon as one went beyond the most tangible things – e.g., digestion and excretion – and it could not be otherwise when even the circulation of the blood was not known. – At the end of the period, chemistry makes its

appearance in the primitive form of alchemy.

If, after the dark night of the Middle Ages was over the sciences suddenly arose anew with undreamt-of force, developing at a miraculous rate, once again we owe this miracle to production. In the first place, following the crusades, industry developed enormously and brought to light a quantity of new mechanical (weaving, clockmaking, milling), chemical (dyeing, metallurgy, alcohol), and physical (spectacles) facts, and this not only gave enormous material for observation, but also itself provided quite other means for experimenting than previously existed, and allowed the construction of new instruments; it can be said that really systematic experimental science now became possible for the first time. Secondly, the whole of West and Middle Europe, including Poland, now developed in a connected fashion, even though Italy was still at the head owing to its old-inherited civilisation. Thirdly, geographical discoveries – made purely for the sake of gain and, therefore, in the last resort, of production – opened up an infinite and hitherto inaccessible amount of material of a meteorological, zoological, botanical, and physiological (human) bearing. Fourthly, there was the printing press. [In margin: "Hitherto, what has been boasted of is what production owes to science, but science owes infinitely more to production."]

Now – apart from mathematics, astronomy, and mechanics, which were already in existence – physics becomes definitely separate from chemistry (Torricelli, Galileo – the former in connection with industrial waterworks studied first of all the movement of liquids, see Clerk Maxwell). Boyle put chemistry on a stable basis as a science. Harvey did the same for physiology (human and animal) by the discovery of the blood circulation. Zoology and botany remain at first collecting sciences, until palaeontology appeared on the scene – Cuvier – and shortly afterwards came the discovery of the cell and the development of organic chemistry. Therewith comparative morphology and physiology became possible and from then on both are true sciences. Geology was founded at the end of the last [18th] century, and recently anthropology, badly so-called, enabling the transition from the morphology and physiology of man and human races to history. This to be studied further in detail and to be developed.

The Ancients' Outlook on Nature

[Hegel, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, Vol. I, – Greek Philosophy][119]

Of the first philosophers, Aristotle says (*Metaphysics*, 1, 3) that they assert:

"That of which all things consist, from which they first come and into which they are ultimately resolved ... of which the essence (*ousia*) persists although modified by its affections (*paqesi*) this is the element (*stoiceton*) and principle (*arch*) of all being.... Hence they believe that nothing is either generated (*oute gignesqai ouden*) or destroyed, since this kind of primary entity always persists." (p. 98.)

Here, therefore, is already the whole original spontaneous materialism which at its beginning quite naturally regards the unity of the infinite diversity of natural phenomena as a matter of course, and seeks it in something definitely corporeal, a particular thing, as Thales does in water.

Cicero says:

"Thales* of Miletos ... declared that water is the basis of things, and God that, mind that forms everything out of water." (*De Natura Deorum*, 1, p. 10.)

Hegel quite rightly declares that this is an addition of Cicero's, and says:

"However, we are not concerned here with this question whether, in addition, Thales believed in God; it is not a matter here of supposition, belief, popular religion ... and even if he spoke of God as having created all things from that water, we would not thereby know

anything more of this being ... it is an empty word without its idea," p. 209 (ca. 600 [B.C.]).

The oldest Greek philosophers were at the same time investigators of nature: Thales, a geometrician, fixed the year at 365 days, and is said to have predicted a solar eclipse. – Anaximander constructed a sun clock, a kind of map (perimetron) of land and sea, and various astronomical instruments. – Pythagoras was a mathematician.

Anaximander of Miletos, according to Plutarch (Quaestiones convivales [Table Talk], VIII, p. 8), makes "man come from a fish, emerging from the water on to the land," p. 213. For him the arch kai stoiceion to apeiron [beginning and element is the infinite], without determining (diorizwn) it as air or water or anything else (Diogenes Laertius II, paragraph 1). This infinite correctly reproduced by Hegel, p. 215, as "undetermined matter" (ca. 580).

Anaximenes of Miletos takes air as principle and basic element, declaring it to be infinite (Cicero, De Natura Deorum, 1, p. 10) and that

"everything arises from it, in it everything is again dissolved" (Plutarch, De placitis philosophorum [On the Opinions of Philosophers], 1, p. 3).

Here air ahr = pneuma [breath, spirit];

"Just as our soul, which is air, holds us together, so also a spirit (pneuma) and air hold the whole world together. Spirit and, air have the same meaning" (Plutarch).[120] [pp. 215-16.]

Soul and air conceived as a general medium (ca. 555).

Aristotle already says that these ancient philosophers put the primordial essence in a form of matter: air and water (and perhaps Anaximander in something midway between both), later Heraclitus in fire, but none in earth on account of its multiple composition (dia thn megalomereian) Metaphysics, I, 8. (p. 217.)

Aristotle correctly remarks of all of them that they leave the origin of motion unexplained (p. 218 et seq.).

Pythagoras of Samos (ca. 540): number is the basic principle.

"That number is the essence of all things, and the organisation of the universe as a whole in its determinations is a harmonious system of numbers and their relations." (Aristotle, Metaphysics, I, 5 passim.)

Hegel justly points out

"the audacity of such language, which at one blow strikes down all that is regarded by the imagination as being or as essential (true), and annihilates the sensuous essence," and puts the essence in a thought determination, even if it is a very restricted and one-sided one. (pp. 237-38.)

Just as number is subject to definite laws, so also the universe; hereby its obedience to law was expressed for the first time. To Pythagoras is ascribed the reduction of musical harmonies to mathematical relations. Likewise:

"The Pythagoreans put fire in the centre, but the earth as a star which revolves in a circle around this central body." (Aristotle, De coelo [On the Sky], II, 13.) (p. 265.)

This fire, however, is not the sun; nevertheless this is the first inkling that the earth moves.

Hegel on the planetary system:

"...the harmonious element, which determines the distances (between the planets) – all mathematics has still not been able to give any basis for it. The empirical numbers are accurately known; but it has all the appearance of chance, not of necessity. An approximate regularity in the distances is known, and thus with luck planets between Mars

and Jupiter have been guessed at, where later Ceres, Vesta, Pallas, etc., were discovered; but astronomy still did not find a consistent series in which there was any sense, any reason. Rather it looks with contempt on the regular presentation of this series; for itself, however, it is an extremely important point which must not be surrendered.” (pp. 267-68.)

For all the naive materialism of the total outlook, the kernel of the later split is already to be found among the ancient Greeks. For Thales, the soul is already something special, something different from the body (just as he ascribes a soul also to the magnet), for Anaximenes it is air (as in Genesis),[121] for the Pythagoreans it is already immortal and migratory, the body being purely accidental to it. For the Pythagoreans, also, the soul is “a chip of the ether (apospasma aiqueros)” (Diogenes Laertius, VIII, p. 26-28), where the cold ether is the air, the dense ether the sea and moisture. [pp. 279-80.]

Aristotle correctly reproaches the Pythagoreans also:

With their numbers “they do not say how motion comes into being, and how, without motion and change, there is coming into being and passing away, or states and activities of heavenly things.” (Metaphysics, I, 8.) [p. 277.]

Pythagoras is supposed to have discovered the identity

of the morning and evening star, that the moon gets its light from the sun, and finally the Pythagorean theorem.

“Pythagoras is said to have slaughtered a hecatomb on discovering this theorem ... and however remarkable it may be that his joy went so far on that account as to order a great feast, to which the rich and the whole people were invited, it was worth the trouble. It is joyousness, joy of the spirit (knowledge) – at the expense of the oxen.” (p. 279.)

The Eleatics.

* * *

Leucippus and Democritus.[122]

“Leucippus, however, and his disciple Democritus hold that the elements are the Full and the Void – calling the one ‘what is’ and the other ‘what is not’. Of these they identify the full or solid with ‘what is’ (i.e., the atoms) and the void or rare with ‘what is not’. Hence they hold that what is not is no less real than what is ... and they say that these are the material causes of things. And just as those who make the underlying substance a unity generate all other things by means of its modifications ... so these thinkers hold that the ‘differences’ (namely, of the atoms) are the causes of everything else. These differences, they say, are three: shape, arrangement, and position.... Thus, e.g., A differs from N in shape, AN from NA in arrangement, and Z from N in position.” (Aristotle, Metaphysics, Book I, Chapter IV.)

Leucippus “was the first to set up atoms as general principles ... and these he calls elements. Out of them arise the worlds unlimited in number and into them they are dissolved. This is how the worlds are formed. In a given section many atoms of all manner of shapes are carried from the unlimited into the vast empty space. These collect together and form a single vortex, in which they jostle against each other and, circling round in every possible way, separate off, by like atoms joining like. And, the atoms being so numerous that they can no longer revolve in equilibrium, the light ones pass into the empty space outside, as if they were being winnowed; the remainder keep together and, becoming entangled, go on their circuit together, and form a primary spherical system.” (Diogenes Laertius, Book IX, Chap. 6.)

The following about Epicurus.

“The atoms are in continual motion through all eternity. Further, he says below that the atoms move with equal speed, since the void makes way for the lightest and heaviest

alike.... Atoms have no quality at all except shape, size, and weight.... They are not of any and every size; at ally rate no atom has ever been seen by our sense.” (Diogenes Laertius, Book X, par. 43-45.) “When they are travelling through the void and meet with no resistance, the atoms must move with equal speed. Neither will heavy atoms travel more quickly than small and light ones, so long as nothing meets them, nor will small atoms travel more quickly than large ones, provided they always find a suitable passage, and provided also that they meet with no obstruction.” (Ibid., par. 61.)

“Thus it is clear that in every kind (of things) the one is of a definite nature and that in none of them does this, the one, have its nature.” (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book IX, Chap. 2.) [123]

Aristarchus of Samos, 270 B. C., already held the Copernican theory of the Earth and Sun. (Madler, p. 44, Wolf, pp. 35-37.)[124]

Democritus had already surmised that the Milky Way sheds on us the combined light of innumerable small stars. (Wolf, p. 313.)

Difference Between the Situation at the End of the Ancient World, CA. 300 – and at the End of the Middle Ages – 1453:

1. Instead of a thin strip of civilisation along the coast of the Mediterranean, stretching its arms sporadically into the interior and as far as the Atlantic coast of Spain, France, and England, which could thus easily be broken through and rolled back by the Germans and Slavs from the North, and by the Arabs from the South-East, there was now a closed area of civilization – the whole of West Europe with Scandinavia, Poland, and Hungary as outposts.
2. Instead of the contrast between the Greeks, or Romans, and the barbarians, there were now six civilised peoples with civilised languages, not counting the Scandinavian, etc., all of whom had developed to such an extent that they could participate in the mighty rise of literature in the fourteenth century, and guaranteed a far more diversified culture than that of the Greek and Latin languages, which were already in decay and dying out at the end of ancient times.
3. An infinitely higher development of industrial production and trade, created by the burghers of the Middle Ages; on the one hand production more perfected, more varied and on a larger scale, and, on the other hand, commerce much stronger, navigation being infinitely more enterprising since the time of the Saxons, Frisians, and Normans, and on the other hand also an amount of inventions and importation of oriental inventions, which not only for the first time made possible the importation and diffusion of Greek literature, the maritime discoveries, and the bourgeois religious revolution, but also gave them a quite different and quicker range of action. In addition they produced a mass of scientific facts, although as yet unsystematised, such as antiquity never had: the magnetic needle, printing, type, flax paper (used by the Arabs and Spanish Jews since the twelfth century, cotton paper gradually making its appearance since the tenth century, and already more widespread in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, papyrus quite obsolete in Egypt since the Arabs), gunpowder, spectacles, mechanical clocks, great progress both of chronology and of mechanics.

(See No. 11 [sheet of manuscript, see below] concerning inventions.)

In addition material provided by travels (Marco Polo, ca. 1272, etc.).

General education, even though still bad, much more widespread owing to the universities.
With the rise of Constantinople and the fall of Rome, antiquity comes to an end. The end of the Middle Ages is indissolubly linked with the fall of Constantinople. The new age begins with the return to the Greeks – Negation of the negation!

Historical Material. – Inventions

B. C.:

Fire-hose, water-clock, ca. 200 B.C. Street paving (Rome).

Parchment, ca. 160.

A. D.:

Watermills on the Moselle, ca. 340, in Germany in the time of Charles the Great.

First signs of glass windows, street lighting in Antioch, ca. 370.

Silk-worms from China, ca. 550 in Greece.

Quill pens in the sixth century.

Cotton paper from China to the Arabs in the seventh century, in the ninth in Italy.

Water-powered organs in France in the eighth century.

Silver mines in the Harz worked since the tenth century.

Windmills, about 1000.

Notes, Guido of Arezzo's musical scale, about 1000.

Sericulture introduced in Italy, about 1100.

Clocks with wheels – ditto.

Magnetic needle from the Arabs to the Europeans, ca. 1180.

Street paving in Paris, 1184.

Spectacles in Florence. Glass mirrors. Second half of thirteenth century.

Herring-salting. Sluices.

Striking clocks. Cotton paper in France.

Rag-paper – beginning of fourteenth century.

Bills of exchange – middle of ditto.

First paper mill in Germany (Nuremberg), 1390.

Street lighting in London. Beginning of fifteenth century.

Post in Venice – ditto.

Wood-cuts and printing – ditto.

Copper-engraving – middle ditto.

Horse post in France, 1464.

Silver mines in the Saxon Erzgebirge, 1471.

Pedal clavichord invented, 1472.

Pocket watches. Air-guns. Flintlock – end of fifteenth century.

Spinning-wheel, 1530.

Diving bell, 1538.

* * *

Historical[125]

Modern natural science – the only one which can come into consideration qua science as against the brilliant intuitions of the Greeks and the sporadic unconnected investigations of the Arabs -begins with that mighty epoch when feudalism was smashed by the burghers. In the background of the struggle between the burghers of the towns and the feudal nobility – this epoch showed the peasant in revolt, and behind the peasant the revolutionary beginnings of the modern proletariat, already red flag in hand and with communism on its lips. It was the epoch which brought into being the great monarchies in Europe, broke the spiritual dictatorship of the Pope, evoked the revival of Greek antiquity and with it the highest artistic development of the new age, broke through the boundaries of the old world, and for the first time really discovered the world.

It was the greatest revolution that the world had so far experienced. Natural science also flourished in this revolution, was revolutionary through and through, advanced hand in hand with the awakening modern philosophy of the great Italians, and provided its martyrs for the stake and the prisons. It is characteristic that Protestants and Catholics vied with one another in persecuting it. The former burned Servetus, the latter Giordano Bruno. It was a time that called for giants and produced giants, giants in learning, intellect, and character, a time that the French correctly called the Renaissance and Protestant Europe with one-sided prejudice called that of the Reformation.

At that time natural science also had its declaration of independence,[126] though it is true it did not come right at the beginning, any more than that Luther was the first Protestant. What Luther's burning of the papal bull was in the religious field, in the field of natural science was the great work of Copernicus, in which he, although timidly, after thirty-six years' hesitation and so to say on his deathbed, threw down a challenge to ecclesiastical superstition. From then on natural science was in essence emancipated from religion, although the complete settlement of accounts in all details has gone on to the present day and in many minds is still far from being complete. But from then on the development of science went forward with giant strides, increasing, so to speak, proportionately to the square of the distance in time from its point of departure, as if it wanted to show the world that for the motion of the highest product of organic matter, the human mind, the law that holds good is the reverse of that for the motion of inorganic matter.

The first period of modern natural science ends – in the inorganic sphere – with Newton. It is the period in which the available subject-matter was mastered; it performed a great work in the fields of mathematics, mechanics and astronomy, statics and dynamics, especially owing to Kepler and Galileo, from whose work Newton drew the conclusions. In the organic sphere, however, there was no progress beyond the first beginnings. The investigation of the forms of life historically succeeding one another and replacing one another, as well as the changing conditions of life corresponding to them – palaeontology and geology did not yet exist. Nature was not at all regarded as something that developed historically, that had a history in time; only extension in space was taken into account; the various forms were grouped not one after the other, but only one beside the other; natural history was valid for all periods, like the elliptical orbits of the planets. For any closer analysis of organic structure both the immediate bases were lacking, viz., chemistry and knowledge of the essential organic structure, the cell. Natural science, at the outset revolutionary, was confronted by an out-and-out conservative nature, in which everything, remained today as it was at the beginning of the world, and in which right to the end of the world everything would remain as it had been in the beginning.

It is characteristic that this conservative outlook on nature both in the inorganic and in the organic sphere [...]

Astronomy
Mechanics
Mathematics

Physics
Chemistry

Geology
Palaeontology
Mineralogy

Plant physiology
Animal physiology
Anatomy

Therapeutics
Diagnostics

The first breach: Kant and Laplace. The second: geology and palaeontology (Lyell, slow development). The third: organic chemistry, which prepares organic bodies and shows the validity of chemical laws for living bodies. The fourth: 1842, mechanical (theory of) heat, Grove. The fifth: Darwin, Lamarck, the cell, etc. (struggle, Cuvier and Agassiz). The sixth: the comparative element in anatomy, climatology (isotherms), animal and plant geography (scientific travel expeditions since the middle of the eighteenth century), physical geography in general (Humboldt), the assembling of the material in its inter-connection. Morphology (embryology, Baer).

[Up to this point, the text of the note has been crossed out in the manuscript by a vertical stroke as having been used by Engels in the first part of the "Introduction" (see this volume, pp. 20-31). The two further paragraphs, partially used in the second part of the "Introduction" (pp. 31-39), were not crossed out. – Ed.]

The old teleology has gone to the devil, but it is now firmly established that matter in its eternal cycle moves according to laws which at a definite stage – now here, now there – necessarily give rise to the thinking mind in organic beings.

The normal existence of animals is given by the contemporary conditions in which they live and to which they adapt themselves – those of man, as soon as he differentiates himself from the animal in the narrower sense, have as yet never been present, and are only to be elaborated by the ensuing historical development. Man is the sole animal capable of working his way out of the merely animal state – his normal state is one appropriate to his consciousness, one that has to be created by himself.

* * *

Omitted from "Feuerbach"[127]

[The vulgarising peddlers who dealt in materialism in the Germany of the fifties in no wise went beyond these limits of their teachers.[i.e., the French materialists of the eighteenth century.] All the advances made by natural science since then served them merely] as fresh arguments against the belief in a creator of the universe; and in fact the further development of theory was quite outside their line of business. Idealism was hard hit. owing to 1848 but materialism in this renovated form of it sank still lower.

Feuerbach was absolutely right in repudiating responsibility for this materialism; only he had no right to confuse the doctrine of the itinerant preachers with materialism in general.

At about the same time, however, empirical natural science made such an advance and arrived at such brilliant results that not only did it become possible to overcome completely the mechanical one-sidedness of the eighteenth century, but also natural science itself, owing to the proof of the inter-connections existing in nature itself between the various fields of investigation (mechanics, physics, chemistry, biology, etc.), was transformed from an empirical into a theoretical science and, by generalising the results achieved, into a system of the materialist knowledge of nature. The mechanics of gases; newly-created organic chemistry, which stripped the last remnants of incomprehensibility from one so-

called organic compound after another by preparing them from inorganic substances; scientific embryology dating from 1818; geology and palaeontology; comparative anatomy of plants and animals – all these furnished new material in an unprecedented measure. Three great discoveries, however, were of decisive importance.

The first was the proof of the transformation of energy arising out of the discovery of the mechanical equivalent of heat (by Robert Mayer, Joule and Colding). All the innumerable acting causes in nature, which had hitherto led a mysterious, inexplicable existence as so-called forces – mechanical force, heat, radiation (light and radiant heat), electricity, magnetism, chemical force of association and dissociation – have now been proved to be special forms, modes of existence of one and the same energy, i.e., motion. We can not only demonstrate its conversion from one form into another, which continually takes place in nature, but we can carry out this conversion in the laboratory and in industry, and indeed in such a way that a given quantity of energy in one form always corresponds to a given quantity of energy in some other form. Thus we can express the unit of heat in kilogram-metres and the units of any quantity of electrical or chemical energy once more in heat-units and vice versa; we can likewise measure the energy consumption and energy intake of a living organism and express it in any desired unit, e.g., in heat-units. The unity of all motion in nature is no longer a philosophical assertion, but a natural-scientific fact.

The second discovery – earlier in point of time – was that of the organic cell by Schwann and Schleiden, as being the unit out of which, by its multiplication and differentiation, all organisms with the exception of the lowest are formed and develop. This discovery for the first time gave a firm basis to the investigation of the organic, living products of nature – both comparative anatomy and physiology, and embryology. The origin, growth and structure of organisms were deprived of their mysterious character; the hitherto incomprehensible miracle was merged in a process which takes place according to a law that is essentially identical for all multicellular organisms.

But an essential gap still remained. If all multicellular organisms – both plants and animals, including man – in each case grow out of a single cell according to the law of cell division, what then is the source of the infinite diversity of these organisms? This question was answered by the third great discovery, the theory of evolution, which for the first time was comprehensively worked out and substantiated by Darwin. However many transformations this theory will still undergo as regards details, in the main it has already solved the problem in a more than adequate manner. The evolutionary series of organisms from a few simple forms to increasingly multifarious and complicated ones, as it confronts us today, and extending right up to man, has been established as far as its main features are concerned. Thanks to this, not only has it become possible to explain the existing stock of organic products of nature but the basis has also been provided for the pre-history of the human mind, for tracing the various stages of its development, from the simple protoplasm – structureless but sensitive to stimuli – of the lowest organisms right up to the thinking human brain. Without this pre-history, however, the existence of the thinking human brain remains a miracle.

By means of these three great discoveries, the main processes of nature were explained and referred to natural causes. One thing still remains to be done here: to explain the origin of life from inorganic nature. At the present stage of science that implies nothing less than the preparation of protein bodies from inorganic substances. Chemistry is approaching closer and closer to the solution of this task, but it is still a long way from it. If, however, we bear in mind that it was only in 1828 that Wohler prepared the first organic body, urea, from inorganic materials, and what an innumerable number of so-called organic compounds are now artificially prepared without any organic materials, we shall not be inclined to bid chemistry halt when confronted by protein. So far chemistry has been able to prepare every organic substance, the composition of which is accurately known. As

soon as the composition of the protein bodies becomes known, chemistry will be able to set about the preparation of living protein. But to demand that it should achieve overnight what nature itself succeeds in doing only under very favourable circumstances on a few cosmic bodies after millions of years, would be to demand a miracle.

Thus the materialist outlook on nature rests today on much firmer foundation than it did in the previous century. At that time only the motion of the heavenly bodies and that of terrestrial solid bodies under the influence of gravity was at all exhaustively understood; almost the entire field of chemistry and the whole of organic nature remained mysterious and not understood. Today the whole of nature lies spread out before us as a system of inter-connections and processes that, at least in its main features, has been explained and understood. At all events, the materialist outlook on nature means nothing more than the simple conception of nature just as it is, without alien addition, and hence among the Greek philosophers it was originally understood in this way as a matter of course. But between those ancient Greeks and us lie more than two thousand years of an essentially idealist outlook on the world, and so the return to self-evident understanding is more difficult than it appears to be at first sight. For it is by no means a matter of simply throwing overboard the entire thought content of those two thousand years, but of a criticism of it, of extracting the results – that had been won within a form that was false and idealistic but which was inevitable for its time and for the course of evolution itself – from this transitory form. And how difficult that is, is proved for us by those numerous natural scientists who are inexorable materialists within their science but outside it are not merely idealists, but even pious and indeed orthodox Christians.

All these epoch-making advances of natural science passed Feuerbach by without affecting him in any essential respect. This was not so much his fault as that of the miserable German conditions, owing to which the university chairs were occupied by empty-headed, eclectic hair-splitters, while Feuerbach, who towered high above them, was compelled almost to rusticate in lonely village isolation. That is why, on the subject of nature, he wastes so much labour – except for a few brilliant generalizations – on empty belletristic writing. Thus he says:

“Life is, of course, not the product of a chemical process, nor in general is it the product of an isolated natural force or phenomenon, to which the metaphysical materialist reduces it; it is a result of the whole of nature.”[128]

That life is a result of the whole of nature in no way contradicts the fact that protein, which is the exclusive independent bearer of life, arises under definite conditions determined by the whole inter-connection of nature, but arises precisely as the product of a chemical process. [Had Feuerbach lived in conditions which permitted him to follow even superficially the development of natural science, it would never have happened that he would speak of a chemical process as the effect of an isolated force of nature.] To the same solitariness must be ascribed the fact that Feuerbach loses himself in a circle of barren speculations on the relation of thought to the thinking organ, the brain – a sphere in which Starcke follows him willingly.

Enough, Feuerbach revolts against the name materialism.[129] And not entirely without reason; for he never completely ceases to be an idealist. In the field of nature he is a materialist; but in the human field [...].

[Page 19 of the original manuscript of L. Feuerbach ends here. The end of this sentence occurs on the following page, which has not come down to us. On the basis of the printed text of L. Feuerbach it may be supposed that this sentence read approximately as follows: “In the sphere of human history he is an idealist.” – Ed.]

God is nowhere treated worse than by the natural scientists who believe in him. Materialists simply explain the facts, without making use of such phrases, they do this first when importunate pious believers try to force God upon them, and then they answer curtly, either like Laplace: Sire, je n'avais pas, etc.,[130] or more rudely in the manner of the Dutch merchants who, when German commercial travellers press their shoddy goods on them, are accustomed to turn them away with the words: Ik kan die zaken niet gebruiken [I have no use for the things] and that is the end of the matter: But what God has had to suffer at the hands of his defenders! In the history of modern natural science, God is treated by his defenders as Frederick William III was treated by his generals and officials in the Jena campaign. One division of the army after another lays down its arms, one fortress after another capitulates before the march of science, until at last the whole infinite realm of nature is conquered by science, and there is no place left in it for the Creator. Newton still allowed Him the "first impulse" but forbade Him any further interference 'in his solar system. Father Secchi bows Him out of the solar system altogether, with all canonical honours it is true, but none the less categorically for all that, and he only allows Him a creative act as regards the primordial nebula. And so in all spheres. In biology, his last great Don Quixote, Agassiz, even ascribes positive nonsense to Him; He is supposed to have created not only the actual animals but also abstract animals, the fish as such! And finally Tyndall totally forbids Him any entry into nature and relegates Him to the world of emotional processes, only admitting Him because, after all, there must be somebody who knows more about all these things (nature) than John Tyndall![131] What a distance from the old God – the Creator of heaven and earth, the maintainer of all things – without whom not a hair can fall from the head!

Tyndall's emotional need proves nothing. The Chevalier des Grieux also had an emotional need to love and possess Marion Lescaut, who sold herself and him over and over again; for her sake he became a cardsharp and pimp, and if Tyndall wants to reproach him, he would reply with his "emotional need"!

God=nescio; but ignorantia non est argumentum (Spinoza).[132]

Notes

119.

G. W. F. Hegel, Werke, Bd. XIII, Berlin, 1833.

120.

Regarding the work De placitis philosophorum, it was subsequently proved that it did not come from Plutarch but some other unknown author (the so-called "Pseudo-Plutarch"). It derives from Aetius who lived in about the year 100 of our era.

121.

Genesis, Ch. 2, Verse 7.

122.

This note is written in Marx's handwriting and consists of quotations (from Tauchnitz editions) in Greek from Aristotle's *Metaphysica* and from the compilatory work of Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of Famous Philosophers*. The note dates from before June 1878 since it contains quotations about Epicurus which were used by Engels in the Old

Preface to [Anti]-Dühring.

All the italicised words in the quotations are Marx's.

123.

In the latest editions of *Metaphysica*, Book IX is called Book X.

124.

R. Wolf, *Geschichte der Astronomie* (History of Astronomy), Munchen, 1877.

For Mädler's book, see Note 22.

125.

This fragment constitutes the original outline of the Introduction (see this edition, pp. 20-39).

126.

The Declaration of Independence, adopted on July 4, 1776, at the Philadelphia congress of delegates from thirteen English colonies in North America, proclaimed the secession of these colonies from England and the establishment of an independent republic, the United States of America.

127.

This is the heading of the fragment given in the list of contents of the second folder of materials for *Dialectics of Nature*. The fragment consists of four pages of the original manuscript of L. Feuerbach, numbered 16, 17, 18 and 19. At the top of page 16 is written in Engels's handwriting: "Aus 'Ludwig Feuerbach'." This fragment was part of the second chapter of L. Feuerbach and was intended to follow immediately after the description of the three principal "limitations" of the French materialists of the eighteenth century. On finally revising the manuscript of L. Feuerbach, Engels removed these four pages and replaced them by another text, but the basic contents of these pages left out of the second chapter (on the three great discoveries in natural science of the nineteenth century) were reproduced in an abbreviated form in the fourth chapter of L. Feuerbach. Since Engels's L. Feuerbach was originally printed in the April and May issues of the magazine *Die Neue Zeit* for 1886, it can be considered that this fragment dates from the first quarter of 1886. On the first page of the fragment the text begins in the middle of a sentence. The beginning of the sentence, restored according to the text of L. Feuerbach printed in *Die Neue Zeit*, is given in square brackets.

128.

This quotation is given in Starcke's book *Ludwig Feuerbach*, Stuttgart, 1885, on pp. 154-55. It is taken from Feuerbach's work *Die Unsterblichkeitsfrage vom Standpunkt der Anthropologie* (The Question of Immortality from the Standpoint of Anthropology) which was written in 1846. (See Ludwig Feuerbach's *Sämtliche Werke*, Bd. III, Leipzig, 1847, §. 331.)

129.

Engels has in mind Feuerbach's aphorisms published posthumously in K. Grun, *Ludwig Feuerbach in seinem Briefwechsel. und Nachlass sowie in seiner philosophischen Charakterentwicklung* (Ludwig Feuerbach in His Correspondence and Legacy, as well as in His Philosophical Development), Bd. II, Leipzig und Heidelberg, 1874, S. 308. The aphorisms are quoted on p. 166 of Starcke's book. Cf. Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, Ch. II.

130.

“Sire, je n’avais pas besoin de cette hypotheses” – the words of Laplace in answer to Napoleon’s question why he had made no mention of God in his work on celestial mechanics.

131.

Engels is referring to Tyndall’s opening speech at the 44th meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Belfast, August 19, 1874 (published in Nature No. 251 of August 20, 1874). In a letter to Marx dated September 21, 1874, Engels gives a more detailed characterisation of this speech.

132.

ignorance is no argument, says Spinoza in his Ethics (Part One, Addendum), as he opposes the exponents of the clerical- teleological view on nature, who gave the “will of God” as the cause of causes of all phenomena and had no other argument left them but the assertion that they knew no other causes.



Frederick Engels 1882

Bruno Bauer and Early Christianity

Marx and Engels, *On Religion*, Progress Publishers, 1966;

Published: May 4-11, 1882 in *Sozialdemokrat*.

In Berlin, on April 13, a man died who once played a role as a philosopher and a theologian, but was hardly heard of for years, only attracting the attention of the public from time to time as a "literary eccentric". Official theologians, including Renan, wrote him off and, therefore, maintained a silence of death about him. And yet he was worth more than them all and did more than all of them in a question which interests us Socialists, too: the question of the historical origin of Christianity.

On the occasion of his death, let us give a brief account of the present position on this question, and Bauer's contribution to its solution.

The view that dominated from the free-thinkers of the Middle Ages to the Enlighteners of the 18th century, the latter included, that all religions, and therefore Christianity too, were the work of deceivers was no longer sufficient after Hegel had set philosophy the task of showing a rational evolution in world history.

It is clear that if spontaneously arising religions — like the fetish worship of the Negroes or the common primitive religion of the Aryans — come to being without deception playing any part, deception by the priests soon becomes inevitable in their further development. But, in spite of all sincere fanaticism, artificial religions cannot even, at their foundation, do

without deception and falsification of history. Christianity, too, has pretty achievements to boast of in this respect from the very beginning, as Bauer shows in his criticism of the New Testament. But that only confirms a general phenomenon and does not explain the particular case in question.

A religion that brought the Roman world empire into subjection, and dominated by far the larger part of civilized humanity for 1,800 years, cannot be disposed of merely by declaring it to be nonsense gleaned together by frauds. One cannot dispose of it before one succeeds in explaining its origin and its development from the historical conditions under which it arose and reached its dominating position. This applies to Christianity. The question to be solved, then, is how it came about that the popular masses in the Roman Empire so far preferred this nonsense — which was preached, into the bargain, by slaves and oppressed — to all other religions, that the ambitious Constantine finally saw in the adoption of this religion of nonsense the best means of exalting himself to the position of autocrat of the Roman world.

Bruno Bauer has contributed far more to the solution of this question than anybody else. No matter how much the half-believing theologians of the period of reaction have struggled against him since 1849, he irrefutably proved the chronological order of the Gospels and their mutual interdependence, shown by Wilke from the purely linguistic standpoint, by the very contents of the Gospels themselves. He exposed the utter lack of scientific spirit of Strauss' vague myth theory according to which anybody can hold for historical as much as he likes in the Gospel narrations. And, if almost nothing from the whole content of the Gospels turns out to be historically provable — so that even the historical existence of a Jesus Christ can be questioned — Bauer has, thereby, only cleared the ground for the solution of the question: what is the origin of the ideas and thoughts that have been woven together into a sort of system in Christianity, and how came they to dominate the world?

Bauer studied this question until his death. His research reached its culminating point in the conclusion that the Alexandrian Jew Philo, who was still living about A.D. 40 but was already very old, was the real father of Christianity, and that the Roman stoic Seneca was, so to speak, its uncle. The numerous writings attributed to Philo which have reached us originate indeed in a fusion of allegorically and rationalistically conceived Jewish traditions with Greek, particularly stoic, philosophy. This conciliation of western and eastern outlooks already contains all the essentially Christian ideas: the inborn sinfulness of man, the Logos, the Word, which is with God and is God and which becomes the mediator between God and man: atonement, not by sacrifices of animals, but by bringing one's own heart of God, and finally the essential feature that the new religious philosophy reverses the previous world order, seeks its disciples among the poor, the miserable, the slaves, and the rejected, and despises the rich, the powerful, and the privileged, whence the precept to despise all worldly pleasure and to mortify the flesh.

On the other hand, Augustus himself saw to it that not only the God-man, but also the so-called immaculate conception became formulae imposed by the state. He not only had Caesar and himself worshipped as gods, he also spread the notion that he, Augustus Caesar Divus, the Divine, was not the son of a human father but that his mother had conceived him of the god Apollo. But was not that Apollo perhaps a relation of the one sung by Heinrich Heine? [Reference to Heine's *Apollgott*.]

As we see, we need only the keystone and we have the whole of Christianity in its basic features: the incarnation of the Word become man in a definite person and his sacrifice on the cross for the redemption of sinful mankind.

Truly reliable sources leave us uncertain as to when this keystone was introduced into the stoic-philonic doctrines. But this much is sure: it was not introduced by philosophers, either Philo's disciples or stoics. Religions are founded by people who feel a need for religion

themselves and have a feeling for the religious needs of the masses. As a rule, this is not the case with the classical philosophers. On the other hand, we find that in times of general decay, now, for instance, philosophy and religious dogmatism are generally current in a vulgarized and shallow form. While classic Greek philosophy in its last forms — particularly in the Epicurean school — led to atheistic materialism, Greek vulgar philosophy led to the doctrine of a one and only God and of the immortality of the human soul. Likewise, rationally vulgarized Judaism in mixture and intercourse with aliens and half-Jews ended by neglecting the ritual and transforming the formerly exclusively Jewish national god, Jahveh, into the one true God, the creator of heaven and earth, and by adopting the idea of the immortality of the soul which was alien to early Judaism. Thus, monotheistic vulgar philosophy came into contact with vulgar religion, which presented it with the ready-made one and only God. Thus, the ground was prepared on which the elaboration among the Jews of the likewise vulgarized philonic notions and not Philo's own works that Christianity proceeded from is proved by the New Testament's almost complete disregard of most of these works, particularly the allegorical and philosophical interpretation of the narrations of the Old Testament. This is an aspect to which Bauer did not devote enough attention.

One can get an idea of what Christianity looked like in its early form by reading the so-called Book of Revelation of John. Wild, confused fanaticism, only the beginnings of dogmas, only the mortification of the flesh of the so-called Christian morals, but on the other hand a multitude of visions and prophecies. The development of the dogmas and moral doctrine belongs to a later period, in which the Gospels and the so-called Epistles of the Apostles were written. In this — at least as regards morals — the philosophy of the stoics, of Seneca in particular, was unceremoniously made us of. Bauer proved that the Epistles often copy the latter word-for-word; in fact, even the faithful noticed this, but they maintained that Seneca had copied from the New Testament, though it had not yet been written in his time. Dogma developed, on the one hand in connection with the legend of Jesus which was then taking shape, and, on the other hand, in the struggle between Christians of Jewish and of pagan origin.

Bauer also gives very valuable data on the causes which helped Christianity to triumph and attain world domination. But here the German philosopher is prevented by his idealism from seeing clearly and formulating precisely. Phrases often replace substance in decisive points. Instead, therefore, of going into details of Bauer's views, we shall give our own conception of this point, based on Bauer's works, and also on our personal study.

The Roman conquest dissolved in all subjugated countries, first, directly, the former political conditions, and then, indirectly, also the social conditions of life.

Firstly by substituting for the former organization according to estates (slavery apart) the simple distinction between Roman citizens and peregrines or subjects.

Secondly, and mainly, by exacting tribute in the name of the Roman state. If, under the empire, a limit was set as far as possible in the interest of the state to the governors' thirst for wealth, that thirst was replaced by ever more effective and oppressive taxation for the benefit of the state treasury, the effect of which was terribly destructive.

Thirdly, Roman law was finally administered everywhere by Roman judges, while the native social system was declared invalid insofar as it was incompatible with the provisions of Roman law.

These three levers necessarily developed a tremendous levelling power, particularly when they were applied for several hundred years to populations — the most vigorous sections of which had been either suppressed or taken away into slavery in the battles preceding, accompanying, and often following, the conquest. Social relations in the provinces came

nearer and nearer to those obtaining in the capital and in Italy. The population became more and more sharply divided into three classes, thrown together out of the most varying elements and nationalities: rich people, including not a few emancipated slaves (cf. Petronius), big landowners or usurers or both at once, like Seneca, the uncle of Christianity; propertyless free people, who in Rome were fed and amused by the state — in the provinces they got on as they could by themselves — and finally the great mass, the slaves. In the face of the state, *i.e.*, the emperor, the first two classes had as few rights as the slaves in the face of their masters. From the time of Tiberius to that of Nero, in particular, it was a practice to sentence rich Roman citizens to death in order to confiscate their property. The support of the government was — *materially*, the army, which was more like an army of hired foreign soldiers than the old Roman peasant army, and *morally*, the general view that there was no way out of that condition; that not, indeed, this or that Caesar, but the empire based on military domination was an immutable necessity. This is not the place to examine what very material facts this view was based on.

The general rightlessness and despair of the possibility of a better condition gave rise to a corresponding general slackening and demoralization. The few surviving old Romans of the patrician type and views either were removed or died out; Tacitus was the last of them. The others were glad when they were able to keep away from public life; all they existed for was to collect and enjoy riches, and to indulge in private gossip and private intrigue. The propertyless free citizens were state pensioners in Rome, but in the provinces their condition was an unhappy one. They had to work, and to compete with slave-labor into the bargain. But they were confined to the towns. Besides them, there was also in the provinces peasants, free landowners (here and there probably still common ownership) or, as in Gaul, bondsmen for debts to the big landowners. This class was the least affected by the social upheaval; it was also the one to resist longest the religious upheaval. [Engels note: According to Fallmerayer, the peasants in Main, Peloponnesus, still offered sacrifices to Zeus in the 9th century.] Finally, there were the slaves, deprived of rights and of their own will and the possibility to free themselves, as the defeat of Spartacus had already proved; most of them, however, were former free citizens, or sons of free-born citizens. It must, therefore, have been among them that hatred of their conditions of life was still generally vigorous, though externally powerless.

We shall find that the type of ideologists at the time corresponded to this state of affairs. The philosophers were either mere money-earning schoolmasters or buffoons in the pay of wealthy revellers. Some were even slaves. An example of what became of them under good conditions is supplied by Seneca. This stoic and preacher of virtue and abstinence was Nero's first court intriguer, which he could not have been without servility; he secured from him presents in money, properties, gardens, and palaces — and while he preached the poor man Lazarus of the Gospel, he was, in reality, the rich man of the same parable. Not until Nero wanted to get at him did he request the emperor to take back all his presents, his philosophy being enough for him. Only completely isolated philosophers, like Persius, had the courage to brandish the lash of satire over their degenerated contemporaries. But, as for the second type of ideologists, the jurists, they were enthusiastic over the new conditions because the abolition of all differences between Estates allowed them broad scope in the elaboration of their favorite private right, in return for which they prepared for the emperor the vilest state system of right that ever existed.

With the political and social peculiarities of the various peoples, the Roman Empire also doomed to ruin their particular religions. All religions of antiquity were spontaneous tribal, and later national, religions, which arose from and merged with the social and political conditions of the respective peoples. Once these, their bases, were disrupted, and their traditional forms of society, their inherited political institutions and their national independence shattered, the religion corresponding to these also naturally collapsed. The

national gods could suffer other gods beside them, as was the general rule of antiquity, but not above them. The transplanting of Oriental divinities to Rome was harmful only to the Roman religion, it could not check the decay of the Oriental religions. As soon as the national gods were unable to protect the independence of their nation, they met their own destruction. This was the case everywhere (except with peasants, especially in the mountains). What vulgar philosophical enlightenment — I almost said Voltairianism — did in Rome and Greece, was done in the provinces by Roman oppression and the replacing of men proud of their freedom by desperate subjects and self-seeking ragamuffins.

Such was the material and moral situation. The present was unbearable, the future still more menacing, if possible. There was no way out. Only despair or refuge in the commonest sensuous pleasure, for *those* who could afford it at least, and they were a tiny minority. Otherwise, nothing but surrender to the inevitable.

But, in all classes there was necessarily a number of people who, despairing of material salvation, sought in its stead a spiritual salvation, a consolation in their consciousness to save them from utter despair. This consolation could not be provided by the stoics any more than by the Epicurean school, for the very reason that these philosophers were not intended for common consciousness and, secondly, because the conduct of disciples of the schools cast discredit on their doctrines. The consolation was to be a substitute, not for the lost philosophy, but for the lost religion; it had to take on a religious form, the same as anything which had to grip the masses both then and as late as the 17th century.

We hardly need to note that the majority of those who were pining for such consolation of their consciousness, for this flight from the external world into the internal, were necessarily among the *slaves*.

It was in the midst of this general economic, political, intellectual, and moral decadence that Christianity appeared. It entered into a resolute antithesis to all previous religions.

In all previous religions, ritual had been the main thing. Only by taking part in the sacrifices and processions, and in the Orient by observing the most detailed diet and cleanliness precepts, could one show to what religion one belonged. While Rome and Greece were tolerant in the last respect, there was in the Orient a rage for religious prohibitions that contributed no little to the final downfall. People of two different religions (Egyptians, Persians, Jews, Chaldeans) could not eat or drink together, perform any every-day act together, or hardly speak to each other. It was largely due to this segregation of man from man that the Orient collapsed. Christianity knew no distinctive ceremonies, not even the sacrifices and processions of the classic world. By thus rejecting all national religions and their common ceremonies, and addressing itself to all peoples without distinction, it became the *first possible world religion*. Judaism, too, with its new universal god, had made a start on the way to becoming a universal religion; but the children of Israel always remained an aristocracy among the believers and the circumcised, and Christianity itself had to get rid of the notion of the superiority of the Jewish Christians (still dominant in the so-called Book of Revelation of John) before it could really become a universal religion. Islam, itself, on the other hand, by preserving its specifically Oriental ritual, limited the area of its propagation to the Orient and North Africa, conquered and populated anew by Arab Bedouins; here it could become the dominating religion, but not in the West.

Secondly, Christianity struck a chord that was bound to echo in countless hearts. To all complaints about the wickedness of the times and the general material and moral distress, Christian consciousness of sin answered: It is so and it cannot be otherwise; thou art in blame, ye are all to blame for the corruption of the world, thine and your own internal corruption! And where was the man who could deny it? *Mea culpa!* The admission of each one's share in the responsibility for the general unhappiness was irrefutable and was made the precondition for the spiritual salvation which Christianity at the same time

announced. And this spiritual salvation was so instituted that it could be easily understood by members of every old religious community. The idea of atonement to placate the offended deity was current in all the old religions; how could the idea of self-sacrifice of the mediator atoning once for all for the sins of humanity not easily find ground there? Christianity, therefore, clearly expressed the universal feeling that men themselves are guilty of the general corruption as the consciousness of sin of each one; at the same time, it provided, in the death-sacrifice of his judge, a form of the universally longed-for internal salvation from the corrupt world, the consolation of consciousness; it thus again proved its capacity to become a world religion and, indeed, a religion which suited the world as it then was.

So it happened that, among the thousands of prophets and preachers in the desert that filled that period of countless religious novations, the founders of Christianity alone met with success. Not only Palestine, but the entire Orient swarmed with such founders of religions, and between them there raged what can be called a Darwinian struggle for ideological existence. Thanks mainly to the elements mentioned above, Christianity won the day. How it gradually developed its character of world religion by natural selection in the struggle of sects against one another and against the pagan world is taught in detail by the history of the Church in the first three centuries.



Frederick Engels 1883

The Book of Revelation

Source: *Marx and Engels On Religion*, Progress Publishers, 1957;

A science almost unknown in this country, except to a few liberalizing theologians who contrive to keep it as secret as they can, is the historical and linguistic criticism of the Bible, the inquiry into the age, origin, and historical value of the various writings comprising the Old and New Testament.

This science is almost exclusively German. And, moreover, what little of it has penetrated beyond the limits of Germany is not exactly the best part of it: it is that latitudinarian criticism which prides itself upon being unprejudiced and thoroughgoing, and, at the same time, Christian. The books are not exactly revealed by the holy ghost, but they are revelations of divinity through the sacred spirit of humanity, etc. Thus, the Tübingen school (Bauer, Gfrörer, etc.) are the great favourites in Holland and Switzerland, as well as in England, and, if people will go a little further, they follow Strauss. The same mild, but utterly unhistorical, spirit dominates the renowned Ernest Renan, who is but a poor plagiarist of the German critics. Of all his works nothing belongs to him but the aesthetic sentimentalism of the pervading thought, and the milk-and-water language which wraps it up.

One good thing, however, Ernest Renan has said:

“When you want to get a distinct idea of what the first Christian communities were, do not compare them to the parish congregations of our day; they were rather like local sections of the International Working Men’s Association.”

And this is correct. Christianity got hold of the masses, exactly as modern socialism does, under the shape of a variety of sects, and still more of conflicting individual views clearer, some more confused, these latter the great majority — but all opposed to the ruling system, to “the powers that be.”

Take, for instance, our Book of Revelation, of which we shall see that, instead of being the darkest and most mysterious, it is the simplest and clearest book of the whole New Testament. For the present we must ask the reader to believe what we are going to prove by-and-by. That it was written in the year of our era 68 or January, 69, and that it is therefore not only the only book of the New Testament, the date of which is really fixed, but also the oldest book. How Christianity looked in 68 we can here see as in a mirror.

First of all, sects over and over again. In the messages to the seven churches of Asia there are at least three sects mentioned, of which, otherwise, we know nothing at all: the Nicolaitans, the Balaamites, and the followers of a woman typified here by the name of Jezebel. Of all the three it is said that they permitted their adherents to eat of things sacrificed to idols, and that they were fond of fornication. It is a curious fact that with every great revolutionary movement the question of “free love” comes in to the foreground. With one set of people as a revolutionary progress, as a shaking off of old traditional fetters, no longer necessary; with others as a welcome doctrine, comfortably covering all sorts of free and easy practices between man and woman. The latter, the philistine sort, appear here soon to have got the upper hand; for the “fornication” is always associated with the eating of “things sacrificed to idols,” which Jews and Christians were strictly forbidden to do, but which it might be dangerous, or at least unpleasant, at times to refuse. This shows evidently that the free lovers mentioned here were generally inclined to be everybody’s friend, and anything but stuff for martyrs.

Christianity, like every great revolutionary movement, was made by the masses. It arose in Palestine, in a manner utterly unknown to us, at a time when new sects, new religions, new prophets arose by the hundred. It is, in fact, a mere average, formed spontaneously out of the mutual friction of the more progressive of such sects, and afterwards formed into a doctrine by the addition of theorems of the Alexandrian Jew, Philo, and later on of strong stoic infiltrations. In fact, if we may call Philo the doctrinal father of Christianity, Seneca was her uncle. Whole passages in the New Testament seem almost literally copied from his works; and you will find, on the other hand, passages in Persius’ satires which seem copied from the then unwritten New Testament. Of all these doctrinal elements there is not a trace to be found in our Book of Revelation. Here we have Christianity in the crudest form in which it has been preserved to us. There is only one dominant dogmatic point: that the faithful have been saved by the sacrifice of Christ. But how, and why is completely indefinable. There is nothing but the old Jewish and heathen notion, that God, or the gods, must be propitiated by sacrifices, transformed into the specific Christian notion (which, indeed, made Christianity the universal religion) that the death of Christ is the great sacrifice which suffices once for all.

Of original sin, not a trace. Nothing of the trinity. Jesus is “the lamb,” but subordinate to God. In fact, in one passage (XV, 3) he is placed upon an equal footing with Moses. Instead of one holy ghost there are “the seven spirits of god” (III, 1, and IV, 5). The murdered saints (the martyrs) cry to God for revenge: “How long, O Lord, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (VI, 10) — a sentiment which has, later on, been carefully struck out from the theoretical code of morals of

Christianity, but carried out practically with a vengeance as soon as the Christians got the upper hand over the heathens.

As a matter of course, Christianity presents itself as a mere sect of Judaism. Thus, in the messages to the seven churches: "I know the blasphemy of them which say that they are Jews (not Christians), and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan" (II, 9); and again, III, 9: "Them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, but are not." Thus, our author, in the 69th year of our era, had not the remotest idea that he represented a new phase of religious development, destined to become one of the greatest elements of revolution. Thus also, when the saints appear before the throne of God, there are at first 144,000 Jews, 12,000 of each of the twelve tribes, and only after them are admitted the heathens who have joined this new phase of Judaism.

Such was Christianity in the year 68, as depicted in the oldest, and the only, book of the New Testament, the authenticity of which cannot be disputed. Who the author was we do not know. He calls himself John. He does not even pretend to be the "apostle" John, for in the foundations of the "new Jerusalem" are "the names of the twelve apostles of the lamb" (XXI, 14). They therefore must have been dead when he wrote. That he was a Jew is clear from the Hebraisms abounding in his Greek, which exceeds in bad grammar, by far, even the other books of the New Testament. That the so-called Gospel of John, the epistles of John, and this book have at least three different authors, their language clearly proves, if the doctrines they contain, completely clashing one with another, did not prove it.

The apocalyptic visions which make up almost the whole of the Revelation, are taken in most cases literally, from the classic prophets of the Old Testament and their later imitators, beginning with the Book of Daniel (about 190 before our era, and prophesying things which had occurred centuries before) and ending with the "Book of Enoch," an apocryphal concoction in Greek written not long before the beginning of our era. The original invention, even the grouping of the purloined visions, is extremely poor. Professor Ferdinand Benary, to whose course of lectures in Berlin University, in 1841, I am indebted for what follows, has proved, chapter and verse, whence our author borrowed every one of his pretended visions. It is therefore no use to follow our "John" through all his vagaries. We had better come at once to the point which discovers the mystery of this at all events curious book.

In complete opposition with all his orthodox commentators, who all expect that his prophecies are still to come off, after more than 1,800 years, "John" never ceases to say, "The time is at hand, all this will happen shortly." And this is especially the case with the crisis which he predicts, and which he evidently expects to see.

This crisis is the great final fight between God and the "antichrist," as others have named him. The decisive chapters are XIII and XVII. To leave out all unnecessary ornamentations, "John" sees a beast arising from the sea which has seven heads and ten horns (the horns do not concern us at all) "and I saw one of his heads, as it were, wounded as to death; and his deadly wound was healed." This beast was to have power over the earth, against God and the lamb for forty-two months (one half of the sacred seven years), and all men were compelled during that time to have the mark of the beast or the number of his name in their right hand, or in their forehead. "Here is wisdom. Let him that bath understanding *count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred three-score and six.*"

Irenaeus, in the second century, knew still that by the head which was wounded and healed, the Emperor Nero was meant. He had been the first great persecutor of the Christians. At his death a rumour spread, especially through Achaia and Asia, that he was not dead, but only wounded, and that he would one day reappear and spread terror throughout the world (Tacitus, Ann. VI, 22). At the same time Irenaeus knew another very

old reading, which made the number of the name 616, instead of 666.

In chapter XII, the beast with the seven heads appears again, this time mounted by the well-known scarlet lady, the elegant description of whom the reader may look out in the book itself. Here an angel explains to John:

“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not.... The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth; and there are seven kings; *five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come*, and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, *even he is the eighth, and is of the seven....* And the woman which thou sawest is the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

Here, then, we have two clear statements: (1) The scarlet lady is Rome, the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth; (2) at the time the book is written the sixth Roman emperor reigns; after him another will come to reign for a short time; and then comes the return of one who :“is of the seven,” who was wounded but healed, and whose name is contained in that mysterious number, and whom Irenaeus still knew to be Nero.

Counting from Augustus, we have Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero the fifth. The sixth, who is, is Galba, whose ascension to the throne was the signal for an insurrection of the legions, especially in Gaul, led by Otho, Galba’s successor. Thus our book must have been written under Galba, who reigned from June 9th, 68, to January 15th, 69. And it predicts the return of Nero as imminent.

But now for the final proof — the number. This also has been discovered by Ferdinand Benary, and since then it has never been disputed in the scientific world.

About 300 years before our era the Jews began to use their letters as symbols for numbers. The speculative Rabbis saw in this a new method for mystic interpretation or cabbala. Secret words were expressed by the figure produced by the addition of the numerical values of the letters contained in them. This new science they called *gematriah*, geometry. Now this science is applied here by our “John.” We have to prove (1) that the number contains the name of a man, and that man is Nero; and (2) that the solution given holds good for the reading 666 as well as for the equally old reading 616. We take Hebrew letters and their values —

נ (nun) n= 50 ק (kof) k = 100
ר (resh) r = 200 ש (samech) s= 60
ו (vav) for o = 6 ר (resh) r = 200
נ (nun) n= 50

Neron Kesar, the Emperor Neron, Greek Nêron Kaiser. Now, if instead of the Greek spelling, we transfer the Latin Nero Caesar into Hebrew characters, the *nun* at the end of Neron disappears, and with it the value of fifty. That brings us to the other old reading of 616, and thus the proof is as perfect as can be desired. [The above spelling of the name, both with and without the second *nun*, is the one which occurs in the Talmud, and is therefore authentic.]

The mysterious book, then, is now perfectly clear. “John” predicts the return of Nero for about the year 70, and a reign of terror under him which is to last forty-two months, or 1,260 days. After that term God arises, vanquishes Nero, the antichrist, destroys the great city by fire, and binds the devil for a thousand years. The millennium begins, and so forth. All this now has lost all interest, except for ignorant persons who may still try to calculate the day of the last judgment. But as an authentic picture of almost primitive Christianity, drawn by one of themselves, the book is worth more than all the rest of the New Testament put together.

Frederick Engels



Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy

(1886)



Frederick Engels 1887

Lawyers' Socialism

The world outlook of the Middle Ages was substantially theological. The unity of the European world which actually did not exist internally, was established externally, against the common Saracen foe, by Christianity.

The unity of the West-European world, which consisted of a group of nations developing in continual intercourse, was welded in Catholicism. This theological welding was not only in ideas, it existed in reality, not only in the Pope, its monarchistic centre, but above all in the feudally and hierarchically organized Church, which, owning about a third of the land in every country, occupied a position of tremendous power in the feudal organization. The Church with its feudal landownership was the real link between the different countries; the feudal organization of the Church gave a religious consecration to the secular feudal state system. Besides, the clergy was the only educated class. It was therefore natural that Church dogma was the starting-point and basis of all thought. Jurisprudence, natural science, philosophy, everything was dealt with according to, whether its content agreed or disagreed with the doctrines of the Church.

But in the womb of feudalism the power of the bourgeoisie was developing. A new class

appeared in opposition to the big landowners. The city burghers were first and foremost and exclusively producers of and traders in commodities, while the feudal mode of production was based substantially on self-consumption of the product within a limited circle, partly by the producers and partly by the feudal lord. The Catholic world outlook, fashioned on the pattern of feudalism, was no longer adequate for this new class and its conditions of production and exchange. Nevertheless, this new class remained for a long time a captive in the bonds of almighty theology. From the thirteenth to the seventeenth century all the reformations and the struggles carried out under religious slogans that were connected with them were, on the theoretical side, nothing but repeated attempts of the burghers and plebeians in the towns and the peasants who had become rebellious by contact with both the latter to adapt the old theological world outlook to the changed economic conditions and the condition of life of the new class. But that could not be done. The flag of religion waved for the last time in England in the seventeenth century, and hardly fifty years later appeared undisguised in France the new world outlook which was to become the classical outlook of bourgeoisie, the *juristic world outlook*.

It was a secularization of the theological outlook. Human right took the place of dogma, of divine right, the state took the place of the church. The economic and social conditions, which had formerly been imagined to have been created by the Church and dogma because they were sanctioned by the Church, were now considered as founded on right and created by the state. Because commodity exchange on a social scale and in its full development, particularly through advance and credit, produces complicated mutual contract relations and therefore demands generally applicable rules that can be given only by the community — state-determined standards of right — it was imagined that these standards of right arose not from the economic facts but from formal establishment by the state. And because competition, the basic form of trade of free commodity producers, is the greatest equalizer, equality before the law became the main battle-cry of the bourgeoisie. The fact that this newly aspiring class's struggle against the feudal lords and the absolute monarchy then protecting them, like every class struggle, had to be a political struggle, a struggle for the mastery of the state, and had to be fought on *juridical demands* contributed to strengthen the juristic outlook.

But the bourgeoisie produced its negative double, the proletariat, and with it a new class struggle which broke out before the bourgeoisie had completed the conquest of political power. As the bourgeoisie in its time had by force of tradition dragged the theological outlook with it for a while in its fight against the nobility, so, too, the proletariat at first took over the juristic outlook from its opponent and sought in it weapons against the bourgeoisie. The first elements of the proletarian party as well as their theoretical representatives remained wholly on the juristic "ground of right," the only distinction being that they built up for themselves a different ground of "right" from that of the bourgeoisie. On one side the demand for equality was extended so that equality in right would be completed by social equality; on the other, from Adam Smith's proposition that labour is the source of all wealth but that the product of labour must be shared with the landowner and the capitalist the conclusion was drawn that this sharing was unjust and must be either abolished or modified in favour of the worker. But the feeling that to leave this question on the mere juristic "ground of right" in no way made possible the abolition of the evil conditions created by the bourgeois-capitalistic mode of production, i.e., the mode of production based on large-scale industry, already then led the major minds among the earlier socialists — Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen — to abandon entirely the juristic-political field and to declare all political struggle fruitless.

Both these views were equally unsatisfactory to express adequately and embrace completely the working class's desire for emancipation created by economic conditions. The demand for the full product of labour and just as much the demand for equality lost

themselves in unsolvable contradictions as soon as they were formulated juristically in detail and left the core of the question — the transformation of the mode of production — more or less untouched. The rejection of the political struggle by the great Utopians was at the same time the rejection of the class struggle, i.e., of the only form of activity of the class whose interests they represented. Both outlooks made abstraction of the historical background to which they owed their existence; both appealed to feeling: some to the feeling of justice, others to the feeling of humanity. Both attired their demands in the form of pious wishes of which one could not say why they had to be fulfilled at that very time and not a thousand years earlier or later.

The working class, who by the changing of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode was deprived of all ownership of the means of production and by the mechanism of the capitalist mode of production is continually engendered anew in that hereditary state of propertylessness, cannot find an exhaustive expression of its living condition in the juristic illusion of the bourgeoisie. It can only know that condition of life fully itself if it looks at things in their reality without juristically coloured glasses. But Marx helped it to do that with his materialist conception of history, by providing the proof that all man's juristic, political, philosophical, religious and other ideas are derived in the last resort from his economic conditions of life, from his mode of production and of exchanging the product. Thus he provided the world outlook corresponding to the conditions of the life and struggle of the proletariat; only lack of illusions in the heads of the workers could correspond to their lack of property. And this proletarian world outlook is now spreading over the world.



Frederick Engels 1890

Engels to J. Bloch

In Königsberg
Abstract

First Published: by Der sozialistische Akademiker, Berlin, October 1, 1895;

London, September 21, 1890

[...]

According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. Other than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure — political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas — also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in

many cases preponderate in determining their form. There is an interaction of all these elements in which, amid all the endless host of accidents (that is, of things and events whose inner interconnection is so remote or so impossible of proof that we can regard it as non-existent, as negligible), the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary. Otherwise the application of the theory to any period of history would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree.

We make our history ourselves, but, in the first place, under very definite assumptions and conditions. Among these the economic ones are ultimately decisive. But the political ones, etc., and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds also play a part, although not the decisive one. The Prussian state also arose and developed from historical, ultimately economic, causes. But it could scarcely be maintained without pedantry that among the many small states of North Germany, Brandenburg was specifically determined by economic necessity to become the great power embodying the economic, linguistic and, after the Reformation, also the religious difference between North and South, and not by other elements as well (above all by its entanglement with Poland, owing to the possession of Prussia, and hence with international political relations — which were indeed also decisive in the formation of the Austrian dynastic power). Without making oneself ridiculous it would be a difficult thing to explain in terms of economics the existence of every small state in Germany, past and present, or the origin of the High German consonant permutations, which widened the geographic partition wall formed by the mountains from the Sudetic range to the Taunus to form a regular fissure across all Germany.

In the second place, however, history is made in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, of which each in turn has been made what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant — the historical event. This may again itself be viewed as the product of a power which works as a whole unconsciously and without volition. For what each individual wills is obstructed by everyone else, and what emerges is something that no one willed. Thus history has proceeded hitherto in the manner of a natural process and is essentially subject to the same laws of motion. But from the fact that the wills of individuals — each of whom desires what he is impelled to by his physical constitution and external, in the last resort economic, circumstances (either his own personal circumstances or those of society in general) — do not attain what they want, but are merged into an aggregate mean, a common resultant, it must not be concluded that they are equal to zero. On the contrary, each contributes to the resultant and is to this extent included in it.

I would furthermore ask you to study this theory from its original sources and not at second-hand; it is really much easier. Marx hardly wrote anything in which it did not play a part. But especially *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* is a most excellent example of its application. There are also many allusions to it in *Capital*. Then may I also direct you to my writings: Herr Eugen Dühring's *Revolution in Science* and Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy, in which I have given the most detailed account of historical materialism which, as far as I know, exists. [The German Ideology was not published in Marx or Engels lifetime]

Marx and I are ourselves partly to blame for the fact that the younger people sometimes lay more stress on the economic side than is due to it. We had to emphasise the main principle vis-à-vis our adversaries, who denied it, and we had not always the time, the place or the opportunity to give their due to the other elements involved in the interaction. But when it came to presenting a section of history, that is, to making a practical application, it was a different matter and there no error was permissible. Unfortunately, however, it happens only too often that people think they have fully understood a new theory and can apply it without more ado from the moment they have assimilated its main

principles, and even those not always correctly. And I cannot exempt many of the more recent "Marxists" from this reproach, for the most amazing rubbish has been produced in this quarter, too....

[....]



Frederick Engels 1890

Engels to Conrad Schmidt

Marx-Engels Correspondence 1890

In Berlin

Abstract

London, October 27, 1890

I think you would do very well to take the post in Zürich. [Editor of the Zürich Post.] You could always learn a good deal about economics there, especially if you bear in mind that Zürich is still only a third-rate money and speculation market, so that the impressions which make themselves felt there are weakened or deliberately distorted by twofold or threefold reflection. But you will get a practical knowledge of the mechanism and be obliged to follow the stock exchange reports from London, New York, Paris, Berlin and Vienna at first hand, and in this way the world market, in its reflex as money and stock market, will reveal itself to you. Economic, political and other reflections are just like those in the human eye, they pass through a condensing lens and therefore appear upside down, standing on their heads. Only the nervous system which would put them on their feet again for representation is lacking. The money market man only sees the movement of industry and of the world market in the inverted reflection of the money and stock market and so effect becomes cause to him. I noticed that in the 'forties already in Manchester: the London Stock Exchange reports were utterly useless for the course of industry and its periodical maxima and minima because these gentry tried to explain everything from crises on the money market, which were generally only symptoms. At that time the object was to explain away the origin of industrial crises as temporary overproduction, so that the thing had in addition its tendentious side, provocative of distortion. This point has now gone (for us, at any rate, for good and all), added to which it is indeed a fact that the money market can also have its own crises, in which direct disturbances of industry only play a subordinate part or no part at all – here there is still much, especially in the history of the last twenty years, to be examined and established. Where there is division of labour on a social scale there is also mutual independence among the different sections of work. In the last instance production is the decisive factor. But when the trade in products becomes independent of production itself, it follows a movement of its own, which, while it is governed as a whole by production, still in particular cases and within this general dependence follows particular laws contained in the nature of this new factor; this movement has phases of its own and in its turn reacts on the movement of production. The discovery of America was due to the thirst for gold which had previously driven the Portuguese to Africa (compare Soetbeer's Production of Precious Metals), because the enormously extended European industry of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the trade corresponding to it demanded more means of exchange

than Germany, the great silver country from 1450 to 1550, could provide. The conquest of India by the Portuguese, Dutch and English between 1500 and 1800 had imports from India as its object – nobody dreamt of exporting anything there. And yet what a colossal reaction these discoveries and conquests, solely conditioned by the interests of trade, had upon industry: they first created the need for exports to these countries and developed large-scale industry.

So it is too with the money market. As soon as trading in money becomes separate from trade in commodities it has (under certain conditions imposed by production and commodity trade and within these limits) a development of its own, special laws and separate phases determined by its own nature. If, in this further development, trade in money extends in addition to trade in securities and these securities are not only government securities but also industrial and transport stocks and shares, so that money trade conquers the direct control over a portion of the production by which, taken as a whole, it is itself controlled, then the reaction of money trading on production becomes still stronger and more complicated. The money traders have become the owners of railways, mines, iron works, etc. These means of production take on a double aspect if their working has to be directed sometimes in the immediate interests of production but sometimes also according to the requirements of the shareholders, in so far as they are money traders. The most striking example of this is the American railways, whose working is entirely dependent on the stock exchange operations of a Jay Gould or a Vanderbilt, etc., these having nothing whatever to do with the particular railway concerned and its interests as a means of communication. And even here in England we have seen struggles lasting for tens of years between different railway companies over the boundaries of their respective territories – struggles in which an enormous amount of money was thrown away, not in the interests of production and communications but simply because of a rivalry which usually only had the object of facilitating the stock exchange dealings of the shareholding money traders.

With these few indications of my conception of the relation of production to commodity trade and of both to money trading, I have already also answered, in essence, your questions about "historical materialism" generally. The thing is easiest to grasp from the point of view of the division of labour. Society gives rise to certain common functions which it cannot dispense with. The persons selected for these functions form a new branch of the division of labour within society. This gives them particular interests, distinct too from the interests of those who gave them their office; they make themselves independent of the latter and – the state is in being. And now the development is the same as it was with commodity trade and later with money trade; the new independent power, while having in the main to follow the movement of production, also, owing to its inward independence (the relative independence originally transferred to it and gradually further developed) reacts in its turn upon the conditions and course of production. It is the interaction of two unequal forces: on one hand the economic movement, on the other the new political power, which strives for as much independence as possible, and which, having once been established, is also endowed with a movement of its own. On the whole, the economic movement gets its way, but it has also to suffer reactions from the political movement which it established and endowed with relative independence itself, from the movement of the state power on the one hand and of the opposition simultaneously engendered on the other. Just as the movement of the industrial market is, in the main and with the reservations already indicated, reflected in the money market and, of course, in inverted form, so the struggle between the classes already existing and already in conflict with one another is reflected in the struggle between government and opposition, but also in inverted form, no longer directly but indirectly, not as a class struggle but as a fight for political principles, and so distorted that it has taken us thousands of years to get behind it again.

The reaction of the state power upon economic development can be one of three kinds: it can run in the same direction, and then development is more rapid; it can oppose the line of development, in which case nowadays state power in every great nation will go to pieces in the long run; or it can cut off the economic development from certain paths, and impose on it certain others. This case ultimately reduces itself to one of the two previous ones. But it is obvious that in cases two and three the political power can do great damage to the economic development and result in the squandering of great masses of energy and material.

Then there is also the case of the conquest and brutal destruction of economic resources, by which, in certain circumstances, a whole local or national economic development could formerly be ruined. Nowadays such a case usually has the opposite effect, at least among great nations: in the long run the defeated power often gains more economically, politically and morally than the victor.

It is similar with law. As soon as the new division of labour which creates professional lawyers becomes necessary, another new and independent sphere is opened up which, for all its general dependence on production and trade, still has its own capacity for reacting upon these spheres as well. In a modern state, law must not only correspond to the general economic position and be its expression, but must also be an expression which is consistent in itself, and which does not, owing to inner contradictions, look glaringly inconsistent. And in order to achieve this, the faithful reflection of economic conditions is more and more infringed upon. All the more so the more rarely it happens that a code of law is the blunt, unmitigated, unadulterated expression of the domination of a class – this in itself would already offend the “conception of justice.” Even in the Code Napoleon the pure logical conception of justice held by the revolutionary bourgeoisie of 1792-96 is already adulterated in many ways, and in so far as it is embodied there has daily to undergo all sorts of attenuation owing to the rising power of the proletariat. Which does not prevent the Code Napoleon from being the statute book which serves as a basis for every new code of law in every part of the world. Thus to a great extent the course of the “development of law” only consists: first in the attempt to do away with the contradictions arising from the direct translation of economic relations into legal principles, and to establish a harmonious system of law, and then in the repeated breaches made in this system by the influence and pressure of further economic development, which involves it in further contradictions (I am only speaking here of civil law for the moment). The reflection of economic relations as legal principles is necessarily also a topsy turvy one: it happens without the person who is acting being conscious of it; the jurist imagines he is operating with a priori principles, whereas they are really only economic reflexes; so everything is upside down. And it seems to me obvious that this inversion, which, so long as it remains unrecognised, forms what we call ideological conception, reacts in its turn upon the economic basis and may, within certain limits, modify it. The basis of the law of inheritance – assuming that the stages reached in the development of the family are equal – is an economic one. But it would be difficult to prove, for instance, that the absolute liberty of the testator in England and the severe restrictions imposed upon him in France are only due in every detail to economic causes. Both react back, however, on the economic sphere to a very considerable extent, because they influence the division of property.

As to the realms of ideology which soar still higher in the air, religion, philosophy, etc., these have a prehistoric stock, found already in existence and taken over in the historic period, of what we should to-day call bunk. These various false conceptions of nature, of man's own being, of spirits, magic forces, etc., have for the most part only a negative economic basis; but the low economic development of the prehistoric period is supplemented and also partially conditioned and even caused by the false conceptions of nature. And even though economic necessity was the main driving force of the progressive

knowledge of nature and becomes ever more so, it would surely be pedantic to try and find economic causes for all this primitive nonsense. The history of science is the history of the gradual clearing away of this nonsense or of its replacement by fresh but already less absurd nonsense. The people who deal with this belong in their turn to special spheres in the division of labour and appear to themselves to be working in an independent field. And in so far as they form an independent group within the social division of labour, in so far do their productions, including their errors, react back as an influence upon the whole development of society, even on its economic development. But all the same they themselves remain under the dominating influence of economic development. In philosophy, for instance, this can be most readily proved in the bourgeois period. Hobbes was the first modern materialist (in the eighteenth century sense) but he was an absolutist in a period when absolute monarchy was at its height throughout the whole of Europe and when the fight of absolute monarchy versus the people was beginning in England. Locke, both in religion and politics, was the child of the class compromise of 1688. The English deists and their more consistent successors, the French materialists, were the true philosophers of the bourgeoisie, the French even of the bourgeois revolution. The German petty bourgeois runs through German philosophy from Kant to Hegel, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively. But the philosophy of every epoch, since it is a definite sphere in the division of labour, has as its presupposition certain definite intellectual material handed down to it by its predecessors, from which it takes its start. And that is why economically backward countries can still play first fiddle in philosophy: France in the eighteenth century compared with England, on whose philosophy the French based themselves, and later Germany in comparison with both. But the philosophy both of France and Germany and the general blossoming of literature at that time were also the result of a rising economic development. I consider the ultimate supremacy of economic development established in these spheres too, but it comes to pass within conditions imposed by the particular sphere itself: in philosophy, for instance, through the operation of economic influences (which again generally only act under political, etc., disguises) upon the existing philosophic material handed down by predecessors. Here economy creates nothing absolutely new (*a novo*), but it determines the way in which the existing material of thought is altered and further developed, and that too for the most part indirectly, for it is the political, legal and moral reflexes which exercise the greatest direct influence upon philosophy.

About religion I have said the most necessary things in the last section on Feuerbach. If therefore Barth supposes that we deny any and every reaction of the political, etc., reflexes of the economic movement upon the movement itself, he is simply tilting at windmills. He has only got to look at Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*, which deals almost exclusively with the particular part played by political struggles and events; of course, within their general dependence upon economic conditions. Or *Capital*, the section on the working day, for instance, where legislation, which is surely a political act, has such a trenchant effect. Or the section on the history of the bourgeoisie. (Chapter XXIV.) Or why do we fight for the political dictatorship of the proletariat if political power is economically impotent? Force (that is state power) is also an economic power.

But I have no time to criticise the book now. I must first get Vol. III out and besides I think too that Bernstein, for instance, could deal with it quite effectively.

What these gentlemen all lack is dialectic. They never see anything but here cause and there effect. That this is a hollow abstraction, that such metaphysical polar opposites only exist in the real world during crises, while the whole vast process proceeds in the form of interaction (though of very unequal forces, the economic movement being by far the strongest, most elemental and most decisive) and that here everything is relative and nothing is absolute – this they never begin to see. Hegel has never existed for them.



Frederick Engels 1891

On the 20th Anniversary of the Paris Commune

On April 1 it was decided that the highest salary received by any employee of the Commune, and therefore also by its members themselves, might not exceed 6,000 francs. On the following day **the Commune decreed the separation of the Church from the State**, and the abolition of all state payments for religious purposes as well as the transformation of all **Church property into national property**; as a result of which, **on April 8, a decree excluding from the schools all religious symbols, pictures, dogmas, prayers – in a word, “all that belongs to the sphere of the individual’s conscience” – was ordered to be excluded from the schools, and this decree was gradually applied.**



Frederick Engels 1892

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific

1892 English Edition Introduction

[History (the role of Religion) in the English middle-class]

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

But the great international centre of feudalism was the Roman Catholic Church. It united the whole of feudalized Western Europe, in spite of all internal wars, into one grand political system, opposed as much to the schismatic Greeks as to the Mohammedan countries. It had organized its own hierarchy on the feudal model, and, lastly, it was itself by far the most powerful feudal lord, holding, as it did, fully 1/3rd of the soil of the Catholic world. Before profane feudalism could be successfully attacked in each country and in

detail, this, its sacred central organization, had to be destroyed.

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

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

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

The first was what is called the Protestant Reformation in Germany. The war cry raised against the Church, by Luther, was responded to by two insurrections of a political nature; first, that of the lower nobility under Franz von Sickingen (1523), then the great Peasants' War, 1525. Both were defeated, chiefly in consequence of the indecision of the parties most interested, the burghers of the towns – an indecision into the causes of which we cannot here enter. From that moment, the struggle degenerated into a fight between the local princes and the central power, and ended by blotting out Germany, for 200 years, from the politically active nations of Europe. The Lutheran Reformation produced a new creed indeed, a religion adapted to absolute monarchy. No sooner were the peasant of North-east Germany converted to Lutheranism than they were from freemen reduced to serfs.

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

In Calvinism, the second great bourgeois upheaval found its doctrine ready cut and dried. This upheaval took place in England. The middle-class of the towns brought it on, and the yeomanry of the country districts fought it out. Curiously enough, in all the three great bourgeois risings, the peasantry furnishes the army that has to do the fighting; and the peasantry is just the class that, the victory once gained, is most surely ruined by the economic consequences of that victory. A hundred years after Cromwell, the yeomanry of England had almost disappeared. Anyhow, had it not been for that yeomanry and for the

plebian element in the towns, the bourgeoisie alone would never have fought the matter out to the bitter end, and would never have brought Charles I to the scaffold. In order to secure even those conquests of the bourgeoisie that were ripe for gathering at the time, the revolution had to be carried considerably further – exactly as in 1793 in France and 1848 in Germany. This seems, in fact, to be one of the laws of evolution of bourgeois society.

Well, upon this excess of revolutionary activity there necessarily followed the inevitable reaction which, in its turn, went beyond the point where it might have maintained itself. After a series of oscillations, the new centre of gravity was at last attained and became a new starting-point. The grand period of English history, known to respectability under the name of "the Great Rebellion", and the struggles succeeding it, were brought to a close by the comparatively puny events entitled by Liberal historians "the Glorious Revolution".

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

From that time, the bourgeoisie was a humble, but still a recognized, component of the ruling classes of England. With the rest of them, it had a common interest in keeping in subjection the great working mass of the nation. The merchant or manufacturer himself stood in the position of master, or, as it was until lately called, of "natural superior" to his clerks, his work-people, his domestic servants. His interest was to get as much and as good work out of them as he could; for this end, they had to be trained to proper submission. He was himself religious; his religion had supplied the standard under which he had fought the king and the lords; he was not long in discovering the opportunities this same religion offered him for working upon the minds of his natural inferiors, and making them submissive to the behests of the masters it had pleased God to place over them. In short, the English bourgeoisie now had to take a part in keeping down the "lower orders", the great producing mass of the nation, and one of the means employed for that purpose was the influence of religion.

There was another factor that contributed to strengthen the religious leanings of the bourgeoisie. That was the rise of materialism in England. This new doctrine not only shocked the pious feelings of the middle-class; it announced itself as a philosophy only fit

for scholars and cultivated men of the world, in contrast to religion, which was good enough for the uneducated masses, including the bourgeoisie. With Hobbes, it stepped on the stage as a defender of royal prerogative and omnipotence; it called upon absolute monarchy to keep down that *puer robustus sed malitiosus* ["Robust but malicious boy"] – to wit, the people. Similarly, with the successors of Hobbes, with Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, etc., the new deistic form of materialism remained an aristocratic, esoteric doctrine, and, therefore, hateful to the middle-class both for its religious heresy and for its anti-bourgeois political connections. Accordingly, in opposition to the materialism and deism of the aristocracy, those Protestant sects which had furnished the flag and the fighting contingent against the Stuarts continued to furnish the main strength of the progressive middle-class, and form even today the backbone of "the Great Liberal Party".

In the meantime, materialism passed from England to France, where it met and coalesced with another materialistic school of philosophers, a branch of Cartesianism. In France, too, it remained at first an exclusively aristocratic doctrine. But, soon, its revolutionary character asserted itself. The French materialists did not limit their criticism to matters of religious belief; they extended it to whatever scientific tradition or political institution they met with; and to prove the claim of their doctrine to universal application, they took the shortest cut, and boldly applied it to all subjects of knowledge in the giant work after which they were named – the Encyclopaedia. Thus, in one or the other of its two forms – avowed materialism or deism – it became the creed of the whole culture's youth of France; so much so that, when the Great Revolution broke out, the doctrine hatched by English Royalists gave a theoretical flag to French Republicans and Terrorists, and furnished the text for the Declaration of the Rights of Man. The Great French Revolution was the third uprising of the bourgeoisie, but the first that had entirely cast off the religious cloak, and was fought out on undisguised political lines; it was the first, too, that was really fought out up to the destruction of one of the combatants, the aristocracy, and the complete triumph of the other, the bourgeoisie. In England, the continuity of pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary institutions, and the compromise between landlords and capitalists, found its expression in the continuity of judicial precedents and in the religious preservation of the feudal forms of the law. In France, the Revolution constituted a complete breach with the traditions of the past; it cleared out the very last vestiges of feudalism, and created in the Code Civil a masterly adaptation of the old Roman law – that almost perfect expression of the juridical relations corresponding to the economic stage called by Marx the production of commodities – to modern capitalist conditions; so masterly that this French revolutionary code still serves as a model for reforms of the law of property in all other countries, not excepting England. Let us, however, not forget that if English law continues to express the economic relations of capitalist society in that barbarous feudal language which corresponds to the thing expressed, just as English spelling corresponds to English pronunciation – *vous écrivez Londres et vous prononcez Constantinople*, said a Frenchman – that same English law is the only one which has preserved through ages, and transmitted to America and the Colonies, the best part of that old Germanic personal freedom, local self-government, and independence from all interference (but that of the law courts), which on the Continent has been lost during the period of absolute monarchy, and has nowhere been as yet fully recovered.

To return to our British bourgeois. The French Revolution gave him a splendid opportunity, with the help of the Continental monarchies, to destroy French maritime commerce, to annex French colonies, and to crush the last French pretensions to maritime rivalry. That was one reason why he fought it. Another was that the ways of this revolution went very much against his grain. Not only its "execrable" terrorism, but the very attempt to carry bourgeois rule to extremes. What should the British bourgeois do without his aristocracy, that taught him manners, such as they were, and invented fashions for him – that

furnished officers for the army, which kept order at home, and the navy, which conquered colonial possessions and new markets abroad? There was, indeed, a progressive minority of the bourgeoisie, that minority whose interests were not so well attended to under the compromise; this section, composed chiefly of the less wealthy middle-class, did sympathize with the Revolution, but it was powerless in Parliament.

Thus, if materialism became the creed of the French Revolution, the God-fearing English bourgeois held all the faster to his religion. Had not the reign of terror in Paris proved what was the upshot, if the religious instincts of the masses were lost? The more materialism spread from France to neighboring countries, and was reinforced by similar doctrinal currents, notably by German philosophy, the more, in fact, materialism and free thought generally became, on the Continent, the necessary qualifications of a cultivated man, the more stubbornly the English middle-class stuck to its manifold religious creeds. These creeds might differ from one another, but they were, all of them, distinctly religious, Christian creeds.

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

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

Then came the Continental revolutions of February and March 1848, in which the working people played such a prominent part, and, at least in Paris, put forward demands which were certainly inadmissible from the point of view of capitalist society. And then came the general reaction. First, the defeat of the Chartists on April 10, 1848; then the crushing of the Paris workingmen's insurrection in June of the same year; then the disasters of 1849 in Italy, Hungary, South Germany, and at last the victory of Louis Bonaparte over Paris, December 2, 1851. For a time, at least, the bugbear of working-class pretensions was put

down, but at what cost! If the British bourgeois had been convinced before of the necessity of maintaining the common people in a religious mood, how much more must he feel that necessity after all these experiences? Regardless of the sneers of his Continental compeers, he continued to spend thousands and tens of thousands, year after year, upon the evangelization of the lower orders; not content with his own native religious machinery, he appealed to Brother Jonathan 1), the greatest organizer in existence of religion as a trade, and imported from America revivalism, Moody and Sankey, and the like; and, finally, he accepted the dangerous aid of the Salvation Army, which revives the propaganda of early Christianity, appeals to the poor as the elect, fights capitalism in a religious way, and thus fosters an element of early Christian class antagonism, which one day may become troublesome to the well-to-do people who now find the ready money for it.

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

In England, the bourgeoisie never held undivided sway. Even the victory of 1832 left the landed aristocracy in almost exclusive possession of all the leading Government offices. The meekness with which the middle-class submitted to this remained inconceivable to me until the great Liberal manufacturer, Mr. W. A. Forster, in a public speech, implored the young men of Bradford to learn French, as a means to get on in the world, and quoted from his own experience how sheepish he looked when, as a Cabinet Minister, he had to move in society where French was, at least, as necessary as English! The fact was, the English middle-class of that time were, as a rule, quite uneducated upstarts, and could not help leaving to the aristocracy those superior Government places where other qualifications were required than mere insular narrowness and insular conceit, seasoned by business sharpness. 2) Even now the endless newspaper debates about middle-class education show that the English middle-class does not yet consider itself good enough for the best education, and looks to something more modest. Thus, even after the repeal of the Corn Laws, it appeared a matter of course that the men who had carried the day – the Cobdens, Brights, Forsters, etc. – should remain excluded from a share in the official government of the country, until 20 years afterwards a new Reform Act opened to them the door of the Cabinet. The English bourgeoisie are, up to the present day, so deeply penetrated by a sense of their social inferiority that they keep up, at their own expense and that of the nation, an ornamental caste of drones to represent the nation worthily at all State functions; and they consider themselves highly honored whenever one of themselves is found worthy of admission into this select and privileged body, manufactured, after all, by themselves.

The industrial and commercial middle-class had, therefore, not yet succeeded in driving the landed aristocracy completely from political power when another competitor, the working-class, appeared on the stage. The reaction after the Chartist movement and the Continental revolutions, as well as the unparalleled extension of English trade from 1848-

66 (ascribed vulgarly to Free Trade alone, but due far more to the colossal development of railways, ocean steamers, and means of intercourse generally), had again driven the working-class into the dependency of the Liberal party, of which they formed, as in pre-Chartist times, the Radical wing. Their claims to the franchise, however, gradually became irresistible; while the Whig leaders of the Liberals "funked", Disraeli showed his superiority by making the Tories seize the favorable moment and introduce household suffrage in the boroughs, along with a redistribution of seats. Then followed the ballot; then, in 1884, the extension of household suffrage to the counties and a fresh redistribution of seats, by which electoral districts were, to some extent, equalized. All these measures considerably increased the electoral power of the working-class, so much so that in at least 150 to 200 constituencies that class now furnished the majority of the voters. But parliamentary government is a capital school for teaching respect for tradition; if the middle-class look with awe and veneration upon what Lord John Manners playfully called "our old nobility", the mass of the working-people then looked up with respect and deference to what used to be designated as "their betters", the middle-class. Indeed, the British workman, some 15 years ago, was the model workman, whose respectful regard for the position of his master, and whose self-restraining modesty in claiming rights for himself, consoled our German economists of the *Kathedersocialist* school for the incurable communistic and revolutionary tendencies of their own working-men at home.

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

And now came the triumph of British respectability over the free thought and religious laxity of the Continental bourgeois. The workmen of France and Germany had become rebellious. They were thoroughly infected with Socialism, and, for very good reasons, were not at all particular as to the legality of the means by which to secure their own ascendancy. The *puer robustus*, here, turned from day-to-day more *malitiosus*. Nothing remained to the French and German bourgeoisie as a last resource but to silently drop their free thought, as a youngster, when sea-sickness creeps upon him, quietly drops the burning cigar he brought swaggeringly on board; one-by-one, the scoffers turned pious in outward behavior, spoke with respect of the Church, its dogmas and rites, and even conformed with the latter as far as could not be helped. French bourgeois dined *maigre* on Fridays, and German ones say out long Protestant sermons in their pews on Sundays. They had come to grief with materialism. "Die Religion muss dem Volk erhalten werden" – religion must be kept alive for the people – that was the only and the last means to save society from utter ruin. Unfortunately for themselves, they did not find this out until they had done their level best to break up religion for ever. And now it was the turn of the British bourgeoisie to sneer and to say: "Why, you fools, I could have told you that 200 years ago!"

However, I am afraid neither the religious stolidity of the British, nor the *post festum* conversion of the Continental bourgeois will stem the rising Proletarian tide. Tradition is a great retarding force, is the *vis inertiae* of history, but, being merely passive, is sure to be broken down; and thus religion will be no lasting safeguard to capitalist society. If our juridical, philosophical, and religious ideas are the more or less remote offshoots of the economical relations prevailing in a given society, such ideas cannot, in the long run,

withstand the effects of a complete change in these relations. And, unless we believe in supernatural revelation, we must admit that no religious tenets will ever suffice to prop up a tottering society.

In fact, in England too, the working-people have begun to move again. They are, no doubt, shackled by traditions of various kinds. Bourgeois traditions, such as the widespread belief that there can be but two parties, Conservatives and Liberals, and that the working-class must work out its salvation by and through the great Liberal Party. Working-men's traditions, inherited from their first tentative efforts at independent action, such as the exclusion, from ever so many old Trade Unions, of all applicants who have not gone through a regular apprenticeship; which means the breeding, by every such union, of its own blacklegs. But, for all that, the English working-class is moving, as even Professor Brentano has sorrowfully had to report to his brother Katheder-Socialists. It moves, like all things in England, with a slow and measured step, with hesitation here, with more or less unfruitful, tentative attempts there; it moves now and then with an over-cautious mistrust of the name of Socialism, while it gradually absorbs the substance; and the movement spreads and seizes one layer of the workers after another. It has now shaken out of their torpor the unskilled laborers of the East End of London, and we all know what a splendid impulse these fresh forces have given it in return. And if the pace of the movement is not up to the impatience of some people, let them not forget that it is the working-class which keeps alive the finest qualities of the English character, and that, if a step in advance is once gained in England, it is, as a rule, never lost afterwards. If the sons of the old Chartists, for reasons unexplained above, were not quite up to the mark, the grandsons bid fair to be worthy of their forefathers.

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

Frederick Engels

London

April 20, 1892

Notes

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

with other Germans abroad, who gradually organized a complete network of commercial colonies all over the world. But, when Germany, about 40 years ago [c.1850], seriously began manufacturing for export, this network served her admirably in her transformation, in so short a time, from a corn-exporting into a first-rate manufacturing country. Then, about 10 years ago, the British manufacturer got frightened, and asked his ambassadors and consuls how it was that he could no longer keep his customers together. The unanimous answer was:

- (1) You don't learn customer's language but expect him to speak your own;
- (2) You don't even try to suit your customer's wants, habits, and tastes, but expect him to conform to your English ones.



Frederick Engels 1895

On the History of Early Christianity

Die Neue Zeit, 1894-95

I

The history of early Christianity has notable points of resemblance with the modern working-class movement. Like the latter, Christianity was originally a movement of oppressed people: it first appeared as the religion of slaves and emancipated slaves, of poor people deprived of all rights, of peoples subjugated or dispersed by Rome. Both Christianity and the workers' socialism preach forthcoming salvation from bondage and misery; Christianity places this salvation in a life beyond, after death, in heaven; socialism places it in this world, in a transformation of society. Both are persecuted and baited, their adherents are despised and made the objects of exclusive laws, the former as enemies of the human race, the latter as enemies of the state, enemies of religion, the family, social order. And in spite of all persecution, nay, even spurred on by it, they forge victoriously, irresistibly ahead. Three hundred years after its appearance Christianity was the recognized state religion in the Roman World Empire, and in barely sixty years socialism has won itself a position which makes its victory absolutely certain.

If, therefore, Prof. Anton Menger wonders in his *Right to the Full Product of Labour* why, with the enormous concentration of landownership under the Roman emperors and the boundless sufferings of the working class of the time, which was composed almost exclusively of slaves, "socialism did not follow the overthrow of the Roman Empire in the West," it is because he cannot see that this "socialism" did in fact, as far as it was possible

at the time, exist and even became dominant — in Christianity.

Only this Christianity, as was bound to be the case in the historic conditions, did not want to accomplish the social transformation in this world, but beyond it, in heaven, in eternal life after death, in the impending "millennium."

The parallel between the two historic phenomena forces itself upon our attention as early as the Middle Ages in the first risings of the oppressed peasants and particularly of the town plebeians. These risings, like all mass movements of the Middle Ages, were bound to wear the mask of religion and appeared as the restoration of early Christianity from spreading degeneration. [Note by Engels: A peculiar antithesis to this was the religious risings in the Mohammedan world, particularly in Africa. Islam is a religion adapted to Orientals, especially Arabs, *i.e.*, on one hand to townsmen engaged in trade and industry, on the other to nomadic Bedouins. Therein lies, however, the embryo of a periodically recurring collision. The townspeople grow rich, luxurious and lax in the observation of the "law." The Bedouins, poor and hence of strict morals, contemplate with envy and covetousness these riches and pleasures. Then they unite under a prophet, a Mahdi, to chastise the apostates and restore the observation of the ritual and the true faith and to appropriate in recompense the treasures of the renegades. In a hundred years they are naturally in the same position as the renegades were: a new purge of the faith is required, a new Mahdi arises and the game starts again from the beginning. That is what happened from the conquest campaigns of the African Almoravids and Almohads in Spain to the last Mahdi of Khartoum who so successfully thwarted the English. It happened in the same way or similarly with the risings in Persia and other Mohammedan countries. All these movements are clothed in religion but they have their source in economic causes; and yet, even when they are victorious, they allow the old economic conditions to persist untouched. So the old situation remains unchanged and the collision recurs periodically. In the popular risings of the Christian West, on the contrary, the religious disguise is only a flag and a mask for attacks on an economic order which is becoming antiquated. This is finally overthrown, a new one arises and the world progresses.]

But behind the religious exaltation there was every time a very tangible worldly interest. This appeared most splendidly in the organization of the Bohemian Taborites under Jan Zizka, of glorious memory; but this trait pervades the whole of the Middle Ages until it gradually fades away after the German Peasant War to revive again with the workingmen Communists after 1830. The French revolutionary Communists, as also in particular Weitling and his supporters, referred to early Christianity long before Renan's words: "If I wanted to give you an idea of the early Christian communities I would tell you to look at a local section of the International Working Men's Association."

This French man of letters, who by mutilating German criticism of the Bible in a manner unprecedented even in modern journalism composed the novel on church history *Origines du Christianisme*, did not know himself how much truth there was in the words just quoted. I should like to see the old "International" who can read, for example, the so-called Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians without old-wounds re-opening, at least in one respect. The whole epistle, from chapter eight onwards, echoes the eternal, and oh! so well-known complaint: *les cotisations ne rentrent pas* — contributions are not coming in! How many of the most zealous propagandists of the sixties would sympathizingly squeeze the hand of the author of that epistle, whoever he may be, and whisper: "So it was like that with you too!" We too — Corinthians were legion in our Association — can sing a song about contributions not coming in but tantalizing us as they floated elusively before our eyes. They were the famous "millions of the International"!

One of our best sources on the first Christians is Lucian of Samosata, the Voltaire of classic antiquity, who was equally sceptic towards every kind of religious superstition and

therefore had neither pagan-religious nor political grounds to treat the Christians otherwise than as some other kind of religious community. On the contrary, he mocked them all for their superstition, those who prayed to Jupiter no less than those who prayed to Christ; from his shallow rationalistic point of view one sort of superstition was as stupid as the other. This in any case impartial witness relates among other things the life-story of a certain adventurous Peregrinus, Proteus by name, from Parium in Hellespontus. When a youth, this Peregrinus made his *début* in Armenia by committing fornication. He was caught in the act and lynched according to the custom of the country. He was fortunate enough to escape and after strangling his father in Parium he had to flee.

"And so it happened" — I quote from Schott's translation — "that he also came to hear of the astonishing learning of the Christians, with whose priests and scribes he had cultivated intercourse in Palestine. He made such progress in a short time that his teachers were like children compared with him. He became a prophet, an elder, a master of the synagogue, in a word, all in everything. He interpreted their writings and himself wrote a great number of works, so that finally people saw in him a superior being, let him lay down laws for them and made him their overseer (bishop) On that ground (*i.e.*, because he was a Christian) Proteus was at length arrested by the authorities and thrown into prison.... As he thus lay in chains, the Christians, who saw in his capture a great misfortune, made all possible attempts to free him. But they did not succeed. Then they administered to him in all possible ways with the greatest solicitude. As early as daybreak one could see aged mothers, widows and young orphans crowding at the door of his prison; the most prominent among the Christians even bribed the warders and spent whole nights with him; they took their meals with them and read their holy books in his presence; briefly, the beloved Peregrinus" (he still went by that name) "was no less to them than a new Socrates. Envoys of Christian communities came to him even from towns in Asia Minor to lend him a helping hand, to console him and to testify in his favour in court. It is unbelievable how quick these people are to act whenever it is a question of their community; they immediately spare neither exertion nor expense. And thus from all sides money then poured in to Peregrinus so that his imprisonment became for him a source of great income. For the poor people persuaded themselves that they were immortal in body and in soul and that they would live for all eternity; that was why, they scorned death and many of them even voluntarily written by his sacrificed their lives. Then their most prominent lawgiver convinced them that they would all be brothers one to another once they were converted, *i.e.*, renounced the Greek gods, professed faith in the crucified sophist and lived according to his prescriptions. That is why they despise all material goods without distinction and own them in common — doctrines which they have accepted in good faith, without demonstration or proof. And when a skilful imposter who knows how to make clever use of circumstances comes to them he can manage to get rich in a short time and laugh up his sleeve over these simpletons. For the rest, Peregrinus was set free by him who was then prefect of Syria."

Then, after a few more adventures,

"Our worthy set forth a second time" (from Parium) "on his peregrinations, the Christians' good disposition standing him in lieu of money for his journey: they administered to his needs everywhere and never let him suffer want. He was fed for a time in this way. But then, when he violated the laws of the Christians too — I think he was caught eating of some forbidden food — they excommunicated him from their community."

What memories of youth come to my mind as I read this passage from Lucian! First of all the "prophet Albrecht" who from about 1840 literally plundered the Weitling communist communities in Switzerland for several years — a tall powerful man with a long beard who wandered on foot through Switzerland and gathered audiences for his mysterious new Gospel of world emancipation, but who, after all, seems to have been a tolerably harmless

hoaxer and soon died. Then his not so harmless successor, "the doctor" Georg Kuhlmann from Holstein, who put to profit the time when Weitling was in prison to convert the communities of French Switzerland to *his own* Gospel, and for a time with such success that he even caught August Becker, by far the cleverest but also the biggest ne'er-do-well among them. This Kuhlmann used to deliver lectures to them which were published in Geneva in 1845 under the title *The New World, or the Kingdom of the Spirit on Earth. Proclamation*. In the introduction, supporters (probably August Becker) we read:

"What was needed was a man on whose lips all our sufferings and all our longings and hopes, in a word, all that affects our time most profoundly should find expression This man, whom our time was waiting for, has come. He is the doctor Georg Kuhlmann from Holstein He has come forward with the doctrine of the new world or the kingdom of the spirit in reality."

I hardly need to add that this doctrine of the new world is nothing more than the most vulgar sentimental nonsense rendered in half-biblical expressions a la *Lamennais* and declaimed with prophet-like arrogance. But this did not prevent the good Weitlingers from carrying the swindler shoulder-high as the Asian Christians once did Peregrinus. They who were otherwise arch-democrats and extreme equalitarians to the extent of fostering ineradicable suspicion against any schoolmaster, journalist, and any man generally who was not a manual worker as being an "erudite" who was out to exploit them, let themselves be persuaded by the melodramatically arrayed Kuhlman that in the "New World" it would be the wisest of all, id est, Kuhlmann, who would regulate the distribution of pleasures and that therefore, even then, in the Old World, the disciples ought to bring pleasures by the bushel to that same wisest of all while they themselves should be content with crumbs. So Peregrinus Kuhlmann lived a splendid life of pleasure at the expense of the community — as long as it lasted. It did not last very long, of course; the growing murmurs of doubters and unbelievers and the menace of persecution by the Vaudois Government put an end to the "Kingdom of the Spirit" in Lausanne — Kuhlmann disappeared.

Everybody who has known by experience the European working-class movement in its beginnings will remember dozens of similar examples. Today such extreme cases, at least in the large centres, have become impossible; but in remote districts where the movement has won new ground a small Peregrinus of this kind can still count on a temporary limited success. And just as all those who have nothing to look forward to from the official world or have come to the end of their tether with it — opponents of inoculation, supporters of abstemiousness, vegetarians, anti-vivisectionists, nature-healers, free-community preachers whose communities have fallen to pieces, authors of new theories on the origin of the universe, unsuccessful or unfortunate inventors, victims of real or imaginary injustice who are termed "good-for-nothing pettifoggers" by all bureaucracy, honest fools and dishonest swindlers — all throng to the working-class parties in all countries — so it was with the first Christians. All the elements which had been set free, *i.e.*, at a loose end, by the dissolution of the old world came one after the other into the orbit Christianity as the only element that resisted that process of dissolution — for the very reason that it was the necessary product of that process — and that therefore persisted and grew while the other elements were but ephemeral flies. There was no fanaticism, no foolishness, no scheming that did not flock to the young Christian communities and did not at least for a time and in isolated places find attentive ears and willing believers. And like our first communist workers' associations the early Christians too took with such unprecedented gullibility to anything which suited their purpose that we are not even sure that some fragment or other of the "great number of works" that Peregrinus wrote for Christianity did not find its way into our New Testament.

II

German criticism of the Bible, so far the only scientific basis of our knowledge of the history of early Christianity, followed a double tendency.

The first tendency was that of the *Tübingen school*, in which, in the broad sense, D. F. Strauss must also be included. In critical inquiry it goes as far as a *theological* school can go. It admits that the four Gospels are not eyewitness accounts but only later adaptations of writings that have been lost; that no more than four of the Epistles attributed to the apostle Paul are authentic, etc. It strikes out of the historical narrations all miracles and contradictions, considering them as unacceptable; but from the rest it tries "to save what can be saved" and then its nature, that of a theological school, is very evident. Thus it enabled Renan, who bases himself mostly on it, to "save" still more by applying the same method and, moreover, to try to impose upon us as historically authenticated many New Testament accounts that are more than doubtful and, besides, a multitude of other legends about martyrs. In any case, all that the Tübingen school rejects as unhistorical or apocryphal can be considered as finally eliminated for science.

The other tendency has but one representative — *Bruno Bauer*. His greatest service consists not merely in having given a pitiless criticism of the Gospels and the Epistles of the apostles, but in having for the first time seriously undertaken an inquiry into not only the Jewish and Greco-Alexandrian elements but the purely Greek and Greco-Roman elements that first opened for Christianity the career of a universal religion. The legend that Christianity arose ready and complete out of Judaism and, starting from Palestine, conquered the world with its dogma already defined in the main and its morals, has been untenable since Bruno Bauer; it can continue to vegetate only in the theological faculties and with people who wish "to keep religion alive for the people" even at the expense of science. The enormous influence which the Philonic school of Alexandria and Greco-Roman vulgar philosophy — Platonic and mainly Stoic — had on Christianity, which became the state religion under Constantine, is far from having been defined in detail, but its existence has been proved and that is primarily the achievement of Bruno Bauer: he laid the foundation of the proof that Christianity was not imported from outside — from Judea — into the Romano-Greek world and imposed on it, but that, at least in its world-religion form, it is that world's own product. Bauer, of course, like all those who are fighting against deep-rooted prejudices, overreached his aim in this work. In order to define through literary sources, too, Philo's and particularly Seneca's influence on emerging Christianity and to show up the authors of the New Testament formally as downright plagiarists of those philosophers he had to place the appearance of the new religion about half a century later, to reject the opposing accounts of Roman historians and take extensive liberties with historiography in general. According to him Christianity as such appears only under the Flavians, the literature of the New Testament only under Hadrian, Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius. As a result the New Testament accounts of Jesus and his disciples are deprived for Bauer of any historical background: they are diluted in legends in which the phases of interior development and the moral struggles of the ' first communities are transferred to more or less fictitious persons. Not Galilee and Jerusalem, but Alexandria and Rome, according to Bauer, are the birthplaces of the new religion.

If, therefore, the Tübingen school presents to us in the remains of the New Testament stories and literature that it left untouched the extreme maximum of what science today can still accept as disputable, Bruno Bauer presents to us maximum of what can be contested. The factual truth lies between these two limits. Whether that truth can be defined with the means at our disposal today is very doubtful. New discoveries, particularly in Rome, in the Orient, and above all in Egypt, will contribute more to this than any

criticism.

But we have in the New Testament a single book the time of the writing of which can be defined within a few months, which must have been written between June 67 and January or April 68; a book, consequently, which belongs to the very beginning of the Christian era and reflects with the most naive fidelity and in the corresponding idiomatic language the ideas of the beginning of that era. This book, therefore, in my opinion, is a far more important source from which to define what early Christianity really was than all the rest of the New Testament, which, in its present form, is of a far later date. This book is the so-called Revelation of John. And as this, apparently the most obscure book in the whole Bible, is moreover today, thanks to German criticism, the most comprehensible and the clearest, I shall give my readers an account of it.

One needs but to look into this book in order to be convinced of the state of great exaltation not only of the author, but also of the "surrounding medium" in which he moved. Our "Revelation" is not the only one of its kind and time. From the year 164 before our era, when the first which has reached us, the so-called Book of Daniel, was written, up to about 250 of our era, the approximate date of Commodian's Carmen, Renan counted no fewer than fifteen extant classical "Apocalypses," not counting subsequent imitations. (I quote Renan because his book is also the best known by non-specialists and the most accessible.) That was a time when even in Rome and Greece and still more in Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt an absolutely uncritical mixture of the crassest superstitions of the most varying peoples was indiscriminately accepted and complemented by pious deception and downright charlatanism; a time in which miracles, ecstasies, visions, apparitions, divining, gold-making, cabbala and other secret magic played a primary role. It was in that atmosphere, and, moreover, among a class of people who were more inclined than any other to listen to these supernatural fantasies, that Christianity arose. For did not the Christian gnostics in Egypt during the second century of our era engage extensively in alchemy and introduce alchemistic notions into their teachings, as the Leyden papyrus documents, among others, prove. And the Chaldean and Judean *mathematici*, who, according to Tacitus, were twice expelled from Rome for magic, once under Claudius and again under Vitellius, practised no other kind of geometry than the kind we shall find at the basis of John's Revelation.

To this we must add another thing. All the apocalypses attribute to themselves the right to deceive their readers. Not only were they written as a rule by quite different people than their alleged authors, and mostly by people who lived much later, for example the Book of Daniel, the Book of Henoch, the Apocalypses of Ezra, Baruch, Juda, etc., and the Sibylline books, but, as far as their main content is concerned, they prophesy only things that had already happened long before and were quite well known to the real author. Thus in the year 164, shortly before the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, the author of the Book of Daniel makes Daniel, who is supposed to have lived in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, prophesy the rise and fall of the Persian and Macedonian empires and the beginning of the Roman Empire, in order by this proof of his gift of prophecy to prepare the reader to accept the final prophecy that the people of Israel will overcome all hardships and finally be victorious. If therefore John's Revelation were really the work of its alleged author it would be the only exception among all apocalyptic literature.

The John who claims to be the author was, in any case, a man of great distinction among the Christians of Asia Minor. This is borne out by the tone of the message to the seven churches. Possibly he was the apostle John, whose historical existence, however, is not completely authenticated but is very probable. If this apostle was really the author, so much the better for our point of view. That would be the best confirmation that the Christianity of this book is real genuine early Christianity. Let it be noted in passing that, apparently, the Revelation was not written by the same author as the Gospel or the three

Epistles which are also attributed to John.

The Revelation consists of a series of visions. In the first Christ appears in the garb of a high priest, goes in the midst of seven candlesticks representing the seven churches of Asia and dictates to "John" messages to the seven "angels" of those churches. Here at the very beginning we see plainly the difference between this Christianity and Constantine's universal religion formulated by the Council of Nicaea. The Trinity is not only unknown, it is even impossible. Instead of the one Holy Ghost of later we here have the "*seven spirits of God*" construed by the Rabbis from Isaiah XI, 2. Christ is the son of God, the first and the last, the *alpha* and the *omega*, by no means God himself or equal to God, but on the contrary, "the beginning of the *creation* of God," hence an emanation of God, existing from all eternity but subordinate to God, like the above-mentioned seven spirits. In Chapter XV, 3 the martyrs in heaven sing "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb" glorifying God. Hence Christ here appears not only as subordinate to God but even, in a certain respect, on an equal footing with Moses. Christ is crucified in Jerusalem (XI, 8) but rises again (I, 5, 18); he is "the Lamb" that has been sacrificed for the sins of the world and with whose blood the faithful of all tongues and nations have been redeemed to God. Here we find the basic idea which enabled early Christianity to develop into a universal religion. All Semitic and European religions of that time shared the view that the gods offended by the actions of man could be propitiated by sacrifice; the first revolutionary basic idea (borrowed from the Philonic school) in Christianity was that by the one great voluntary sacrifice of a mediator the sins of all times and all men were atoned for once for all — in respect of the faithful. Thus the necessity of any further sacrifices was removed and with it the basis for a multitude of religious rites: but freedom from rites that made difficult or forbade intercourse with people of other confessions was the first condition of a universal religion. In spite of this the habit of sacrifice was so deeply rooted in the customs of peoples that Catholicism — which borrowed so much from paganism — found it appropriate to accommodate itself to this fact by the introduction of at least the symbolical sacrifice of the mass. On the other hand there is no trace whatever of the dogma of original sin in our book.

But the most characteristic in these messages, as in the whole book, is that it never and nowhere occurs to the author to refer to himself and his co-believers by any other name than that of *Jews*. He reproaches the members of the sects in Smyrna and Philadelphia against whom he fulminates with the fact that they "say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan"; of those in Pergamos he says: they hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block *before the children of Israel*, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. Here it is therefore not a case of conscious Christians but of people who say they are Jews. Granted, their Judaism is a new stage of development of the earlier but for that very reason it is the only true one. Hence, when the saints appeared before the throne of God there came first 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each tribe, and only after them the countless masses of heathens converted to this renovated Judaism. That was how little our author was aware in the year 69 of the Christian era that he represented quite a new phase in the development of a religion which was to become one of the most revolutionary elements in the history of the human mind.

We therefore see that the Christianity of that time, which was still unaware of itself, was as different as heaven from earth from the later dogmatically fixed universal religion of the Nicene Council; one cannot be recognized in the other. Here we have neither the dogma nor the morals of later Christianity but instead a feeling that one is struggling against the whole world and that the struggle will be a victorious one; an eagerness for the struggle and a certainty of victory which are totally lacking in Christians of today and which are to be found in our time only at the other pole of society, among the Socialists.

In fact, the struggle against a world that at the beginning was superior in force, and at the

same time against the novators themselves, is common to the early Christians and the Socialists. Neither of these two great movements were made by leaders or prophets — although there are prophets enough among both of them — they are mass movements. And mass movements are bound to be confused at the beginning; confused because the thinking of the masses at first moves among contradictions, lack of clarity and lack of cohesion, and also because of the role that prophets still play in them at the beginning. This confusion is to be seen in the formation of numerous sects which right against one another with at least the same zeal as against the common external enemy. So it was with early Christianity, so it was in the beginning of the socialist movement, no matter how much that worried the well-meaning worthies who preached unity where no unity was possible.

Was the International held together by a uniform dogma? On the contrary. There were Communists of the French pre-1848 tradition, among whom again were various shades: Communists of Weitling's school and others of the regenerated Communist League, Proudhonists dominating in France and Belgium, Blanquists, the German Workers' Party, and finally the Bakuninist anarchists, who for a while had the upper hand in Spain and Italy, to mention only the principal groups. It took a whole quarter of a century from the foundation of the International before the separation from the anarchists was final and complete everywhere and unity could be established at least in respect of most general economic viewpoints. And that with our means of communication — railways, telegraph, giant industrial cities, the press, organized people's assemblies.

There was among the early Christians the same division into countless sects, which was the very means by which discussion and thereby later unity was achieved. We already find it in this book, which is beyond doubt the oldest Christian document, and our author fights it with the same irreconcilable ardour as the great sinful world outside. There were first of all the Nicolaitans, in Ephesus and Pergamos; those that said they were Jews but were the synagogue of Satan, in Smyrna and Philadelphia; the supporters of Balaam, who is called a false prophet, in Pergamos; those who said they were apostles and were not, in Ephesus; and finally, in Thyatira, the supporters of the false prophetess who is described as a Jezebel. We are given no more details about these sects, it being only said about the followers of Balaam and Jezebel that they ate things sacrificed to idols and committed fornication. Attempts have been made to conceive these five sects as Pauline Christians and all the messages as directed against Paul, the false apostle, the alleged Balaam and "Nicolaos." Arguments to this effect, hardly tenable, are to be found collected in Renan's *Saint Paul* (Paris 1869, pp. 303-05 and 367-70). They all tend to explain the messages by the Acts of the Apostles and the so-called Epistles of Paul, writings which, at least in their present form, are no less than 60 years younger than the Revelation and the relevant factual data of which, therefore, are not only extremely doubtful but also totally contradictory. But the decisive thing is that it could not occur to the author to give five different names to one and the same sect and even two for Ephesus alone (false apostles and Nicolaitans) and two also for Pergamos (Balaamites and Nicolaitans), and to refer to them every time expressly as two different sects. At the same time one cannot deny the probability that there were also elements among these sects that would be termed Pauline today.

In both cases in which more details are given the accusation bears on eating meats offered to idols and on fornication, two points on which the Jews — the old ones as well as the Christian ones — were in continual dispute with converted heathens. The meat from heathen sacrifices was not only served at festal meals where refusal of the food offered would have seemed improper and could even have been dangerous; it was also sold on the public markets, where it was not always possible to ascertain whether it was pure in the eyes of the law. By fornication the Jews understood not only extra-nuptial sexual

relations but also marriage within the degrees of relationship prohibited by the Jewish law or between a Jew and a gentile, and it is in this sense that the word is generally understood in the Acts of the Apostles XV, 20 and 29. But our John has his own views on the sexual relations allowed to orthodox Jews. He says, XIV, 4, of the 144,000 heavenly Jews: "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins." And in fact, in our John's heaven there is not a single woman. He therefore belongs to the trend, which also often appears in other early Christian writings, that considers sexual relations generally as sinful. And when we moreover take into consideration the fact that he calls Rome the Great Whore with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication and have become drunk with the wine of fornication and the merchants of the earth have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies, it becomes impossible for us to take the word in the messages in the narrow sense that theological apologists would like to attribute to it in order thus to catch at some confirmation of other passages in the New Testament. On the contrary. These passages in the messages are an obvious indication of a phenomenon common to all times of great agitation, that the traditional bonds of sexual relations, like all other fetters, are shaken off. In the first centuries of Christianity, too, there appeared often enough, side by side with ascetics which mortified the, flesh, the tendency to extend Christian freedom to a more or less unrestrained intercourse between man and woman. The same thing was observed in the modern socialist movement. What unspeakable horror was felt in the then Copious nursery" of Germany at Saint-Simon's a *réhabilitation de la chair* in the thirties, which was rendered in German as "*Wiedereinsetzung des Fleisches*" (reinstatement of the flesh)! And the most horrified of all were the then ruling distinguished estates (there were as yet no classes in our country) who could not live in Berlin any more than on their country estates without repeated reinstatement of their flesh! If only those good people had been able to know Fourier, who contemplated quite different pranks for the' flesh! With the overcoming of utopianism these extravagances yielded to a more rational and in reality far more radical conception, and since Germany has grown out of Heine's pious nursery and developed into the centre of the Socialist movement the hypocritical indignation of the distinguished pious world is laughed at.

That is all the dogmatic content of the messages. The rest consists in exhorting the faithful to be zealous in propaganda, to courageous and proud confession of their faith in face of the foe, to unrelenting struggle against the enemy both within and without — and as far as this goes they could just as well have been written by one of the prophetically minded enthusiasts of the International.

III

The messages are but the introduction to the theme properly so-called of John's communication to the seven churches of Asia Minor and through them to the remaining reformed Judaism of the year 69, out of which Christianity later developed. And herewith we enter the innermost holy of holies of early Christianity.

What kind of people were the first Christians recruited from? Mainly from the "labouring and burdened," the members of the lowest strata of the people, as becomes a revolutionary element. And what did they consist of? In the towns of impoverished free men, all sorts of people, like the "mean whites" of the southern slave states and the European beachcombers and adventurers in colonial and Chinese seaports, then of emancipated slaves and, above all, actual slaves; on the large estates in Italy, Sicily, and Africa of slaves, and in the rural districts of the provinces of small peasants who had fallen more and more into bondage through debt. There was absolutely no common road to

emancipation for all these elements. For all of them paradise lay lost behind them; for the ruined free men it was the former polis, the town and the state at the same time, of which their forefathers had been free citizens; for the war-captive slaves the time of freedom before their subjugation and captivity; for the small peasants the abolished gentile social system and communal landownership. All that had been smitten down by the levelling iron fist, of conquering Rome. The largest social group that antiquity had attained was the tribe and the union of kindred tribes; among the barbarians grouping was based on alliances of families and among the townfounding Greeks and Italians of the *polis*, which consisted of one or more kindred tribes. Philip and Alexander gave the Hellenic peninsula political unity but that did not lead to the formation of a Greek nation. Nations became possible only through the downfall of Roman world domination. This domination had put an end once for all to the smaller unions; military might, Roman jurisdiction and the tax-collecting machinery completely dissolved the traditional inner organization. To the loss of independence and distinctive organization was added the forcible plunder by military and civil authorities who took the treasures of the subjugated away from them and then lent them back at usurious rates in order to extort still more out of them. The pressure of taxation and the need for money which it caused in regions dominated only or mainly by natural economy plunged the peasants into ever deeper bondage to the usurers, gave rise to great differences in fortune, making the rich richer and the poor completely destitute. Any resistance of isolated small tribes or towns to the gigantic Roman world power was hopeless. Where was the way out, salvation, for the enslaved, oppressed and impoverished, a way out common to all these groups of people whose interests were mutually alien or even opposed? And yet it had to be found if a great revolutionary movement was to embrace them all.

This way out was found. But not in this world. In the state in which things were it could only be a religious way out. Then a new world was disclosed. The continued life of the soul after the death of the body had gradually become a recognized article of faith throughout the Roman world. A kind of recompense or punishment of the deceased souls for their actions while on earth also received more and more general recognition. As far as recompense was concerned, admittedly, the prospects were not so good: antiquity was too spontaneously materialistic not to attribute infinitely greater value to life on earth than to life in the kingdom of shadows; to live on after death was considered by the Greeks rather as a misfortune. Then came Christianity, which took recompense and punishment in the world beyond seriously and created heaven and hell, and a way out was found which would lead the labouring and burdened from this vale of woe to eternal paradise. And in fact only with the prospect of a reward in the world beyond could the stoico-philonic renunciation of the world and ascetics be exalted to the basic moral principle of a new universal religion which would inspire the oppressed masses with enthusiasm.

But this heavenly paradise does not open to the faithful by the mere fact of their death. We shall see that the kingdom of God, the capital of which is the New Jerusalem, can only be conquered and opened after arduous struggles with the powers of hell. But in the imagination of the early Christians these struggles were immediately ahead. John describes his book at the very beginning as the revelation of "things which must *shortly* come to pass ; an immediately afterwards, I, 3, he declares "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy ... for *the time is at hand.*" To the church in Philadelphia Christ sends the message: "Behold, I come *quickly.*" And in the last chapter the angel says he has shown John "things which must *shortly* be done" and gives him the order: "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is *at hand.*" And Christ himself says twice (XXII, 12, 20) "I come *quickly.*" The sequel will show us how soon this coming was expected.

The visions of the Apocalypse, which the author now shows us, are copied throughout,

and mostly literally, from earlier models, partly from the classical prophets of the Old Testament, particularly Ezekiel, partly from later Jewish apocalypses written after the fashion of the Book of Daniel and in particular from the Book of Henoch which had already been written at least in part. Criticism has shown to the smallest details where our John got every picture, every menacing sign, every plague sent to unbelieving humanity, in a word, the whole of the material for his book; so that he not only shows great poverty of mind but even himself proves that he never experienced, even in imagination the alleged ecstasies and visions which he describes.

The order of these visions is briefly as follows: First John sees God sitting on his throne holding in his hand a book with seven seals and before him the Lamb that has been slain and has risen from the dead (Christ) and is found worthy to open the seals of the book. The opening of the seals is followed by all sorts of miraculous menacing signs. When the fifth seal is opened John sees under the altar of God the souls of the martyrs of Christ that were slain for the word of God and who cry with a loud voice saying: "How long, O Lord, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And then white robes are given to them and they are told that they must rest for a little while yet, for more martyrs must be slain.

So here it is not yet a question of a "religion of love," of "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you," etc. Here undiluted revenge is preached, sound, honest revenge on the persecutors of the Christians. So it is in the whole of the book. The nearer the crisis comes, the heavier the plagues and punishments rain from the heavens and with all the more satisfaction John announces that the mass of humanity will not atone for their sins, that new scourges of God must lash them, that Christ must rule them with a rod of iron and tread the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, but that the impious still remain obdurate in their hearts. It is the natural feeling, free of all hypocrisy, that a fight is going on and that — ? *la guerre comme ? la guerre.*

When the seventh seal is opened there come seven angels with seven trumpets and each time one of them sounds his trumpet new horrors occur. After the seventh blast seven more angels come on to the scene with the seven vials of the wrath of God which they pour out upon the earth; still more plagues and punishments, mainly boring repetitions of what has already happened several times. Then comes the woman, Babylon the Great Whore, sitting arrayed in scarlet over the waters, drunk with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus, the great city of the seven hills that rules over all the kings of the earth. She is sitting on a beast with seven heads and ten horns. The seven heads represent the seven hills, and also seven "kings." Of those kings five are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come, and after him comes again one of the first five; he was wounded to death but was healed. He will reign over the world for 42 months or 3/2 years (half of a week of seven years) and will persecute the faithful to death and bring the rule of godlessness. But then follows the great final fight, the saints and the martyrs are avenged by the destruction of the Great Whore Babylon and all her followers, *i.e.*, the main mass of mankind; the devil is cast into the bottomless pit and shut up there for a thousand years during which Christ reigns with the martyrs risen from the dead. But after a thousand years the devil is freed again and there is another great battle of the spirits in which he is finally defeated. Then follows the second resurrection, when the other dead also arise and appear before the throne of judgment of God (not of Christ, be it noted) and the faithful will enter a new heaven, a new earth, and a new Jerusalem for life eternal.

As this whole monument is made up of exclusively pre-Christian Jewish material it presents almost exclusively Jewish ideas. Since things started to go badly in this world for the people of Israel, from the time of the tribute to the Assyrians and Babylonians, from the destruction of the two kingdoms of Israel and Juda to the bondage under Seleucis, that is from Isaiah to Daniel, in every dark period there were prophecies of a saviour. In Daniel,

XII, 1-3, there is even a prophecy about Michael, the guardian angel of the Jews, coming down on earth to save them from great trouble; many dead will come to life again, there will be a kind of last judgment and the teachers who have taught the people justice will shine like stars for all eternity. The only Christian point is the great stress laid on the imminent reign of Christ and the glory of the faithful, particularly the martyrs who have risen from the dead.

For the interpretation of these prophecies, as far as they refer to events of that time, we are indebted to German criticism, particularly Ewald, Lücke and Ferdinand Benary. It has been made accessible to non-theologians by Renan. We have already seen that Babylon, the Great Whore, stands for Rome, the city of seven hills. We are told in Chapter XVII, 9-11, about the beast on which she sits that:

"The seven heads" of the beast "are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even. he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

According to this the beast is Roman world domination, represented by seven caesars in succession, one of them having been mortally wounded and no longer reigning, but he will be healed and will return. It will be given unto him as the eighth to establish the kingdom of blasphemy and defiance of God. It will be given unto him

"to make war with the saints and to overcome them.... And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb.... And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six." (XII, 7-18.)

We merely note that boycott is mentioned here as one of the measures to be applied against the Christians by the Roman Empire — and is therefore patently an invention of the devil — and pass on to the question who this Roman emperor is who has reigned once before, was wounded to death and removed but will return as the eighth in the series in the role of Antichrist.

Taking Augustus as the first we have: 2. Tiberius, 3. Caligula, 4. Claudius, 5. Nero, 6. Galba. "Five are fallen, and one is." Hence, Nero is already fallen and Galba is. Galba ruled from June 9, 68 to January 15, 69. But immediately after he ascended the throne the legions of the Rhine revolted under Vitellius while other generals prepared military risings in other provinces. In Rome itself the praetorians rose, killed Galba and proclaimed Otho emperor.

From this we see that our Revelation was written under Galba. Probably towards the end of his rule. Or, at the latest, during the three months (up to April 15, 69) of the rule of Otho, "the seventh." But who is the eighth, who was and is not? That we learn from the number 666.

Among the Semites — Chaldeans and Jews — there was at the time a kind of magic based on the double meaning of letters. As about 300 years before our era Hebrew letters were also used as symbols for numbers: a=1, b=2, g=3, d=4, etc. The cabbala diviners added up the value of each letter of a name and sought from the sum to prophesy the future of the one who bore the name, e.g., by forming words or combinations of words of equal value. Secret words and the like were also expressed in this language of numbers. This art was given the Greek name *gematria*, geometry; the Chaldeans, who pursued this as a business and were called *mathematici* by Tacitus, were later expelled from Rome

under Claudius and again under Vitellius, presumably for "serious disorders."

It was by means of this mathematics that our number 666 appeared. It is a disguise for the name of one of the first five caesars. But besides the number 666, Irenaeus, at the end of the second century, knew another reading — 616, which, at all events, appeared at a time when the number puzzle was still widely known. The proof of the solution will be if it holds good for both numbers.

This solution was given by Ferdinand Benary of Berlin. The name is Nero. The number is based on **xxx xxxx** Neron Kesar, the Hebrew spelling of the Greek Nerôn Kaisar, Emperor Nero, authenticated by means of the Talmud and Palmyrian inscriptions. This inscription was found on coins of Nero's time minted in the eastern half of the empire. And so — n (*nun*)=50; r (*resh*)=200; v (*vau*) for o=6; n (*nun*)=50; k (*kaph*)=100; s (*samech*)=60; r (*resh*)=200. Total 666. If we take as a basis the Latin spelling *Nero Caesar* the second *nun*=50 disappears and we get 666 - 50 = 616, which is Irenaeus's reading.

In fact the whole Roman Empire suddenly broke into confusion in Galba's time. Galba himself marched on Rome at the head of the Spanish and Gallic legions to overthrow Nero, who fled and ordered an emancipated slave to kill him. But not only the praetorians in Rome plotted against Galba, the supreme commanders in the provinces did too; new pretendants to the throne appeared everywhere and prepared to march on Rome with their legions. The empire seemed doomed to civil war, its dissolution appeared imminent. Over and above all this the rumour spread, especially in the East, that Nero had not been killed but only wounded, that he had fled to the Parthians and was about to advance with an army over the Euphrates to begin another and more bloody rule of terror. Achaia and Asia in particular were terrified by such reports. And at the very time at which the Revelation must have been written there appeared a false Nero who settled with a fairly considerable number of supporters not far from Patmos and Asia Minor on the island of Kytnos in the Aegean Sea (now called Thermia), until he was killed while Otho still reigned. What was there to be astonished at in the fact that among the Christians, against whom Nero had begun the first great persecution, the view spread that he would return as the Antichrist and that his return and the intensified attempt at a bloody suppression of the new sect that it would involve would be the sign and prelude of the return of Christ, of the great victorious struggle against the powers of hell, of the thousand year kingdom "shortly" to be established, the confident expectation of which inspired the martyrs to go joyfully to death?

v

Christian and Christian-influenced literature in the first two centuries gives sufficient indication that the secret of the number 666 was then known to many. Irenaeus no longer knew it, but on the other hand he and many others up to the end of the third century also knew that the returning Nero was meant by the beast of the Apocalypse. This trace is then lost and the work which interests us is fantastically interpreted by religious-minded future-tellers; I myself as a child knew old people who, following the example of old Johann Albrecht Bengel, expected the end of the world and the last judgment in the year 1836. The prophecy was fulfilled, and to the very year. The victim of the last judgment, however, was not the sinful world, but the pious interpreters of the Revelation themselves. For in 1836 F. Benary provided the key to the number 666 and thus put a torturous end to all the prophetic calculations, that new *gematriah*.

Our John can only give a superficial description of the kingdom of heaven that is reserved for the faithful. The new Jerusalem is laid out on a fairly large scale, at least according to the conceptions of the time; it is 12,000 furlongs or, 2,227 square kilometres, so that its area is about five million square kilometres, more than half the size of the United States of America. And it is built of gold and all manner of precious stones. There God lives with his people, lightening them instead of the sun, and there shall be no more death, neither

sorrow, neither shall there be any more pain. And a pure river of water of life flows through the city, and on either side of the river are trees of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits and yielding fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree "serve for the hearing of the nations." (A kind of medicinal beverage, Renan thinks — *L'Antechrist*, p. 542.) Here the saints shall live for ever.

Such, as far as we know, was Christianity in Asia Minor, its main seat, about the year 68. No trace of any Trinity but, on the contrary, the old one and indivisible Jehovah of later Judaism which had exalted him from the national god of the Jews to the one and supreme God of heaven and earth, where he claims to rule over all nations, promising mercy to those who are converted and mercilessly smiting down the obdurate in accordance with the ancient *parcere subjectis uc debellare superbos*. "Pardon the humble and make war on the proud."] Hence, this God, in person, not Christ as in the later accounts of the Gospels and the Epistles, will judge at the last judgment. According to the Persian doctrine of emanation which was current in later Judaism, Christ the Lamb proceeds eternally from him as do also, but on a lower footing, the "seven spirits of God" who owe their existence to a misunderstanding of a poetical passage (Isaiah, XI, 2). All of them are subordinate to God, not God themselves or equal to him. The Lamb sacrifices itself to atone for the sins of the world and for that it is considerably promoted in heathen, for its voluntary death is credited as an extraordinary feat throughout the book, not as something which proceeds necessarily from its intrinsic nature. Naturally the whole heavenly court of elders, cherubim, angels and saints is there. In order to become a religion monotheism has ever had to make concessions to polytheism — since the time of the Zend-Avesta. With the Jews the decline to the sensuous gods of the heathens continued chronically until, after the exile, the heavenly court according to the Persian model adapted religion somewhat better to the people's fantasy, and Christianity itself, even after it had replaced the eternally self-equal immutable god of the Jews by the mysterious self-differentiating god of the Trinity, could find nothing to supplant the worship of the old gods but that of the saints; thus, according to Fallmerayer, the worship of Jupiter in Peloponnesus, Maina and Arcadia died out only about the ninth century. (*Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea*, I, p. 227.) Only the modern bourgeois period and its Protestantism did away with the saints again and at last took differentiated monotheism seriously.

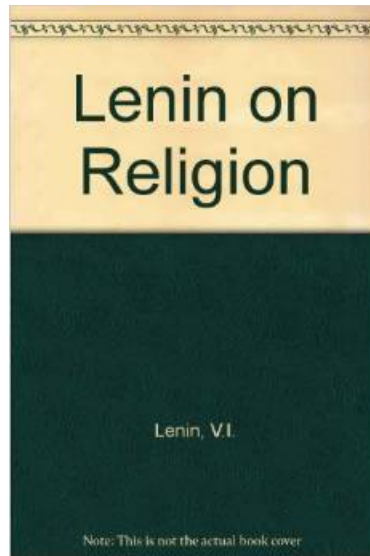
In the book there is just as little mention of original sin and justification by faith. The faith of these early militant communities is quite different from that of the later victorious church: side by side with the sacrifice of the Lamb, the imminent return of Christ and the thousand-year kingdom which is shortly to dawn form its essential content; this faith survives only through active propaganda, unrelenting struggle against the internal and external enemy, the proud profession of the revolutionary standpoint before the heathen judges and martyrdom, confident in victory.

We have seen that the author is not yet aware that he is something else than a Jew. Accordingly there is no mention of baptism in the whole book, just as many more facts indicate that baptism was instituted in the second period of Christianity. The 144,000 believing Jews are "sealed," not baptized. It is said of the saints in heaven and the faithful upon earth that they had washed themselves of their sins and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; there is no mention of the water of baptism.. The two prophets who precede the coming of the Antichrist in Chapter XI do not baptize; and according to XIX, 10, the testimony of Jesus is not baptism but the spirit of prophecy. Baptism should naturally have been mentioned in all these cases if it had already been in vigour; we may therefore conclude with almost absolute certainty that the author did not know of it, that it first appeared when the Christians finally separated from the Jews.

Neither does our author know any more about the second sacrament, the Eucharist. If in the Lutheran text Christ promises all the Thyatirans that remain firm in the faith to come

das Abendmahl halten with them, this creates a false impression. The Greek text has *deipn?sô* — I shall eat supper (with him), and the English bible translates this correctly: I shall *sup* with him. There is no question here of the Eucharist even as a mere commemoration meal.

There can be no doubt that this book, with its date so originally authenticated as the year 68 or 69, is the oldest of all Christian literature. No other is written in such barbaric language, so full of Hebraisms, impossible constructions and mistakes in grammar. Chapter I, verse 4, for example, says literally: "Grace be unto you ... from he that is being and that was and that is coming." Only professional theologians and other historians who have a stake in it now deny that the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are but later adaptations of writings which are now lost and whose feeble historical core is now unrecognizable in the maze of legend, that even the few Epistles supposed by Bruno Bauer to be "authentic" are either writings of a later date or at best adaptations of old works of unknown authors altered by additions and insertions. It is all the more important since we are here in possession of a book whose date of writing has been determined to the nearest month, a book that displays to us Christianity in its undeveloped form. This form stands in the same relation to the fourth century state religion with its fully evolved dogma and mythology as Tacitus's still unstable mythology of the Germans to the developed teaching of the gods of Edda as influenced by Christian and antique elements. The core of the universal religion is there, but it includes without any discrimination the thousand possibilities of development which became realities in the countless subsequent sects. And the reason why this oldest writing of the time when Christianity was coming into being is especially valuable for us is that it shows without any dilution what Judaism, strongly influenced by Alexandria, contributed to Christianity. All that comes later is western, Greco-Roman addition. It was only by the intermediary of the monotheistic Jewish religion that- the cultured monotheism of later Greek vulgar philosophy could clothe itself in the religious form in which alone it could grip the masses. But once this intermediary found, it could become a universal religion only in the Greco-Roman world, and that by further development in and merging with the thought material that world had achieved.



LENIN

ON RELIGION

collection of works arranged by Wolfgang Eggers
on February 1, 2015

* * *



LENIN ON RELIGION

- Writings and Speeches -

Socialism and Religion

December 3, 1905.



Leo Tolstoy as the Mirror of the Russian Revolution

1908



The Attitude of the Workers' Party to Religion

1909



Classes and Parties in Their Attitude to Religion and the Church

June 1909



Letter to MAXIM GORKY (1)

1913



Letter to MAXIM GORKY (2)

1913



On the Significance of Militant Materialism

12 March 1922



Volume 38
(Philosophical Notebooks)
1895 — 1916

Conspectus of Feuerbach's Book
Lectures on the Essence of Religion

1909



COLLECTION OF
SOME QUOTATIONS

We must be extremely careful in fighting religious prejudices; some people cause a lot of harm in this struggle by offending religious feelings. We must use propaganda and education. By lending too sharp an edge to the struggle we may only arouse popular resentment; such methods of struggle tend to perpetuate the division of the people along religious lines, whereas our strength lies in unity. The deepest source of religious prejudice is poverty and ignorance; and that is the evil we have to combat.

(V. I. LENIN)

* * *

In what sense do we reject ethics, reject morality?

In the sense given to it by the bourgeoisie, who based ethics on God's commandments. On this point we, of course, say that we do not believe in God, and that we know perfectly well that the clergy, the landowners and the bourgeoisie invoked the name of God so as to further their own interests as exploiters. Or, instead of basing ethics on the commandments of morality, on the commandments of God, they based it on idealist or semi-idealist phrases, which always amounted to something very similar to God's

commandments. (Lenin)

* * *

"Autocracy cannot do without its twin agents: a hangman and a priest, the first to suppress popular resistance by force, the second to sweeten and embellish the lot of the oppressed with empty promises of a heavenly kingdom."

— Vladimir Lenin

* * *

"Religion is the opium of the people—this dictum by Marx is the corner-stone of the whole Marxist outlook on religion. Marxism has always regarded all modern religions and churches, and each and every religious organisation, as instruments of bourgeois reaction that serve to defend exploitation and to befuddle the working class."

– V.I. Lenin, "The Attitude of the Workers' Party Towards Religion"

* * *

"[...] under no circumstances ought we to fall into the error of posing the religious question in an abstract, idealistic fashion, as an "intellectual" question unconnected with the class struggle, as is not infrequently done by the radical-democrats from among the bourgeoisie. It would be stupid to think that, in a society based on the endless oppression and coarsening of the worker masses, religious prejudices could be dispelled by purely propaganda methods. It would be bourgeois narrow-mindedness to forget that the yoke of religion that weighs upon mankind is merely a product and reflection of the economic yoke within society. No number of pamphlets and no amount of preaching can enlighten the proletariat, if it is not enlightened by its own struggle against the dark forces of capitalism. Unity in this really revolutionary struggle of the oppressed class for the creation of a paradise on earth is more important to us than unity of proletarian opinion on paradise in heaven."

– V.I. Lenin, "Socialism and Religion"

* * *

"That is the reason why we do not and should not set forth our atheism in our Programme; that is why we do not and should not prohibit proletarians who still retain vestiges of their old prejudices from associating themselves with our Party. We shall always preach the scientific world-outlook, and it is essential for us to combat the inconsistency of various "Christians". But that does not mean in the least that the religious question ought to be advanced to first place, where it does not belong at all; nor does it mean that we should allow the forces of the really revolutionary economic and political struggle to be split up on account of third-rate opinions or senseless ideas, rapidly losing all political importance,

rapidly being swept out as rubbish by the very course of economic development.”

– V.I. Lenin, “Socialism and Religion”

* * *

“[Engels polemicized against those who] gave prominence to religious divisions rather than political divisions, and diverted the attention of some sections of the working class and of the other democratic elements away from the urgent tasks of the class and revolutionary struggle to the most superficial and false bourgeois anti-clericalism. Accusing the would-be ultra-revolutionary Dühring of wanting to repeat Bismarck’s folly in another form, Engels insisted that the workers’ party should have the ability to work patiently at the task of organising and educating the proletariat, which would lead to the dying out of religion, and not throw itself into the gamble of a political war on religion.”

– V.I. Lenin, “The Attitude of the Workers’ Party Towards Religion”

* * *

“[...] Engels frequently condemned the efforts of people who desired to be “more left” or “more revolutionary” than the Social-Democrats, to introduce into the programme of the workers’ party *an explicit proclamation of atheism, in the sense of declaring war on religion*. Commenting in 1874 on the famous manifesto of the Blanquist fugitive Communards who were living in exile in London, Engels called their vociferous proclamation of war on religion a piece of stupidity, and stated that such a declaration of war was the best way to revive interest in religion and to prevent it from really dying out. Engels blamed the Blanquists for being unable to understand that only the class struggle of the working masses could, by comprehensively drawing the widest strata of the proletariat into conscious and revolutionary social *practice*, really free the oppressed masses from the yoke of religion, whereas to proclaim that war on religion was a political task of the workers’ party was just anarchistic phrase-mongering.

Religion must be declared a private affair. In these words socialists usually express their attitude towards religion. But the meaning of these words should be accurately defined to prevent any misunderstanding. We demand that religion be held a private affair so far as the state is concerned. But by no means can we consider religion a private affair so far as our Party is concerned. Religion must be of no concern to the state, and religious societies must have no connection with governmental authority. Everyone must be absolutely free to profess any religion he pleases, or no religion whatever, i.e., to be an atheist, which every socialist is, as a rule. Discrimination among citizens on account of their religious convictions is wholly intolerable. Even the bare mention of a citizen’s religion in official documents should unquestionably be eliminated. No subsidies should be granted to the established church nor state allowances made to ecclesiastical and religious societies. These should become absolutely free associations of like-minded citizens, associations independent of the state. Only the complete fulfilment of these demands can put an end to the shameful and accursed past when the church lived in feudal dependence on the state, and Russian citizens lived in feudal dependence on the established church, when medieval, inquisitorial laws (to this day remaining in our criminal codes and on our statute-books) were in existence and were applied, persecuting men for their belief or disbelief, violating men’s consciences, and linking cosy government jobs and government-derived incomes with the dispensation of this or that dope by the established church. Complete

separation of Church and State is what the socialist proletariat demands of the modern state and the modern church.

The Russian revolution must put this demand into effect as a necessary component of political freedom. In this respect, the Russian revolution is in a particularly favourable position, since the revolting officialism of the police-ridden feudal autocracy has called forth discontent, unrest and indignation even among the clergy. However abject, however ignorant Russian Orthodox clergymen may have been, even they have now been awakened by the thunder of the downfall of the old, medieval order in Russia. Even they are joining in the demand for freedom, are protesting against bureaucratic practices and officialism, against the spying for the police imposed on the “servants of God”. We socialists must lend this movement our support, carrying the demands of honest and sincere members of the clergy to their conclusion, making them stick to their words about freedom, demanding that they should resolutely break all ties between religion and the police. Either you are sincere, in which case you must stand for the complete separation of Church and State and of School and Church, for religion to be declared wholly and absolutely a private affair. Or you do not accept these consistent demands for freedom, in which case you evidently are still held captive by the traditions of the inquisition, in which case you evidently still cling to your cosy government jobs and government-derived incomes, in which case you evidently do not believe in the spiritual power of your weapon and continue to take bribes from the state. And in that case the class-conscious workers of all Russia declare merciless war on you.”

– V.I. Lenin, “The Attitude of the Workers’ Party Towards Religion”

* * *

Section Of The Programme Dealing With Religion

As regards religion, the policy of the R.C.P. is not to be confined to decreeing the separation of the church from the state and the school from the church, that is, to measures promised by bourgeois democrats but never fully carried out anywhere in the world because of the many and varied connections actually existing between capital and religious propaganda.

The Party’s object is to completely destroy the connection between the exploiting classes and organised religious propaganda and really liberate the working people from religious prejudices. For this purpose it must organise the most widespread scientific education and anti-religious propaganda. It is necessary, however, to take care to avoid hurting the religious sentiments of believers, for this only serves to increase religious fanaticism.

* * *

In the sphere of philosophy revisionism followed in the wake of bourgeois professorial “science”. The professors went “back to Kant”—and revisionism dragged along after the neo-Kantians. The professors repeated the platitudes that priests have uttered a thousand times against philosophical materialism—and the revisionists, smiling indulgently, mumbled (word for word after the latest Handbuch) that materialism had been “refuted” long ago. The professors treated Hegel as a “dead dog”, and while themselves preaching

idealism, only an idealism a thousand times more petty and banal than Hegel's, contemptuously shrugged their shoulders at dialectics—and the revisionists floundered after them into the swamp of philosophical vulgarisation of science, replacing “artful” (and revolutionary) dialectics by “simple” (and tranquil) “evolution”. The professors earned their official salaries by adjusting both their idealist and their “critical” systems to the dominant medieval “philosophy” (i.e., to theology)—and the revisionists drew close to them, trying to make religion a “private affair”, not in relation to the modern state, but in relation to the party of the advanced class.
(Lenin: Marxism and Revisionism, 1908)

* * *

"Expelling /aws from science means taking a step towards religion." (Lenin, Volume 20, page 202)

* * *



Materialism and Empirio-criticism

1908

Critical Comments on a Reactionary Philosophy

(selected Quotations concerning Religion)

Bogdanov, arguing against Plekhanov in 1906, wrote:

“. . . I cannot own myself a Machian in philosophy. In the general philosophical conception there is only one thing I borrowed from Mach—the idea of the neutrality of the elements of experience in relation to the ‘physical’ and ‘psychical’ and the dependence of these characteristics solely on the *connection* of experience.” (*Empirio-Monism*, Bk. III, St. Petersburg, 1906, p. xli.)

This is as though a religious man were to say—I cannot own myself a believer in religion, for there is “only one thing” I have borrowed from the believers—the belief in God. This “only one thing” which Bogdanov borrowed from Mach is the *basic error* of Machism, the basic falsity of its entire philosophy. Those deviations of Bogdanov’s from empirio-criticism

to which he himself attaches great significance are in fact of entirely secondary importance and amount to nothing more than inconsiderable private and individual differences between the various empirio-critacists who are approved by Mach and who approve Mach (we shall speak of this in greater detail later). Hence when Bogdanov was annoyed at being confused with the Machians he only revealed his failure to understand what *radically* distinguishes materialism from what is common to Bogdanov and to all other Machians. How Bogdanov developed, improved or worsened Machism is not important. What is important is that he has abandoned the materialist standpoint and has thereby inevitably condemned himself to confusion and idealist aberrations. (Volume 14, pages 57 - 58)



(Chapter Two: The Theory of Knowledge of Empirio-Criticism and of Dialectical Materialism. II)

4. Does Objective Truth Exist?

Volume 14, pages 125 - 126

Of course it is very gratifying that Bogdanov himself “does not include” social experience in regard to sprites and hobgoblins under objective experience. But this well-meant amendment in the spirit of anti-fideism by no means corrects the fundamental error of Bogdanov’s whole position. Bogdanov’s definition of objectivity and of the physical world completely falls to the ground, since the religious doctrine has “universal significance” to a greater degree than the scientific doctrine; the greater part of mankind cling to the former doctrine to this day. Catholicism has been “socially organised, harmonised and co-ordinated” by centuries of development; it “fits in” with the “chain of causality” in the most indisputable manner; for religions did not originate without cause, it is not by accident that they retain their hold over the masses under modern conditions, and it is quite “in the order of things” that professors of philosophy should adapt themselves to them. If this undoubtedly universally significant and undoubtedly highly-organised religious social experience does “not harmonise” with the “experience” of science, it is because there is a radical and fundamental difference between the two, which Bogdanov obliterated when he rejected objective truth. And however much Bogdanov tries to “correct” himself by saying that fideism, or clericalism, does not harmonise with science, the undeniable fact remains that Bogdanov’s denial of objective truth completely “harmonises” with fideism. Contemporary fideism does not at all reject science; all it rejects is the “exaggerated claims” of science, to wit, its claim to objective truth. If objective truth exists (as the materialists think), if natural science, reflecting the outer world in human “experience,” is alone capable of giving us objective truth, then all fideism is absolutely refuted. But if there is no objective truth, if truth (including scientific truth) is only an organising form of human experience, then this in itself is an admission of the fundamental premise of clericalism, the door is thrown open for it, and a place is cleared for the “organising forms” of religious experience.



5. A. Bogdanov's "Empirio-Monism"

Volume 14, pages 229 - 230

A philosophy which teaches that physical nature itself is a product, is a philosophy of the priests pure and simple. And its character is in no wise altered by the fact that personally Bogdanov emphatically repudiates all religion. Dühring was also an atheist; he even proposed to prohibit religion in his "socialitarian" order. Nevertheless, Engels was absolutely right in pointing out that Dühring's "system" could not make ends meet without religion. The same is true of Bogdanov, with the essential difference that the quoted passage is not a chance inconsistency but the very essence of his "empirio-monism" and of all his "substitution." If nature is a product, it is obvious that it can be a product only of some thing that is greater, richer, broader, mightier than nature, of something that exists; for in order to "produce" nature, it must exist independently of nature. That means that something exists *outside* nature, something which moreover *produces* nature. In plain language this is called God. The idealist philosophers have always sought to change this latter name, to make it more abstract, more vague and at the same time (for the sake of plausibility) to bring it nearer to the "psychical," as an "immediate complex," as the immediately given which requires no proof. Absolute Idea, Universal Spirit, World Will, "*general substitution*" of the psychical for the physical, are different formulations of one and the same idea. Every man knows, and science investigates, idea, mind, will, the psychical, as a function of the normally operating human brain. To divorce this function from substance organised in a definite way, to convert this function into a universal, general abstraction, to "substitute" this abstraction for the whole of physical nature, this is the raving of philosophical idealism and a mockery of science.

Materialism says that the "socially-organised experience of living beings" is a product of physical nature, a result of a long development of the latter, a development from a state of physical nature when no society, organisation, experience, or living beings existed or could have existed. Idealism says that physical nature is a product of this experience of living beings, and in saying this, idealism is equating (if not subordinating) nature to God. For God is undoubtedly a product of the socially-organised experience of living beings. No matter from what angle you look at it, Bogdanov's philosophy contains nothing but a reactionary muddle.

Bogdanov thinks that to speak of the social organisation of experience is "cognitive socialism" (Bk. III, p. xxxiv). This is insane twaddle. If socialism is thus regarded, the Jesuits are ardent adherents of "cognitive socialism," for the basis of their epistemology is divinity as "socially-organised experience." And there can be no doubt that Catholicism is a socially-organised experience; only, it reflects not objective truth (which Bogdanov denies, but which science reflects), but the exploitation of the ignorance of the masses by definite social classes.

But why speak of the Jesuits! We find Bogdanov's "cognitive socialism" in its entirety among the immanentists, so beloved of Mach. Leclair regards nature as the consciousness of "mankind" (*Der Realismus, etc.*, S. 55), and not of the individual. The bourgeois philosophers will serve you up any amount of such Fichtean cognitive socialism. Schuppe also emphasises *das generische, das gattungsmässige Moment des Bewusstseins* (*Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie*, Bd. XVII, S. 379-80), *i.e.*, the general, the generic factor of consciousness. To think that philosophical idealism vanishes when the consciousness of mankind is substituted for the consciousness of the individual, or the socially-organised experience for the experience of one person, is like thinking that capitalism vanishes when one capitalist is replaced by a joint-stock company.



(Chapter Five: The Recent Revolution in Natural Science and Philosophical Idealism)

8. The Essence and Significance of “Physical” Idealism

Volume 14, page 308

But what is highly characteristic is the way the drowning man clutches at a straw, the subtle means whereby representatives of the educated bourgeoisie artificially attempt to preserve, or to find a place for, the fideism which is engendered among the masses of the people by their ignorance and their downtrodden condition, and by the wild absurdities of capitalist contradictions.



(Chapter Six: Empirio-Criticism and Historical Materialism)

4. Parties in Philosophy and Philosophical Blockheads

Volume 14, page 339

Marx and Engels were partisans in philosophy from start to finish, they were able to detect the deviations from materialism and concessions to idealism and fideism in each and every “new” tendency. They therefore appraised Huxley *exclusively* from the standpoint of his materialist consistency. They therefore rebuked Feuerbach for not pursuing materialism to the end, for renouncing materialism because of the errors of individual materialists, for combating religion in order to renovate it or invent a new religion, for being unable, in sociology, to rid himself of idealist phraseology and become a materialist.

* * *

J. Dietzgen had not the slightest doubt that the “scientific priestcraft” of idealist philosophy is simply the antechamber to open priestcraft. “Scientific priestcraft,” he wrote, “is seriously endeavouring to assist religious priestcraft” (op. cit., p. 51). “In particular, the sphere of epistemology, the misunderstanding of the human mind, is such a louse-hole” (*Lausgrube*) in which both kinds of priests “lay their eggs.” “Graduated flunkeys,” who with their talk of “ideal blessings” stultify the people by their tortuous (*geschraubte*) “idealism” (p. 53)—that is J. Dietzgen’s opinion of the professors of philosophy. “Just as the antipodes of the good God is the devil, so the professorial priest (*Kathederpfaffen*) has his opposite pole in the materialist.” The materialist theory of knowledge is “a universal weapon against religious belief” (p. 55), and not only against the “notorious, formal and common religion of the priests, but also against the most refined, elevated professorial religion of muddled (*benebelter*) idealists” (p. 58).

Dietzgen was ready to prefer “religious honesty” to the “half-heartedness” of freethinking professors (p. 60), for “there at least there is a system,” there we find integral people, people who do not separate theory from practice. For the Herr Professors “philosophy is not a science, but a means of defence against Social-Democracy . . .” (p. 107). “All who call themselves philosophers, professors, and university lecturers are, despite their

apparent freethinking, more or less immersed in superstition and mysticism . . . and in relation to Social-Democracy constitute a single . . . reactionary mass” (p. 108). “Now, in order to follow the true path, without being led astray by all the religious and philosophical gibberish (*Welsch*), it is necessary to study the falsest of all false paths (*der Holzweg der Holzwege*), philosophy” (p. 103).

Not a single one of these professors, who are capable of making very valuable contributions in the special fields of chemistry, history, or physics, *can be trusted one iota* when it comes to philosophy. Why? For the same reason that *not a single* professor of political economy, who may be capable of very valuable contributions in the field of factual and specialised investigations, can be trusted *one iota* when it comes to the general theory of political economy. For in modern society the latter is as much a *partisan* science as is *epistemology*. Taken as a whole, the professors of economics are nothing but learned salesmen of the capitalist class, while the professors of philosophy are learned salesmen of the theologians.

The task of Marxists in both cases is to be able to master and adapt the achievements of these “salesmen” (for instance, you will not make the slightest progress in the investigation of new economic phenomena unless you have recourse to the works of these salesmen) and *to be able* to lop off their reactionary tendency, to pursue your *own* line and to combat the *whole alignment* of forces and classes hostile to us. And this is just what our Machians were unable to do, they *slavishly* follow the lead of the reactionary professorial philosophy. “Perhaps we have gone astray, but we are seeking,” wrote Lunacharsky in the name of the authors of the *Studies*. The trouble is that it is not *you* who are seeking, but you who are *being sought* ! You do not go with your, *i.e.*, Marxist (for you want to be Marxists), standpoint to every change in the bourgeois philosophical fashion; the fashion comes to you, foists upon you its new surrogates got up in the idealist taste, one day *à la* Ostwald, the next day *à la* Mach, and the day after *à la* Poincaré. These silly “theoretical” devices (“energetics,” “elements,” “introjections,” etc.) in which you so naïvely believe are confined to a narrow and tiny school, while the ideological and *social tendency* of these devices is immediately spotted by the Wards, the neo-criticists, the immanentists, the Lopatins and the pragmatists, and *it serves their purposes*. The infatuation for empirio-criticism and “physical” idealism passes as rapidly as the infatuation for Neo-Kantianism and “physiological” idealism; but fideism takes its toll from every such infatuation and modihes its devices in a thousand ways for the benefit of philosophical idealism.

The attitude towards religion and the attitude towards natural science excellently illustrate the *actual* class use made of empirio-criticism by bourgeois reactionaries.

Take the first question. Do you think it is an accident that in a collective work directed *against* the philosophy of Marxism Lunacharsky went so far as to speak of the “deification of the higher human potentialities,” of “religious atheism,” etc.? If you do, it is only because the Russian Machians have not informed the public correctly regarding the *whole* Machian current in Europe and the attitude of this current to religion. Not only is this attitude in no way similar to the attitude of Marx, Engels, J. Dietzgen and even Feuerbach, but it is the *very opposite*, beginning with Petzoldt’s statement to the effect that empirio-criticism “contradicts neither theism nor atheism” (*Einführung in die Philosophie der reinen Erfahrung*, Bd. I, S. 351), or Mach’s declaration that “religious opinion is a private affair” (French trans., p. 434), and ending with the *explicit fideism*, the explicitly *arch-reactionary* views of Cornelius, who praises Mach and whom Mach praises, of Carus and of all the immanentists. The neutrality of a *philosopher* in this question *is in itself* servility to fideism, and Mach and Avenarius, because of the very premises of their epistemology, do not and cannot rise above neutrality.

Once you deny objective reality, given us in sensation, you have already lost every one of your weapons against fideism, for you have slipped into agnosticism or subjectivism—and that is all fideism wants. If the perceptual world is objective reality, then the door is closed to every other “reality” or quasi-reality (remember that Bazarov believed the “realism” of the immanentists, who declare God to be a “real concept”). If the world is matter in motion, matter can and must be infinitely studied in the infinitely complex and detailed manifestations and ramifications of *this* motion, the motion of *this* matter; but beyond it, beyond the “physical,” external world, with which everyone is familiar, there can be nothing. And the hostility to materialism and the showers of abuse heaped on the materialists are all in the order of things in civilised and democratic Europe. All this is going on to this day. All this is being *concealed* from the public by the Russian Machians, who have *not once* attempted even simply to compare the attacks made on materialism by Mach, Avenarius, Petzoldt and Co., with the statements made *in favour* of materialism by Feuerbach, Marx, Engels and J. Dietzgen.



(Chapter Six: Empirio-Criticism and Historical Materialism)

5. Ernst Haeckel and Ernst Mach

Volume 14, page 350

The point is that Haeckel’s philosophical naïvete, his lack of definite partisan aims, his anxiety to respect the prevailing philistine prejudice against materialism, his personal conciliatory tendencies and proposals concerning religion, all this gave the greater salience to *the general spirit* of his book, the *ineradicability* of natural-scientific materialism and its *irreconcilability* with *all* official professorial philosophy and theology. Haeckel personally does not seek a rupture with the philistines, but what he expounds with such unshakeably naïve conviction is *absolutely* incompatible with any of the shades of prevailing philosophical idealism. All these shades, from the crudest reactionary theories of a Hartmann, to Petzoldt, who fancies himself the latest, most progressive and advanced of the positivists, and the empirio-criticist Mach—all are agreed that natural-scientific materialism is “metaphysics,” that the recognition of an objective reality underlying the theories and conclusions of science is sheer “naïve realism,” etc. And for this doctrine, “sacred” to *all* professorial philosophy and theology, every page of Haeckel is a *slap in the face*.



Conclusion

Volume 14, page 357

There are four standpoints from which a Marxist must proceed to form a judgment of empirio-criticism.

First and foremost, the theoretical foundations of this philosophy must be compared with those of dialectical materialism. Such a comparison, to which the first three chapters were

devoted, reveals, *along the whole line* of epistemological problems, the *thoroughly reactionary* character of empirio-criticism, which uses new artifices, terms and subtleties to disguise the old errors of *idealism and agnosticism*. Only utter ignorance of the nature of philosophical materialism generally and of the nature of Marx's and Engels' dialectical method can lead one to speak of "combining" empirio-criticism and Marxism.

Secondly, the place of empirio-criticism, as one very small school of specialists in philosophy, in relation to the other modern schools of philosophy must be determined. Both Mach and Avenarius started with Kant and, leaving him, proceeded not towards materialism, but in the opposite direction, towards Hume and Berkeley. Imagining that he was "purifying experience" generally, Avenarius was in fact only purifying agnosticism of Kantianism. The whole school of Mach and Avenarius is moving more and more definitely towards idealism, hand in hand with one of the most reactionary of the idealist schools, *viz.*, the so-called immanentists.

Thirdly, the indubitable connection between Machism and one school in one branch of modern science must be borne in mind. The vast majority of scientists, both generally and in this special branch of science in question, *viz.*, physics, are invariably on the side of materialism. A minority of new physicists, however, influenced by the breakdown of old theories brought about by the great discoveries of recent years, influenced by the crisis in the new physics, which has very clearly revealed the relativity of our knowledge, have, owing to their ignorance of dialectics, slipped into idealism by way of relativism. The physical idealism in vogue today is as reactionary and transitory an infatuation as was the fashionable physiological idealism of the recent past.

Fourthly, behind the epistemological scholasticism of empirio-criticism one must not fail to see the struggle of parties in philosophy, a struggle which in the last analysis reflects the tendencies and ideology of the antagonistic classes in modern society. Recent philosophy is as partisan as was philosophy two thousand years ago. The contending parties are essentially, although it is concealed by a pseudo-erudite quackery of new terms or by a feeble-minded non-partisanship, materialism and idealism. The latter is merely a subtle, refined form of fideism, which stands fully armed, commands vast organisations and steadily continues to exercise influence on the masses, turning the slightest vacillation in philosophical thought to its own advantage. The objective, class role of empirio-criticism consists entirely in rendering faithful service to the fideists in their struggle against materialism in general and historical materialism in particular.



The Vperyodists and the *Vperyod* Group

1914, Volume 20, pages 487-493

Machism is the philosophy of Mach and Avenarius, modified by Bogdanov. It is advocated by Bogdanov, Lunacharsky and Volsky, and *is concealed* in the *Vperyod* platform under the pseudonym of "proletarian philosophy". In effect, this philosophy is a species of philosophical idealism, i. e., a subtle defence of religion, and it was no accident that Lunacharsky has slipped from this philosophy into advocating a blending of scientific socialism with religion. Even today, A. Bogdanov, in a number of "new" books, defends this utterly anti-Marxist and utterly reactionary philosophy, which both the Menshevik G. V. Plekhanov and the Bolshevik V. Ilyin have strongly opposed.



Karl Marx

A Brief Biographical Sketch With an Exposition of Marxism

The Marxist Doctrine

1914

In his *Ludwig Feuerbach*—which expounded his own and Marx’s views on Feuerbach’s philosophy, and was sent to the printers after he had re-read an old manuscript Marx and himself had written in 1844-45 on Hegel, Feuerbach and the materialist conception of history—Engels wrote:

“The great basic question of all philosophy, especially of more recent philosophy, is the relation of thinking and being... spirit to Nature... which is primary, spirit or Nature.... The answers which the philosophers gave to this question split them into two great camps. Those who asserted the primary of spirit to Nature and, therefore, in the last instance, assumed world creation in some form or other... comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded Nature as primary, belonged to the various schools of materialism.”

Any other use of the concepts of (philosophical) idealism and materialism leads only to confusion. Marx decidedly rejected, not only idealism, which is always linked in one way or another with religion, but also the views—especially widespread in our day—of Hume and Kant, agnosticism, criticism, and positivism in their various forms; he considered that philosophy a “reactionary” concession to idealism, and at best a “shame-faced way of surreptitiously accepting materialism, while denying it before the world.”



The Collapse of the Second International

Chapter V

1915

The Lord help us, the Lord have mercy on us! “What is a philistine?” Lassalle used to ask, and answered by quoting the words of the well-known poet: “A philistine is a gut void of everything but fear and hope that God will have mercy on him.”

Kautsky has degraded Marxism to unparalleled prostitution and has turned into a real churchman. The latter tries to *persuade* the capitalists to adopt peaceful democracy—and

calls this dialectics: if at first, he argues, there was Free Trade, and then arrived the monopolies and imperialism, why should there not be “ultra-imperialism”, and then Free Trade again? The churchman *consoles* the oppressed masses by depicting the blessings this ultra-imperialism will bring, although he has not even the courage to say whether it can be “achieved”! Feuerbach was right when, in reply to those who defended religion on the ground that it consoles the people, he indicated the reactionary significance of consolation: whoever consoles the slave instead of arousing him to rise up against slavery is aiding the slaveowner.

All oppressing classes stand in need of two social functions to safeguard their rule: the function of the hangman and the function of the priest. The hangman is required to quell the protests and the indignation of the oppressed; the priest is required to console the oppressed, to depict to them the prospects of their sufferings and sacrifices being mitigated (this is particularly easy to do without guaranteeing that these prospects will be “achieved”), while preserving class rule, and thereby to reconcile them to class rule, win them away from revolutionary action, undermine their revolutionary spirit and destroy their revolutionary determination. Kautsky has turned Marxism into a most hideous and stupid counter-revolutionary theory, into the lowest kind of clericalism.



The Defeat of One's Own Government in the Imperialist War

1915

The war cannot but evoke among the masses the most turbulent sentiments, which upset the usual sluggish state of mass mentality. Revolutionary tactics are *impossible* if they are not adjusted to these new turbulent sentiments.

What are the main currents of these turbulent sentiments? They are: (1) Horror and despair. Hence, a growth of religious feeling. Again the churches are crowded, the reactionaries joyfully declare. “Wherever there is suffering there is religion,” says the arch-reactionary Barr s. He is right, too. (2) Hatred of the “enemy”, a sentiment that is carefully fostered by the bourgeoisie (not so much by the priests), and is of economic and political value *only to the bourgeoisie*. (3) Hatred of one's *own* government and one's *own* bourgeoisie—the sentiment of all class-conscious workers who understand, on the one hand, that war is a “continuation of the politics” of imperialism, which they counter by a “continuation” of their hatred of their class enemy, and, on the other hand, that “a war against war” is a banal phrase unless it means a revolution against their *own* government. Hatred of one's own government and one's own bourgeoisie cannot be aroused unless their defeat is desired; one *cannot* be a sincere opponent of a civil (i.e., class) truce without arousing hatred of one's own government and bourgeoisie!



ON THE STATE

1919

I have already said that you are not likely to find another question which has been so confused, deliberately and unwittingly, by representatives of bourgeois science, philosophy, jurisprudence, political economy and journalism, as the question of the state. To this day it is very often confused with religious questions; not only those professing religious doctrines (it is quite natural to expect it of them), but even people who consider themselves free from religious prejudice, very often confuse the specific question of the state with questions of religion and endeavour to build up a doctrine—very often a complex one, with an ideological, philosophical approach and argumentation—which claims that the state is something divine, something supernatural, that it is a certain force by virtue of which mankind has lived, that it is a force of divine origin which confers on people, or can confer on people, or which brings with it something that is not of man, but is given him from without. And it must be said that this doctrine is so closely bound up with the interests of the exploiting classes—the landowners and the capitalists—so serves their interests, has so deeply permeated all the customs, views and science of the gentlemen who represent the bourgeoisie, that you will meet with vestiges of it on every hand, even in the view of the state held by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, although they are convinced that they can regard the state with sober eyes and reject indignantly the suggestion that they are under the sway of religious prejudices. This question has been so confused and complicated because it affects the interests of the ruling classes more than any other question (yielding place in this respect only to the foundations of economic science). The doctrine of the state serves to justify social privilege, the existence of exploitation, the existence of capitalism—and that is why it would be the greatest mistake to expect impartiality on this question, to approach it in the belief that people who claim to be scientific can give you a purely scientific view on the subject. In the question of the state, in the doctrine of the state, in the theory of the state, when you have become familiar with it and have gone into it deeply enough, you will always discern the struggle between different classes, a struggle which is reflected or expressed in a conflict of views on the state, in the estimate of the role and significance of the state.



Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution

1921

Take religion, or the denial of rights to women, or the oppression and inequality of the non-Russian nationalities. These are all problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The

vulgar petty-bourgeois democrats talked about them for eight months. In not a *single* one of the most advanced countries in the world have these questions been *completely* settled on *bourgeois-democratic* lines.



Volume 38
(Philosophical Notebooks)
1895 — 1916

THE HOLY FAMILY, OR CRITIQUE OF CRITICAL CRITICISM

(36) “Accepting the relations of private property as human and rational, political economy comes into continual contradiction with its basic premise, private property, a contradiction analogous to that of the theologian, who constantly gives a human interpretation to religious conceptions and by that very fact comes into constant conflict with his basic premise, the superhuman character of religion.

* * *

How far the sharpness of Bauer’s division into Geist and Masse goes is evident from this phrase that Marx attacks: “In the mass, not somewhere else, is the true enemy of the spirit to be sought.” (121)

Marx answers this by saying that the enemies of progress are the products endowed with independent being (*verselbständigten*) of the self-abasement of the mass, although they are not ideal but material products existing in an outward way. As early as 1789, Loustallot’s journal had the motto:

*Les grands ne nous paraissent grands
Que parceque nous sommes à genoux.
Levons-nous!*

But in order to rise (122), says Marx, it is not enough to do so in thought, in the idea.

“Yet *Absolute Criticism* has learnt from Hegel’s *Phenomenology* at least the *art* of converting *real objective* chains that exist *outside me* into *merely ideal*, *merely subjective* chains existing *merely within me*, and thus of converting all *exterior* palpable struggles into pure struggles of thought.” (122)

In this way it is possible to prove, says Marx bitinglly, the pre-established harmony between Critical Criticism and the censorship, to present the censor not as a police hangman (Polizeischarge) but as my own personified sense of tact and moderation.

Preoccupied with its “Geist,” Absolute Criticism does not investigate whether the phrase, self-deception and pithlessness (Kernlosigkeit) are not in its own empty (windig) pretensions.

“The situation is the same with ‘*progress*.’ In spite of the pretensions of ‘*progress*,’ continual *retrogressions* and *circular movements* are to be observed. Far from suspecting that the category ‘*progress*’ is completely empty and abstract, Absolute Criticism is instead so ingenious as to recognise ‘*progress*’ as being absolute, in order to explain retrogression by assuming a ‘*personal adversary*’ of progress, *the mass*.” (123-124)

“All communist and socialist writers proceeded from the observation that, on the one hand, even the most favourable brilliant deeds seemed to remain without brilliant results, to end in trivialities, and, on the other, all *progress of the spirit* had so far been progress against the *mass of mankind*, driving it to an ever more *dehumanised* situation. They therefore declared “*progress*” (see *Fourier*) to be an inadequate abstract *phrase*; they assumed (see *Owen*, among others) a fundamental flaw in the civilised world; that is why they subjected the *real* bases of contemporary society to incisive *criticism*. This communist criticism immediately had its counterpart in practice in the movement of the *great mass*, in opposition to which the previous historical development had taken place. One must be acquainted with the studiousness, the craving for knowledge, the moral energy and the unceasing urge for development of the French and English workers to be able to form an idea of the *human nobility* of this movement.” (124-125)

“What a fundamental superiority over the communist writers it is not to have traced spiritlessness, indolence, superficiality and self-complacency to their origin but to have denounced them *morally* and *exposed* them as the



opposite of the spirit, of progress!” (125)

“The relation between ‘spirit and mass,’ however, has still a *hidden* sense, which will be completely revealed in the course of the reasoning. We only make mention of it here. That relation *discovered* by Herr Bruno is, in fact, nothing but a *critically caricatured culmination of Hegel’s conception of history*; which, in turn, is nothing but the speculative expression of the *Christian-Germanic* dogma of the antithesis between *spirit* and *matter*, between *God* and the *world*. This antithesis is expressed in history, in the human world itself, in such a way that a few chosen *individuals* as the *active* spirit stand opposed to the rest of mankind, as the *spiritless mass*, as *matter*.” (126)

And Marx points out that Hegel’s conception of history (Geschichtsauffassung) presupposes an abstract and absolute spirit, the embodiment of which is the mass. Parallel with Hegel’s doctrine there developed in France the theory of the *Doctrinaires* (126) who proclaimed the sovereignty of reason in opposition to the sovereignty of the people in order to exclude the mass and rule alone (allein).

Hegel is “guilty of a double half-heartedness” (127):
1) while declaring that philosophy is the being of the Absolute Spirit, he does not declare this the spirit of the philosophical individual; 2) he makes the Absolute Spirit the creator of history only in appearance (nur zum Schein), only post festum, only in consciousness.

Bruno does away with this half-heartedness; he declares that *Criticism* is the Absolute Spirit and the creator of history in actual fact.

“On the one side stands the Mass, as the passive, spiritless, unhistorical *material* element of history; on the other—the *Spirit, Criticism*, Herr Bruno and Co. as the active element from which all *historical* action arises. The act of the transformation of society is reduced to the *brain work* of Critical Criticism.” (128)

As the first example of “the campaigns of Absolute Criticism against the Mass,” Marx adduces Bruno Bauer’s attitude to the *Judenfrage*, and he refers to the refutation of Bauer in *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*.

“One of the chief pursuits of Absolute Criticism consists

in first bringing all questions of the day into *their right setting*. For it does not answer, of course, the *real* questions—but substitutes *quite different* ones.... It thus distorted the ‘Jewish question,’ too, in such a way that it did not need to investigate *political emancipation*, which is the subject-matter of that question, but could instead be satisfied with a criticism of the Jewish religion and a description of the Christian-German state.

“This method, too, like all Absolute Criticism’s originalities, is the repetition of a *speculative* verbal trick. *Speculative* philosophy, in particular *Hegel’s* philosophy, must transpose all questions from the form of common sense to the form of speculative reason and convert the real question into a *speculative* one to be able to answer it. Having distorted *my* questions and having, like the catechism, placed *its own* questions into my mouth, speculative philosophy could, of course, again like the catechism, have its ready answer to each of my questions.” (134-135)

In Section 2a (...“‘Criticism’ and ‘Feuerbach’—Damnation of Philosophy...”)—pp. 138-142—written by Engels, one finds Feuerbach warmly praised. In regard to “‘Criticism’s” attacks on philosophy, its contrasting to philosophy the actual wealth of human relations, the “immense content of history,” the “significance of man,” etc., etc., right up to the phrase: “the mystery of the system revealed,” Engels says:

“But who, then, revealed the mystery of the ‘system’? *Feuerbach*. Who annihilated the dialectics of concepts, the war of the gods known to the philosophers along? *Feuerbach*. Who substituted for the old rubbish and for ‘infinite self-consciousness’ not, it is true, ‘*the significance of man*’—as though man had another significance than that of being man—but still ‘*Man*’? *Feuerbach*, and only *Feuerbach*. And he did more. Long ago he did away with the very categories that ‘*Criticism*’ now wields—the ‘real wealth of human relations, the immense content of history, the struggle of history, the fight of the mass against the spirit,’ etc., etc.

“Once man is conceived as the essence, the basis of all human activity and situations, only ‘*Criticism*’ can invent *new categories* and transform *man* himself again into a category and into the principle of a whole series of categories as it is doing now. It is true that in so doing it takes the only road to salvation that remained for frightened and persecuted *theological* inhumanity. *History* does *nothing*, it ‘possesses *no* immense wealth,’ it ‘wages *no* battles.’ It is

man and not ‘history,’ real living man, that does all that, that possesses and fights; ‘history’ is not, as it were, a person apart, using man as a means to achieve *its own* aims; history is *nothing but* the activity of man pursuing his aims. If *Absolute Criticism*, after *Feuerbach’s* brilliant reasoning, still dares to reproduce the old trash in a new form...” (139-140) etc.—then, Engels says, this fact alone is sufficient to assess the Critical naïveté, etc.

And after this, in regard to the opposition of Spirit and “Matter” (Criticism calls the mass “*matter*”), Engels says:

“Is Absolute Criticism then not *genuinely Christian-German*? After the old contradiction between spiritualism

and materialism has been fought out on all sides and overcome once for all by *Feuerbach*, ‘Criticism’ again makes a basic dogma of it in its ugliest form and gives the victory to the ‘*Christian-German spirit*.’” (141)

In regard to Bauer’s words: “To the extent of the progress now made by the Jews in theory, they are emancipated; to the extent that they wish to be free, they are free” (142), Marx says:

“From this proposition one can immediately measure the critical gap which separates *mass* profane communism and socialism from *absolute* socialism. The first proposition of profane socialism rejects emancipation *in mere theory* as an illusion and for *real* freedom it demands besides the idealistic ‘*will*,’ very tangible, very material conditions. How low ‘*the Mass*’ is in comparison with holy Criticism, the Mass which considers material, practical upheavals necessary, merely to win the time and means required to deal with ‘*theory*!’” (142)

Further, (pp. 143-167), the most boring, incredibly caviling criticism of the *Literary Gazette*, a sort of word by word commentary of a “blasting” type. Absolutely nothing of interest.

The end of the section ((b) The Jewish Question No. II. pp. 142-185)—pp. **167-185** provides an interesting answer by Marx to Bauer on the latter’s defence of his book *Judenfrage*, which was criticised in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*. (Marx constantly refers to the latter.) Marx here

sharply and clearly stresses the basic principles of his entire world outlook.

“Religious questions of the day have at present a social significance” (167)—this was already pointed out in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*. It characterised the “*real* position of Judaism in civil society today.” “Herr Bauer explains the *real Jew* by the *Jewish religion*, instead of explaining the mystery of the Jewish religion by the *real Jew*.” (167-168)

Herr Bauer does not suspect “that real, worldly Judaism, and hence religious Judaism too, is being continually produced by present-day civil life and finds its final development in the *money system*.”

It was pointed out in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* that the development of Judaism has to be sought “in der kommerziellen und industriellen Praxis”(169), —that practical Judaism “vollendete Praxis der christlichen Welt selber ist.”(169)

“It was proved that the task of abolishing the essence of Judaism is in truth the task of abolishing *Judaism in civil society*, abolishing the inhumanity of the present-day practice of life, the summit of which is the *money system*.” (169)

In demanding freedom, the Jew demands something that in no way contradicts political freedom (172)—it is a question of *political* freedom.

“Herr Bauer was shown that it is by no means contrary to political emancipation to *divide* man into the non-religious *citizen* and the religious *private individual*.” (172)

And immediately following the above:

“He was shown that as the state emancipates itself from religion by emancipating itself from *state religion* and leaving religion to itself within civil society, so the individual emancipates himself *politically* from religion by regarding it no longer as a public matter but as a *private matter*. Finally, it was shown that the terroristic attitude of the French *Revolution* to *religion*, far from refuting this conception, bears it out.” (172)

The Jews desire allgemeine Menschenrechte.

“In the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* it was expounded to Herr Bauer that this ‘free humanity’ and

the 'recognition' of it are nothing but the recognition of the *selfish, civil individual* and of the *uncurbed* movement of the spiritual and material elements which are the content of his life situation, the content of civil life *today*; that the *Rights of Man* do not, therefore, free man from religion but give him *freedom of religion*; that they do not free him from property, but procure for him *freedom of property*; that they do not free him from the filth of gain but give him *freedom of choice of a livelihood*.

"He was shown that the *recognition of the Rights of Man by the modern state* means nothing more than did the *recognition of slavery by the ancient state*. In fact, just as the ancient state had slavery as its *natural basis*, the *modern state* has civil society and the *man* of civil society, i.e., the independent man connected with other men only by the ties of private interest and *unconscious* natural necessity, the *slave* of labour for gain and of his own as well as other men's *selfish* need. The modern state has recognised this as its natural basis as such in the *universal Rights of Man*." (175)

"The Jew has all the more right to the recognition of his 'free humanity'" "as 'free civil society' is of a thoroughly commercial and Jewish nature and the Jew is a necessary link in it." (176)

That the "Rights of Man" are not inborn, but arose historically, was known already to Hegel. (176)

Pointing out the contradictions of *constitutionalism*, "Criticism" does not generalise them (faßt nicht den allgemeinen Widerspruch des Constitutionalismus). (177-178) If it had done so, it would have proceeded from constitutional monarchy to the *democratic representative state*, to the perfect modern state. (178)

Industrial activity is not abolished by the abolition of privileges (of the guilds, corporations, etc.); on the contrary it develops more strongly. Property in land is not abolished by the abolition of privileges of landownership, "but, rather, first begins its universal movement with the abolition of its privileges and through the free division and free alienation of land." (180)

Trade is not abolished by the abolition of trade privileges but only then does it become genuinely free trade, so also

with religion, "so religion develops in its *practical* univer-



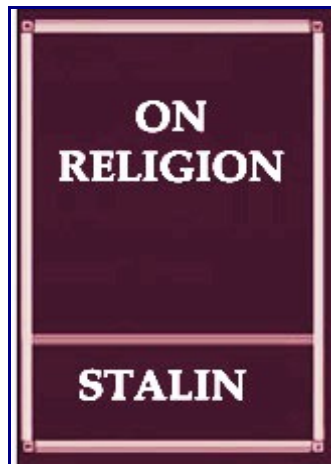
sality only where there is no *privileged* religion (one calls to mind the North American States).”



...“Precisely the *slavery of bourgeois society* is in *appearance* the greatest *freedom....*” (181)

To the dissolution (Auflösung) (182) of the *political* existence of religion (the abolition of the state church), of *property* (the abolition of the property qualification for electors), etc.—corresponds their “most vigorous life, which now obeys its own laws undisturbed and develops into its full scope.”

Anarchy is the law of bourgeois society emancipated from privileges. (182-183)



STALIN ON RELIGION

collection of quotations
arranged by Wolfgang Eggers

February 1, 2015



**Stalin: *"The Russian Social-Democratic Party and its Immediate Tasks"* -
November-December 1901**

The working class is not the only class that is groaning under the yoke of the tsarist regime.

Groaning are the many millions of Russian non-conformists who wish to believe and worship in accordance with the dictates of their conscience and not with the wishes of the orthodox priests.

But the demands of the students for freedom of education, for non-interference in internal university life, are too narrow for the broad social movement. To unite all the participants in this movement a banner is needed, a banner that will be understood and cherished by all and will combine all demands. Such a banner is one inscribed: Overthrow the autocracy. Only on the ruins of the autocracy will it be possible to build a social system that will be based on government by the people and ensure freedom of education, freedom to strike, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom for nationalities, etc., etc. Only such a system will provide the people with means to protect themselves against all oppressors, against the grasping merchants and capitalists, the clergy and the nobility;

only such a system will open a free road to a better future, to the unhindered struggle for the establishment of the socialist system.



**J. V. Stalin: "*The Provisional Revolutionary Government and Social-Democracy*"
- August 15, 1905**

What must the provisional government do?

It must organise peasant committees which will settle the land question in the countryside. It must also disestablish the church and secularise education. . . .



J. V. Stalin: "*Two Clashes*" (Concerning January 9) - January 7, 1906

In discussing the January clash we said that it lacked revolutionary consciousness; as regards the December clash we must say that this consciousness existed. Eleven months of revolutionary storm had sufficiently opened the eyes of the militant proletariat of Russia, and the slogans: Down with the autocracy! Long live the democratic republic! became the slogans of the day, the slogans of the masses. This time you saw no church banners, no icons, no portraits of the tsar—instead, red flags fluttered and portraits of Marx and Engels were carried. This time you heard no singing of psalms or of "God Save the Tsar"—instead, the strains of the *Marseillaise* and the *Varshavyanka* deafened the tyrants.

Thus, in respect to revolutionary consciousness, the December clash differed radically from the January clash.

The January uprising was "led" mainly by the Gapon. In this respect the December uprising had the advantage in that the Social-Democrats were at the head of it.

In short, *a united party, an uprising organised by the Party, and a policy of offensive* — this is what we need today to achieve the victory of the uprising.



J. V. Stalin: "*Anarchism Or Socialism ?*" December, 1906 — January, 1907

How do the Anarchists look upon the dialectical method?

In the opinion of the Anarchists, "dialectics is metaphysics," and as they "want to free science from metaphysics, philosophy from theology," they repudiate the dialectical method (see *Nobati*, Nos. 3 and 9. Sh. G. See also Kropotkin's *Science and Anarchism*).

Metaphysics recognises various nebulous dogmas, such as, for example, the "unknowable," the "thing-in-itself," and, in the long run, passes into empty theology. In contrast to Proudhon and Spencer, Engels combated these dogmas with the aid of the dialectical method (see *Ludwig Feuerbach*); but the Anarchists — the disciples of Proudhon and Spencer — tell us that Proudhon and Spencer were scientists, whereas Marx and Engels were metaphysicians!

One of two things: either the Anarchists are deceiving themselves, or else they do not know what they are talking about.

At all events, it is beyond doubt that the Anarchists confuse Hegel's metaphysical system with his dialectical method.

Needless to say, Hegel's *philosophical system*, which rests on the immutable idea, is from beginning to end *metaphysical*. But it is also clear that Hegel's *dialectical method*, which repudiates all immutable ideas, is from beginning to end *scientific and revolutionary*.

That is why Karl Marx, who subjected Hegel's metaphysical system to devastating criticism, at the same time praised his dialectical method, which, as Marx said, "lets nothing impose upon it, and is in its essence critical and revolutionary" (see *Capital*, Vol. I. Preface).

That is why Engels sees a big difference between Hegel's method and his system. "Whoever placed the chief emphasis on the Hegelian system could be fairly conservative in both spheres; whoever regarded the dialectical method as the main thing could belong to the most extreme opposition, both in politics and religion" (see *Ludwig Feuerbach*).

The Anarchists fail to see this difference and thoughtlessly maintain that "dialectics is metaphysics."

What is the materialist theory?

Some people say that "nature" and "social life" were preceded by the universal idea, which subsequently served as the basis of their development, so that the development of the phenomena of "nature" and of "social life" is, so to speak, the external form, merely the expression of the development of the universal idea.

Such, for example, was the doctrine of the *idealists*, who in the course of time split up into several trends.

Others say that from the very beginning there have existed in the world two mutually negating forces — idea and matter, consciousness and being, and that correspondingly, phenomena also fall into two categories — the ideal and the material, which negate each other, and contend against each other, so that the development of nature and society is a constant struggle between ideal and material phenomena.

Such, for example, was the doctrine of the dualists, who in the course of time, like the idealists, split up into several trends.

The materialist theory utterly repudiates both dualism and idealism.

A single and indivisible nature expressed in two different forms — material and ideal; a single and indivisible social life expressed in two different forms — material and ideal—that is how we should regard the development of nature and of social life.

Such is the monism of the materialist theory.

At the same time, the materialist theory also repudiates idealism.

It is wrong to think that in its development the ideal side, and consciousness in general, precedes the development of the material side. So-called external "non-living" nature existed before there were any living beings.

It follows, therefore, that the development of the ideal side, the development of consciousness, is *preceded* by the development of the material side, the development of the external conditions: first the external conditions change, first the material side changes, and *then* consciousness, the ideal side, changes accordingly.

Thus, the history of the development of nature utterly refutes so-called idealism.

In social life, first the external conditions change, first the conditions of men change and then their consciousness changes accordingly.

In social life, too, first the external conditions change, first the material conditions change, and then the ideas of men, their habits, customs and their world outlook change accordingly.

If the economic conditions change first and the consciousness of men undergoes a corresponding change later, it is clear that we must seek the grounds for a given ideal not in the minds of men, not in their imaginations, but in the development of their economic conditions. Only that ideal is good and acceptable which is based on a study of economic conditions. All those ideals which ignore economic conditions and are not based upon their development are useless and unacceptable.

Such is the first practical conclusion to be drawn from the materialist theory.

If the consciousness of men, their habits and customs, are determined by external conditions, if the unsuitability of legal and political forms rests on an economic content, it is clear that we must help to bring about a radical change in economic relations in order, with this change, to bring about a radical change in the habits and customs of the people, and in their political system.

Such is the second practical conclusion to be drawn from the materialist theory.

What is the anarchist view of the materialist theory of Marx and Engels?

The Anarchists tell us with great aplomb that "Feuerbach was a pantheist . . ." that he "deified man . . ." (see *Nobati*, No. 7. D. Delendi), that "in Feuerbach's opinion man is what he eats . . ." alleging that from this Marx drew the following conclusion: "Consequently, the main and primary thing is economic conditions . . ." (see *Nobati*, No. 6, Sh. G.).

True, nobody has any doubts about Feuerbach's pantheism, his deification of man, and other errors of his of the same kind. On the contrary, Marx and Engels were the first to reveal Feuerbach's errors. Nevertheless, the Anarchists deem it necessary once again to "expose" the already exposed errors. Why? Probably because, in reviling Feuerbach, they want indirectly to discredit the materialist theory of Marx and Engels. Of course, if we examine the subject impartially we shall certainly find that in addition to erroneous ideas,

Feuerbach gave utterance to correct ideas, as has been the case with many scholars in history. Nevertheless, the Anarchists go on "exposing." . . .

We say again that by tricks of this kind they prove nothing but their own ignorance. It is interesting to note (as we shall see later on) that the Anarchists took it into their heads to criticise the materialist theory from hearsay, without any acquaintance with it.

It appears that they are ignorant of the fact that there are various kinds of materialism in science which differ a great deal from each other: there is, for example, vulgar materialism, which denies the importance of the ideal side and the effect it has upon the material side; but there is also so-called monistic materialism—the materialist theory of Marx—which scientifically examines the interrelation between the ideal and the material sides. But the Anarchists confuse these different kinds of materialism, fail to see even the obvious differences between them, and at the same time affirm with great aplomb that they are regenerating science!

Where, when, on which planet, and which Marx did you hear say that "*eating determines ideology*"? Why did you not cite a single sentence, a single word from the works of Marx to back your assertion? True, Marx said that the economic conditions of men determine their consciousness, their ideology, but who told you that eating and economic conditions are the same thing? Don't you really know that physiological phenomena, such as eating, for example, differ fundamentally from sociological phenomena, such as the *economic conditions* of men, for example? One can forgive a schoolgirl, say, for confusing these two different phenomena; but how is it that you, the "vanquishers of Social-Democracy," "regenerators of science," so carelessly repeat the mistake of a schoolgirl?

How, indeed, can eating determine social ideology? Ponder over what you yourselves have said: eating, the form of eating, does not change; in ancient times people ate, masticated and digested their food in the same way as they do now, but ideology changes all the time. Ancient, feudal, bourgeois and proletarian — such are the forms of ideology. Is it conceivable that *that which does not change* can determine *that which is constantly changing*?

Fourthly, when did Marx depict "human striving and will as a utopia and an illusion"? True, Marx explained "human striving and will" by economic development, and when the strivings of certain armchair philosophers failed to harmonise with economic conditions he called them utopian. But does this mean that Marx believed that human striving in general is utopian? Does this, too, really need explanation? Have you really not read Marx's statement that: "*mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve*" (see Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*), i.e., that, generally speaking, mankind does not pursue utopian aims? Clearly, either our "critic" does not know what he is talking about, or he is deliberately distorting the facts.

Fifthly, who told you that in the opinion of Marx and Engels "human striving and will are of no importance"? Why do you not point to the place where they say that? Does not Marx speak of the importance of "striving and will" in his *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, in his *Class Struggles in France*, in his *Civil War in France*, and in other pamphlets of the same kind? Why then did Marx try to develop the proletarians' "will and striving" in the socialist spirit, why did he conduct propaganda among them if he attached no importance to "striving and will"? Or, what did Engels talk about in his well-known articles of 1891-94 if not the "importance of will and striving"? True, in Marx's opinion human "will and striving" acquire their content from economic conditions, but does that mean that they themselves exert no influence on the development of economic relations? Is it really so difficult for the Anarchists to understand such a simple idea?



J. V. Stalin: *"Party News"* - August 2, 1909

4) So-called "god-building" as a literary trend and, in general, the introduction of religious elements into socialism is the result of an interpretation of the principles of Marxism that is unscientific and therefore harmful for the proletariat. The Baku Committee emphasises that Marxism took shape and developed into a definite world outlook not as the result of an alliance with religious elements, but as the result of an implacable struggle against them.



J. V. Stalin: *"Long Live the First of May !"* April 1912

"We do not worship the golden calf!" We do not want the kingdom of the bourgeoisie and the oppressors! Damnation and death to capitalism and its horrors of poverty and bloodshed! Long live the kingdom of labour, long live socialism!

Look around! Does long-suffering Russia resemble a "renovated," "well-governed" country?

Instead of improvement and purification of morals —incredible dissoluteness in the monasteries, those citadels of official morality!



Stalin:

"On the Road to Nationalism"

(A Letter From the Caucasus) - January 12 (25), 1913

Or the phrase stating that "such an interpretation of the clause of the Party programme which recognises the right of every nationality to self-determination does not contradict the precise meaning of the programme." Just think! The clause in the programme referred to (Clause 9), speaks of freedom of nationalities, of the *right* of nationalities to develop freely, of the Party's duty to combat all violence against them. Speaking generally, the *right* of nationalities, within the meaning of that clause, must not be restricted, it may be extended to autonomy and federation, as well as to secession. But does this mean that it is a matter of indifference to the Party, that it is all the same to it, how a given nationality decides its destiny, whether in favour of centralism or of secession? Does it mean that on the basis of

the abstract right of nationalities alone it is possible "while expressing no opinion on the merits of this demand," to recommend, even indirectly, autonomy for some, federation for others, and secession for still others? A nationality decides its destiny, but does that mean that the Party must not influence the will of a nationality towards a decision most in accordance with the interests of the proletariat? The Party stands for freedom of conscience, for the right of people to practise any religion they please. Does this mean that the Party will stand for Catholicism in Poland, for the Orthodox Church in Georgia and for the Gregorian Church in Armenia? That it will not combat these forms of world outlook? . . . And is it not self-evident that Clause 9 of the Party programme and cultural-national autonomy are on two entirely different planes that are as capable of "contradicting" each other as, say, Cheops' pyramid and the notorious Liquidators' conference?

The Caucasian Liquidators' turn towards nationalism is no accident. They began to liquidate the traditions of the Party long ago. The deletion of the "social section" from the minimum programme, the repudiation of the "hegemony of the proletariat" (see *Diskussionny Listok*, No. 2), the declaration that the illegal Party is an auxiliary organisation of the legal organisations (see *Dnevnik*, No. 9)—all these are commonly known facts. Now the turn has come for the national question.



J. V. Stalin: "*Marxism and the National Question*" - January 1913

And the mounting wave of militant nationalism above and the series of repressive measures taken by the "powers that be" in vengeance on the border regions for their "love of freedom," evoked an answering wave of nationalism below, which at times took the form of crude chauvinism. The spread of Zionism among the Jews, the increase of chauvinism in Poland, Pan-Islamism among the Tatars, the spread of nationalism among the Armenians, Georgians and Ukrainians, the general swing of the philistine towards anti-Semitism – all these are generally known facts.

The wave of nationalism swept onwards with increasing force, threatening to engulf the mass of the workers. And the more the movement for emancipation declined, the more plentifully nationalism pushed forth its blossoms.

At this difficult time Social-Democracy had a high mission – to resist nationalism and to protect the masses from the general "epidemic." For Social-Democracy, and Social-Democracy alone, could do this, by countering nationalism with the tried weapon of internationalism, with the unity and indivisibility of the class struggle.

The Bund, which had previously laid stress on the common tasks, now began to give prominence to its own specific, purely nationalist aims: it went to the length of declaring "observance of the Sabbath" and "recognition of Yiddish" a fighting issue in its election campaign.

Social-Democracy strives to secure *for all nations* the right to use their own language. But that does not satisfy the Bund; it demands that "the rights of the *Jewish* language" (our italics – *J. St.*) be championed with "exceptional persistence," and the Bund itself in the elections to the Fourth Duma declared that it would give "preference to those of them (i.e., electors) who undertake to defend the rights of the Jewish language."

Not the *general* right of all nations to use their own language, but the *particular* right of the

Jewish language, Yiddish! Let the workers of the various nationalities fight *primarily* for their own language: the Jews for Jewish, the Georgians for Georgian, and so forth. The struggle for the general right of all nations is a secondary matter. You do not have to recognize the right of all oppressed nationalities to use their own language; but if you have recognized the right of Yiddish, know that the Bund will vote for you, the Bund will "prefer" you.

But in what way then does the Bund differ from the bourgeois nationalists?

Comrade Plekhanov was right a thousand times over when he said that the Bund "is adapting socialism to nationalism."

Disorganization of the labour movement, demoralization of the Social-Democratic ranks – that is what the federalism of the Bund leads to.

The programme of the Social-Democrats contains a clause on freedom of religion. According to this clause any group of persons *have the right* to profess any religion they please: Catholicism, the religion of the Orthodox Church, etc. Social-Democrats will combat all forms of religious persecution, be it of members of the Orthodox Church, Catholics or Protestants. Does this mean that Catholicism, Protestantism, etc., "do not contradict the precise meaning" of the programme? No, it does not. Social-Democrats will always protest against persecution of Catholicism or Protestantism; they will always defend the right of nations to profess any religion they please; but at the same time, on the basis of a correct understanding of the interests of the proletariat, they will carry on agitation against Catholicism, Protestantism and the religion of the Orthodox Church in order to achieve the triumph of the socialist world outlook.

And they will do so just because there is no doubt that Protestantism, Catholicism, the religion of the Orthodox Church, etc., "contradict the precise meaning" of the programme, i.e., the correctly understood interests of the proletariat.

One thing or the other: *either* the federalism of the Bund, in which case the Russian Social-Democratic Party must re-form itself on a basis of "demarcation" of the workers according to nationalities; *or* an international type of organization, in which case the Bund must reform itself on a basis of territorial autonomy after the pattern of the Caucasian, Lettish and Polish Social-Democracies, and thus make possible the direct union of the Jewish workers with the workers of the other nationalities of Russia.

There is no middle course: principles triumph, they do not "compromise."

Thus, *the principle of international solidarity of the workers is an essential element* in the solution of the national question.



J. V. Stalin: "*Abolition of National Disabilities*" - March 25, 1917

Religious and national persecution, forcible Russification of the "alien" peoples, suppression of national-cultural institutions, denial of the franchise, denial of liberty of movement, incitement of nationality against nationality, pogroms and massacres — such was the national oppression of shameful memory.

How can national oppression be eliminated?

The social basis of national oppression, the force which animates it, is the obsolescent

landed aristocracy. And the nearer the latter is to power and the firmer it grasps it, the more severe is national oppression and the more revolting are its forms.

In the old Russia, when the old feudal landed aristocracy was in power, national oppression operated to the limit, not infrequently taking the form of pogroms (of Jews) and massacres (Armenian-Tatar).

Spurred by the growth of the revolution, the Provisional Government was bound to take this first step towards the emancipation of the peoples of Russia; and it did take it.

The decree amounts in general substance to the abolition of restrictions on the rights of citizens of non-Russian nationality and not belonging to the Orthodox Church



J. V. Stalin: "*The Policy of the Soviet Government on the National Question in Russia*" - October 10, 1920

A no less serious obstacle to the realization of Soviet autonomy is the haste, often becoming gross tactlessness, displayed by certain comrades in the matter of sovietiz-ing the border regions. When such comrades venture to take upon themselves the "heroic task" of introducing "pure communism" in regions which are a whole historical period behind central Russia, regions where the medieval order has not yet been wholly abolished, one may safely say that no good will come of such cavalry raids, of "communism" of this kind. We should like to remind these comrades of the point in our programme which says:

"The R.C.P. upholds the historical and class standpoint, giving consideration to the stage of historical development in which the given nation finds itself—whether it is on the way from medievalism to bourgeois democracy, or from bourgeois democracy to Soviet, or proletarian, democracy, etc."

And further:

"In any case, the proletariat of those nations which were oppressor nations must exercise particular caution and be particularly heedful of the survivals of national sentiment among the labouring masses of the oppressed or unequal nations" (see *Programme of the R.C.P.*).

That means that if in Azerbaijan, for instance, the direct method of requisitioning superfluous dwelling space alienates from us the Azerbaijanian masses, who regard the home, the domestic hearth, as sacred and inviolable, it is obvious that the direct way of requisitioning superfluous dwelling space must be replaced by an indirect, roundabout way of achieving the same end. Or if, for instance, the Daghestan masses, who are profoundly imbued with religious prejudices, follow the Communists "on the basis of the Sharia," it is obvious that the direct way of combating religious prejudices in this country must be replaced by indirect and more cautious ways. And so on, and so forth.

In brief, cavalry raids with the object of "immediately communizing" the backward masses must be discarded in favour of a circumspect and carefully considered policy of gradually drawing these masses into the general stream of Soviet development.



J. V. Stalin: "Three years of Proletarian Dictatorship" - Report Delivered at a Celebration Meeting of the Baku Soviet November 6, 1920

Undoubtedly, our path is not of the easiest; but, just as undoubtedly, we are not to be frightened by difficulties. Paraphrasing the well-known words of Luther, [*] Russia might say:

"Here I stand on the border line between the old, capitalist world and the new, socialist world. Here, on this border line, I unite the efforts of the proletarians of the West and of the peasants of the East in order to shatter the old world. May the god of history be my aid!"

Kommunist (Baku), Nos. 157 and 160, November 7 and 11, 1920

[*] From Luther's speech in his defence at the Diet of Worms (1521), where he was called upon by the Catholic Church to recant his teachings (see *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Weimar, 1897, Band 7, S. 838).



J. V. Stalin: "Congress of the Peoples of Daghestan" - November 13, 1920

The Government of Russia gives every people the full right to govern itself on the basis of its laws and customs.

The Soviet Government considers that the Sharia, as common law, is as fully authorized as that of any other of the peoples inhabiting Russia.

If the Daghestan people desire to preserve their laws and customs, they should be preserved.



J. V. Stalin: "Congress of the Peoples of the Terek Region" - November 17, 1920

Each of the peoples—Chechens, Ingushes, Ossetians, Kabardinians, Balkarians, Karachais, and also the Cossacks who remain within the autonomous highland territory—should have its National Soviet to administer the affairs of the given people in accordance with its manner of life and specific features. There is no need to mention the inogorodnie, who were and remain loyal sons of Soviet Russia, and whose interests the Soviet Government will always staunchly defend.

If it is shown that the Sharia is necessary, then let the Sharia remain. The Soviet Government has no thought of declaring war on the Sharia.



J. V. Stalin: "The Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)" - March 8 - 16, 1921

It would be unthinkable and dangerous to transplant to the territories of these nationalities the measures that had force and significance here, in central Russia. Clearly, in applying the economic policy of the R.S.F.S.R., it is absolutely necessary to take into account all the specific features of the economic condition, the class structure and the historical past confronting us in these border regions. There is no need for me to dwell on the necessity of putting an end to such incongruities as, for example, the order issued by the People's Commissariat of Food that pigs be included in the food quotas to be obtained from Kirghizia, the Moslem population of which has never raised pigs. This example shows how obstinately some people refuse to take into account peculiarities of the manner of life which strike the eye of every traveller.



"Fourth Conference of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) with Responsible Workers of the National Republics and Regions"

Firdevs's speech was sheer diplomacy from beginning to end. Who the ideological leader was, whether Sultan-Galiyev led Firdevs, or whether Firdevs led Sultan-Galiyev, is a question I leave open, although I think that ideologically Firdevs led Sultan-Galiyev rather than the other way round. I see nothing particularly reprehensible in Sultan-Galiyev's exercises in theory. If Sultan-Galiyev had confined himself to the ideology of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism it would not have been so bad and I would say that this ideology, in spite of the ban pronounced by the resolution on the national question passed by the Tenth Party Congress, could be regarded as tolerable, and that we could confine ourselves to criticising it within the ranks of our Party. But when exercises in ideology end in establishing contacts with Basmach leaders, with Validov and others, it is utterly impossible to justify Basmach practices here on the ground that the ideology is innocent, as Firdevs tries to do. You can deceive nobody by such a justification of Sultan-Galiyev's activities. In that way it would be possible to find a justification for both imperialism and tsarism, for they too have their ideologies, which sometimes look innocent enough. One cannot reason in that way. You are not facing a tribunal, but a conference of responsible workers, who demand of you straightforwardness and sincerity, not diplomacy.

While the Rights create the danger that by their tendency to yield to nationalism they may hinder the growth of our communist cadres in the border regions, the "Lefts" create the danger for the Party that by their infatuation with an over-simplified and hasty "communism" they may isolate our Party from the peasantry and from broad strata of the local population.

Which of these dangers is the more formidable? If the comrades who are deviating towards the "Left" intend to continue practising in the localities their policy of artificially splitting the population—and this policy has been practised not only in Chechnya and in the Yakut Region, and not only in Turkestan (*Ibrahimov* : "They are tactics of differentiation.") Ibrahimov has now thought of substituting the tactics of differentiation for the tactics of splitting, but that changes nothing. If, I say, they intend to continue practising

their policy of splitting the population from above; if they think that Russian models can be mechanically transplanted to a specifically national milieu regardless of the manner of life of the inhabitants and of the concrete conditions; if they think that in fighting nationalism everything that is national must be thrown overboard; in short, if the "Left" Communists in the border regions intend to remain incorrigible, I must say that of the two, the "Left" danger may prove to be the more formidable.

Now, under present conditions, we cannot possibly do that, for the Party is now in power, and being in power, the Party needs in the border regions reliable Marxist cadres from among local people who are connected with the broad masses of the population. Now we cannot *first of all* defeat the Right danger with the help of the "Lefts," as was the case in the history of our Party, and then the "Left" danger with the help of the Rights. Now we have to wage a fight on both fronts *simultaneously*, striving to defeat both dangers so as to obtain as a result in the border regions trained Marxist cadres of local people connected with the masses. At that time we could speak of cadres who were not yet connected with the broad masses, but who were to become connected with them in the next period of development.



J. V. Stalin: "*The Fifth Anniversary of the First Congress of Working Women and Peasant Women*" - November 10, 1923

Lastly, the working women and peasant women are mothers; they are rearing our youth—the future of our country. They can either warp a child's soul or rear for us a younger generation that will be of healthy mind and capable of promoting our country's progress, depending upon whether the mothers sympathise with the Soviet system or whether they follow in the wake of the priests, the kulaks, the bourgeoisie.

That is why the political enlightenment of working women and peasant women is now, when the workers and peasants have set to work to build the new life, a matter of paramount importance for the achievement of real victory over the bourgeoisie.



J. V. Stalin: "*On The Death Of Lenin*" - A Speech Delivered at the Second All-union Congress of Soviets – January 6, 1924

Burdensome and intolerable has been the lot of the working class. Painful and grievous have been the sufferings of the labouring people. Slaves and slaveholders, serfs and serf-owners, peasants and landlords, workers and capitalists, oppressed and oppressors — so the world has been built from time immemorial, and so it remains to this day in the vast majority of countries. Scores and indeed hundreds of times in the course of the centuries the labouring people have striven to throw off the oppressors from their backs and to become the masters of their own destiny. But each time, defeated and disgraced, they have been forced to retreat, harbouring in their breasts resentment and humiliation, anger and despair, and lifting up their eyes to an inscrutable heaven where they hoped to find

deliverance. The chains of slavery remained intact, or the old chains were replaced by new ones, equally burdensome and degrading. Ours is the only country where the oppressed and downtrodden labouring masses have succeeded in throwing off the rule of the landlords and capitalists and replacing it by the rule of the workers and peasants. You know, comrades, and the whole world now admits it, that this gigantic struggle was led by Comrade Lenin and his Party. The greatness of Lenin lies above all in this, that by creating the Republic of Soviets he gave a practical demonstration to the oppressed masses of the whole world that hope of deliverance is not lost, that the rule of the landlords and capitalists is short-lived, that the kingdom of labour can be created by the efforts of the labouring people themselves, and that the kingdom of labour must be created not in heaven, but on earth. He thus fired the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world with the hope of liberation. That explains why Lenin's name has become the name most beloved of the labouring and exploited masses.



J. V. Stalin: *"The Results of the Thirteen Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)"* - June 17, 1924

One of the essential tasks confronting the Party in the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat is to re-educate the older generations and educate the new generations in the spirit of the proletarian dictatorship and socialism. The old habits and customs, traditions and prejudices inherited from the old society are most dangerous enemies of socialism. They—these traditions and habits—have a firm grip over millions of working people; at times they engulf whole strata of the proletariat; at times they present a great danger to the very existence of the proletarian dictatorship. That is why the struggle against these traditions and habits, their absolute eradication in all spheres of our activity, and, lastly, the education of the younger generations in the spirit of proletarian socialism, represent immediate tasks for our Party without the accomplishment of which socialism cannot triumph.



J. V. Stalin: *"THE PARTY'S IMMEDIATE TASKS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE"* - Speech Delivered at a Conference of Secretaries of Rural Party Units, Called by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) - October 22, 1924
A TACTFUL APPROACH TO THE PEASANTRY IS NEEDED

To illustrate how tactlessly the peasants are approached sometimes, a few words must be said about anti-religious propaganda. Occasionally, some comrades are inclined to regard the peasants as materialist philosophers and to think that it is enough to deliver a lecture on natural science to convince the peasant of the nonexistence of God. Often they fail to realise that the peasant looks on God in a practical way, i.e., he is not averse to turning away from God sometimes, but he is often torn by doubt: "Who knows, maybe there is a

God after all. Would it not be better to please both the Communists and God, as being safer for my affairs?" He who fails to take this peculiar mentality of the peasant into account totally fails to understand what the relations between Party and non-Party people should be, fails to understand that in matters concerning anti-religious propaganda a careful approach is needed even to the peasant's prejudices.



J. V. Stalin: "The Active of the Young Communist League in the Countryside" - Speech Delivered at a Meeting of the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) - April 6, 1925

Seventhly. The Young Communist League active in the countryside must receive precise instructions concerning the rights and duties of Young Communist Leaguers, concerning the relations between the Young Communist League and the Party, between the Soviets and the Young Communist League. Every Young Communist League activist must regard himself as an assistant of the Party and the Soviet Government in the countryside. High-handed methods in the countryside, disorder during Soviet elections, attempts to usurp the functions of the Party, cooperative and Soviet organisations, and rowdy escapades during so-called anti-religious propaganda — all this must be abandoned and stopped forthwith as something that tarnishes the banner of the Young Communist League and disgraces the name of Young Communist Leaguer. The task is to wage a ruthless struggle against such scandals and to establish proper relations between the Young Communist League and the Soviet and Party bodies.



J.V. Stalin: "The Political Tasks of the University of the Peoples of the East" - Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Students of the Communist University of the Toilers of the East

First Published: Pravda, No. 115, May 22, 1925

But what is national culture? How is it to be reconciled with proletarian culture? Did not Lenin say, already before the war, that there are two cultures — bourgeois and socialist; that the slogan of national culture is a reactionary slogan of the bourgeoisie, who try to poison the minds of the working people with the venom of nationalism? How is the building of national culture, the development of schools and courses in the native languages, and the training of cadres from the local people, to be reconciled with the building of socialism, with the building of proletarian culture? Is there not an irreconcilable contradiction here? Of course not! We are building proletarian culture. That is absolutely true. But it is also true that proletarian culture, which is socialist in content, assumes different forms and modes of expression among the different peoples who are drawn into the building of socialism, depending upon differences in language, manner of life, and so forth. Proletarian in content, national in form—such is the universal culture towards which socialism is proceeding. Proletarian culture does not abolish national culture, it gives it content. On the other hand, national culture does not abolish proletarian culture, it gives it form. The slogan of national culture was a bourgeois slogan as long as the bourgeoisie was in power

and the consolidation of nations proceeded under the aegis of the bourgeois order. The slogan of national culture became a proletarian slogan when the proletariat came to power, and when the consolidation of nations began to proceed under the aegis of Soviet power. Whoever fails to understand the fundamental difference between these two situations will never understand either Leninism or the essence of the national question.



J. V. Stalin

Concerning Questions of Leninism

Dedicated to the Leningrad
Organisation of the C.P.S.U.(B.)

January 25, 1926

V

THE PARTY AND THE WORKING CLASS IN THE SYSTEM OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

What does *leadership* mean when the policy of the Party is correct and the correct relations between the vanguard and the class are not upset?

Leadership under these circumstances means the ability to convince the masses of the correctness of the Party's policy; the ability to put forward and to carry out such slogans as bring the masses to the Party's positions and help them to realise through their own experience the correctness of the Party's policy; the ability to raise the masses to the Party's level of political consciousness, and thus secure the support of the masses and their readiness for the decisive struggle.

Therefore, the method of persuasion is the principal method of the Party's leadership of the working class.

"If we, in Russia today," says Lenin, "after two-and-a-half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, were to make 'recognition of the dictatorship' a condition of trade-union membership, we should be committing a folly, we should be damaging our influence over the masses, we should be helping the Mensheviks. For the whole task of the Communists is to be able to *convince* the backward elements, to be able to work *among* them, and not to *fence themselves off* from them by artificial and childishly 'Left' slogans" (see Vol. XXV, p. 197).

This, of course, must not be understood in the sense that the Party must convince all the workers, down to the last man, and that only after this is it possible to proceed to action, that only after this is it possible to start operations. Not at all! It only means that before entering upon decisive political actions the Party must, by means of prolonged revolutionary work, secure for itself the support of the majority of the masses of the

workers, or at least the benevolent neutrality of the majority of the class. Otherwise Lenin's thesis, that a necessary condition for victorious revolution is that the Party should win over the majority of the working class, would be devoid of all meaning.

Well, and what is to be done with the minority, if it does not wish, if it does not agree voluntarily to submit to the will of the majority? Can the Party, must the Party, enjoying the confidence of the majority, compel the minority to submit to the will of the majority? Yes, it can and it must. Leadership is ensured by the method of persuading the masses, as the principal method by which the Party influences the masses. This, however, does not preclude, but presupposes, the use of coercion, if such coercion is based on confidence in the Party and support for it on the part of the majority of the working class, if it is applied to the minority after the Party has convinced the majority.

It would be well to recall the controversies around this subject that took place in our Party during the discussion on the trade-union question. What was the mistake of the opposition, the mistake of the Tsektran, at that time? Was it that the opposition then considered it possible to resort to coercion? No! It, was not that. The mistake of the opposition at that time was that, being unable to convince the majority of the correctness of its position, having lost the confidence of the majority, it nevertheless began to apply coercion, began to insist on "shaking up" those who enjoyed the confidence of the majority.

Here is what Lenin said at that time, at the Tenth Congress of the Party, in his speech on the trade unions:

"In order to establish mutual relations and mutual confidence between the vanguard of the working class and the masses of the workers, it was necessary, if the Tsektran had made a mistake . . . to correct this mistake. But when people begin to defend this mistake, it becomes a source of political danger. Had not the utmost possible been done in the way of democracy in heeding the moods expressed here by Kutuzov, we would have met with political bankruptcy. *First we must convince, and then coerce. We must at all costs first convince, and then coerce.* We were not able to convince the broad masses, and we upset the correct relations between the vanguard and the masses" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 235).

Lenin says the same thing in his pamphlet *On the Trade Unions*:

"We applied coercion correctly and successfully only when we were able to create beforehand a basis of conviction for it" (*ibid.*, p. 74).

And that is quite true, for without those conditions no leadership is possible. For only in that way can we ensure unity of action in the Party, if we are speaking of the Party, or unity of action of the class, if we are speaking of the class as a whole. Without this there is splitting, confusion and demoralisation in the ranks of the working class.

Such in general are the fundamentals of correct leadership of the working class by the Party.

Any other conception of leadership is syndicalism, anarchism, bureaucracy—anything you please, but not Bolshevism, not Leninism.



J. V. Stalin: "Speech Delivered in the German Commission of the Sixth

Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I."- March 8, 1926

Scholem is now in favour of inner-party democracy. He therefore proposes that a general discussion should be started—that Brandler and Radek and everybody, from the Rights to the “ultra-Lefts,” should be invited, a general amnesty declared and a general discussion opened. That would be wrong, comrades. We don’t want that. Previously, Scholem was opposed to inner-party democracy. Now he is running to the other extreme and declaring in favour of unlimited and absolutely unrestrained democracy. Heaven save us from such democracy! The Russians have an apt saying: “Tell a fool to kneel and pray, and he will split his forehead bowing.” (*Laughter.*) No, we don’t want that sort of democracy. The German Communist Party has already recovered from the disease of Rightism. There would be no sense now in infecting it with the disease artificially. What the German Communist Party is now suffering from is the disease of “ultra-Leftism.” There would be no sense in intensifying this disease—it has to be eradicated, not intensified. It is not just any kind of discussion or any kind of democracy that we need, but such discussion and such democracy as will be of benefit to the communist movement in Germany. I am therefore opposed to Scholem’s general amnesty.



The Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

November 22-December 16, 1926

5. Trotsky's Oracular Sayings

I should like, further, to dwell on certain ambiguous statements made by Trotsky, statements which in point of fact were meant to mislead.

What, then, can be the purpose of this more than ambiguous statement of Trotsky's?

I think that it had only one purpose: to throw dust in the eyes of his hearers and mislead them.

Trotsky behaved in this instance in the way certain astute oracles did in olden days, who parried inquirers with ambiguous answers like the following: "When crossing a river, a big army will be routed." *Which* river would be crossed, and whose army would be routed was left for the hearers to interpret.



Joseph Stalin's Interview With The First American Labor Delegation in Russia

Questions Put By The Delegation and Stalin's Replies

Pravda September 15, 1927

QUESTION XI. *We understand that some good Communists are not in entire sympathy with the Communist Party's demand that all new members be atheists, now that the reactionary clergy are suppressed. Could the Communist Party in the future take a neutral attitude towards a religious faith which supported all the teachings of science and did not oppose Communism? Could you in the future permit some Party members to hold religious opinions if they did not conflict with Party loyalty?*

REPLY: In this question there are several inexactitudes. In the first place, I do not know of any such "good Communists" that the delegates talk about. It is hardly likely that such Communists exist at all. Secondly, I must declare that speaking formally, we have no conditions of Party membership which demand that a candidate for Party membership shall be an Atheist.

The conditions of membership of our Party are: acceptance of the program and rules of the Party; absolute subordination to the decisions of the Party and its organs; payment of membership dues; and membership in one of the Party locals.

A DELEGATE: I often read of expulsions from the Party because of belief in God.

STALIN: I can only repeat the conditions of membership in our Party that I have just mentioned. We have no other condition.

Does that mean the Party is neutral towards religion? No, it does not. We carry on and will continue to carry on propaganda against religious prejudices. Our legislation guaranteed to citizens the right to adhere to any religion. This is a matter for the conscience of each individual. That is precisely why we carried out the separation of the Church from the State. But in separating the Church from the State and proclaiming religious liberty we at the same time guaranteed the right of every citizen to combat by argument, by propaganda and agitation any and all religion. The Party cannot be neutral towards religion and does conduct anti-religious propaganda against all and every religious prejudice because it stands for science, while religious prejudices run counter to science, because all religion is something opposite to science. Cases such as recently occurred in America in which Darwinists were prosecuted in court, cannot occur here because the Party carries out a policy of the general defense of science. The Party cannot be neutral towards religious prejudices and it will continue to carry on propaganda against these prejudices because this is one of the best means of undermining the influence of the reactionary clergy who support the exploiting classes and who preach submission to these classes. The Party cannot be neutral towards the bearers of religious prejudices, towards the reactionary clergy who poison the minds of the toiling masses. Have we suppressed the reactionary clergy? Yes, we have. The unfortunate thing is that it has not been completely liquidated. Anti-religious propoganda is a means by which the complete liquidation of the reactionary clergy must be brought about. Cases occur when certain members of the Party hamper the complete development of anti-religious propoganda. If such members are expelled it is a good thing because there is no room for such "Communists" in the ranks of our Party.



The Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)

December 2-19, 1927

4. Classes, the State Apparatus and the Country's Cultural Development

We have some manifestations of anti-Semitism, not only among certain circles of the middle strata of the population, but also among a certain section of the workers, and even in some quarters in our Party. This evil must be combated, comrades, with all ruthlessness.

We also have a shortcoming like the slackening in the struggle against religion.

All these and similar shortcomings must be eliminated, comrades, if we want to advance at a more or less rapid rate.



J. V. Stalin

The Work of the April Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission

*Report Delivered at a Meeting of the Active of the Moscow Organisation of the
C.P.S.U.(B.)*

April 13, 1928

II

The Question of Grain Procurements

The kulak was scandalously speculating in grain, thereby creating the gravest difficulties both in town and country; in addition he was violating Soviet laws, that is, the will of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Men's Deputies—is it not obvious that this circumstance was bound to facilitate the work of isolating the kulaks?

The pattern was in a way similar (with the appropriate reservations, of course) to the one we had in 1921, when, because of the famine in the country, the Party, headed by Lenin, raised the question of confiscating valuables from the churches with a view to acquiring food for the famine-stricken regions, and made this the basis of an extensive anti-religious campaign, and when the priests, by clinging to their valuables, were in fact opposing the starving masses and thereby evoked the resentment of the masses against the Church in general and against religious prejudices in particular, and especially against the priests and their leaders. There were some queer people at that time in our Party who thought that Lenin had come to realise the necessity of combating the Church only in 1921 (*laughter*) — that he had not realised it until then. That, of course, was silly, comrades. Lenin, of course, realised the necessity of combating the Church before 1921 too. But that was not the point. The point was to link a broad mass anti-religious campaign with the struggle for the vital interests of the masses, and to conduct it in such a way that it was understood by the masses and supported by them.



Anti-Semitism

January 12, 1931

Reply to an Inquiry of the Jewish News Agency in the United States

Works, Vol. 13, 1930 - January 1934

In answer to your inquiry :

National and racial chauvinism is a vestige of the misanthropic customs characteristic of the period of cannibalism. Anti-semitism, as an extreme form of racial chauvinism, is the most dangerous vestige of cannibalism.

Anti-semitism is of advantage to the exploiters as a lightning conductor that deflects the blows aimed by the working people at capitalism. Anti-semitism is dangerous for the working people as being a false path that leads them off the right road and lands them in the jungle. Hence Communists, as consistent internationalists, cannot but be irreconcilable, sworn enemies of anti-semitism.

In the U.S.S.R. anti-semitism is punishable with the utmost severity of the law as a phenomenon deeply hostile to the Soviet system. Under U.S.S.R. law active anti-semites are liable to the death penalty.

J. Stalin

January 12, 1931



J. V. Stalin

Talk With the German Author Emil Ludwig

December 13, 1931

Ludwig: What impelled you to become an oppositionist? Was it, perhaps, bad treatment by your parents?

Stalin: No. My parents were uneducated, but they did not treat me badly by any means. But it was a different matter at the Orthodox theological seminary which I was then attending. In protest against the outrageous regime and the Jesuitical methods prevalent at the seminary, I was ready to become, and actually did become, a revolutionary, a believer in Marxism as a really revolutionary teaching.

Ludwig: But do you not admit that the Jesuits have good points?

Stalin: Yes, they are systematic and persevering in working to achieve sordid ends. Hut their principal method is spying, prying, worming their way into people's souls and outraging their feelings. What good can there be in that? For instance, the spying in the hostel. At nine o'clock the bell rings for morning tea, we go to the dining-room, and when we return to our rooms we find that meantime a search has been made and all our chests have been ransacked.... What good point can there be in that?

Ludwig: My question is the following: You have often incurred risks and dangers. You have been persecuted. You have taken part in battles. A number of your close friends have perished. You have survived. How do you explain that? And do you believe in fate?

Stalin: No, I do not. Bolsheviki, Marxists, do not believe in "fate." The very concept of fate, of "Schicksal," is a prejudice, an absurdity, a relic of mythology, like the mythology of the ancient Greeks, for whom a goddess of fate controlled the destinies of men.

Ludwig: That is to say that the fact that you did not perish is an accident?

Stalin: There are internal and external causes, the combined effect of which was that I did not perish. But entirely independent of that, somebody else could have been in my place, for somebody had to occupy it. "Fate" is something not governed by natural law, something mystical. I do not believe in mysticism. Of course, there were reasons why danger left me unscathed. But there could have been a number of other fortuitous circumstances, of other causes, which could have led to a directly opposite result. So-called fate has nothing to do with it.



J. V. Stalin

Joint Plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) January 7-12, 1933

The Results of the First Five-Year Plan

Report Delivered on January 7, 1933

VII

The Results of the Five-year Plan in Four Years in the Sphere of the Struggle Against the Remnants of the Hostile Classes

If the capitalists proclaimed private property sacred and inviolable when they were consolidating the capitalist system, all the more reason why we Communists should proclaim public property sacred and inviolable in order to consolidate the new socialist forms of economy in all spheres of production and trade. To permit theft and plundering of public property—no matter whether it is state property or co-operative or collective-farm property—and to ignore such counter-revolutionary outrages means to aid and abet the undermining of the Soviet system, which rests on public property as its basis.



J. V. Stalin

Speech at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites

17 November 1935

3. NEW PEOPLE – NEW TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Science is called science just because it does not recognise fetishes, just because it does not fear to raise its hand against the obsolete and antiquated, and because it lends an attentive ear to the voice of experience, of practice. If it were otherwise, we would have no science at all; we would have no astronomy, say, and would still have to get along with the outworn system of Ptolemy; we would have no biology, and would still be comforting ourselves with the legend of the creation of man; we would have no chemistry, and would still have to get along with the auguries of the alchemists.



J. V. Stalin

Constitution (Fundamental law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

With Ammendments and Additions adopted by the First, Second, Third, Sixth,
Seventh and Eighth Sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

Kremlin, Moscow, December 5, 1936

ARTICLE 124.

In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the U.S.S.R. is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.



J. V. Stalin September

Dialectical and Historical Materialism

1938

When describing their dialectical method, Marx and Engels usually refer to Hegel as the philosopher who formulated the main features of dialectics. This, however, does not mean that the dialectics of Marx and Engels is identical with the dialectics of Hegel. As a matter of fact, Marx and Engels took from the Hegelian dialectics only its "rational kernel," casting aside its Hegelian idealistic shell, and developed dialectics further so as to lend it a modern scientific form.

"My dialectic method," says Marx, "is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, ... the process of thinking which, under the name of 'the Idea,' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos (creator) of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea.' With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought." (Marx, Afterword to the Second German Edition of Volume I of *Capital*.)

When describing their materialism, Marx and Engels usually refer to Feuerbach as the philosopher who restored materialism to its rights. This, however, does not mean that the materialism of Marx and Engels is identical with Feuerbach's materialism. As a matter of fact, Marx and Engels took from Feuerbach's materialism its "inner kernel," developed it into a scientific-philosophical theory of materialism and cast aside its idealistic and religious-ethical encumbrances. We know that Feuerbach, although he was fundamentally a materialist, objected to the name materialism. Engels more than once declared that "in

spite of" the materialist "foundation," Feuerbach "remained... bound by the traditional idealist fetters," and that "the real idealism of Feuerbach becomes evident as soon as we come to his philosophy of religion and ethics." (Marx and Engels, Vol. XIV, pp. 652-54.)

The principal features of *Marxist philosophical materialism* are as follows:

Contrary to idealism, which regards the world as the embodiment of an "absolute idea," a "universal spirit," "consciousness," Marx's philosophical materialism holds that the world is by its very nature *material*, that the multifold phenomena of the world constitute different forms of matter in motion, that interconnection and interdependence of phenomena as established by the dialectical method, are a law of the development of moving matter, and that the world develops in accordance with the laws of movement of matter and stands in no need of a "universal spirit."

Speaking of the materialist views of the ancient philosopher Heraclitus, who held that "the world, the all in one, was not created by any god or any man, but was, is and ever will be a living flame, systematically flaring up and systematically dying down" Lenin comments: "A very good exposition of the rudiments of dialectical materialism." (Lenin, *Philosophical Notebooks*, p. 318.)

Contrary to idealism, which asserts that only our consciousness really exists, and that the material world, being, nature, exists only in our consciousness' in our sensations, ideas and perceptions, the Marxist philosophical materialism holds that matter, nature, being, is an objective reality existing outside and independent of our consciousness; that matter is primary, since it is the source of sensations, ideas, consciousness, and that consciousness is secondary, derivative, since it is a reflection of matter, a reflection of being; that thought is a product of matter which in its development has reached a high degree of perfection, namely, of the brain, and the brain is the organ of thought; and that therefore one cannot separate thought from matter without committing a grave error. Engels says:

"The question of the relation of thinking to being, the relation of spirit to nature is the paramount question of the whole of philosophy.... The answers which the philosophers gave to this question split them into two great camps. Those who asserted the primacy of spirit to nature ... comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism." (Marx, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 329.)

And further:

"The material, sensuously perceptible world to which we ourselves belong is the only reality.... Our consciousness and thinking, however supra-sensuous they may seem, are the product of a material, bodily organ, the brain. Matter is not a product of mind, but mind itself is merely the highest product of matter." (Ibid., p. 332.)

Concerning the question of matter and thought, Marx says:

"It is impossible to separate thought from matter that thinks. Matter is the subject of all changes." (Ibid., p. 302.)

Describing Marxist philosophical materialism, Lenin says:

"Materialism in general recognizes objectively real being (matter) as independent of consciousness, sensation, experience.... Consciousness is only the reflection of being, at best an approximately true (adequate, perfectly exact) reflection of it." (Lenin, Vol. XIII, pp. 266-67.)

And further:

– "Matter is that which, acting upon our sense-organs, produces sensation; matter is the objective reality given to us in sensation.... Matter, nature, being, the physical-is primary,

and spirit, consciousness, sensation, the psychical-is secondary." (Ibid., pp. 119-20.)

– "The world picture is a picture of how matter moves and of how '*matter thinks*.'" (Ibid., p. 288.)

– "The brain is the organ of thought." (Ibid., p. 125.)

Contrary to idealism, which denies the possibility of knowing the world and its laws, which does not believe in the authenticity of our knowledge, does not recognize objective truth, and holds that the world is full of "things-in-themselves" that can never be known to science, Marxist philosophical materialism holds that the world and its laws are fully knowable, that our knowledge of the laws of nature, tested by experiment and practice, is authentic knowledge having the validity of objective truth, and that there are no things in the world which are unknowable, but only things which are as yet not known, but which will be disclosed and made known by the efforts of science and practice.

Accusing Bogdanov, Bazarov, Yushkevich and the other followers of Mach of fideism (a reactionary theory, which prefers faith to science) and defending the well-known materialist thesis that our scientific knowledge of the laws of nature is authentic knowledge, and that the laws of science represent objective truth, Lenin says:

"Contemporary fideism does not at all reject science; all it rejects is the 'exaggerated claims' of science, to wit, its claim to objective truth. If objective truth exists (as the materialists think), if natural science, reflecting the outer world in human 'experience,' is alone capable of giving us objective truth, then all fideism is absolutely refuted." (Lenin, Vol. XIII, p. 102.)

If the connection between the phenomena of nature and their interdependence are laws of the development of nature, it follows, too, that the connection and interdependence of the phenomena of social life are laws of the development of society, and not something accidental.

Hence, social life, the history of society, ceases to be an agglomeration of "accidents", for the history of society becomes a development of society according to regular laws, and the study of the history of society becomes a science.

Hence, the practical activity of the party of the proletariat must not be based on the good wishes of "outstanding individuals." not on the dictates of "reason," "universal morals," etc., but on the laws of development of society and on the study of these laws.

Hence, the party of the proletariat should not guide itself in its practical activity by casual motives, but by the laws of development of society, and by practical deductions from these laws.

Hence, socialism is converted from a dream of a better future for humanity into a science.

Hence, the bond between science and practical activity, between theory and practice, their unity, should be the guiding star of the party of the proletariat.

Further, if nature, being, the material world, is primary, and consciousness, thought, is secondary, derivative; if the material world represents objective reality existing independently of the consciousness of men, while consciousness is a reflection of this objective reality, it follows that the material life of society, its being, is also primary, and its spiritual life secondary, derivative, and that the material life of society is an objective reality existing independently of the will of men, while the spiritual life of society is a reflection of this objective reality, a reflection of being.

Hence, the source of formation of the spiritual life of society, the origin of social ideas, social theories, political views and political institutions, should not be sought for in the ideas, theories, views and political institutions themselves, but in the conditions of the

material life of society, in social being, of which these ideas, theories, views, etc., are the reflection.

Hence, if in different periods of the history of society different social ideas, theories, views and political institutions are to be observed; if under the slave system we encounter certain social ideas, theories, views and political institutions, under feudalism others, and under capitalism others still, this is not to be explained by the "nature", the "properties" of the ideas, theories, views and political institutions themselves but by the different conditions of the material life of society at different periods of social development.

Whatever is the being of a society, whatever are the conditions of material life of a society, such are the ideas, theories political views and political institutions of that society.

In this connection, Marx says:

"It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." (Marx *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 269.)

Hence, in order not to err in policy, in order not to find itself in the position of idle dreamers, the party of the proletariat must not base its activities on abstract "principles of human reason", but on the concrete conditions of the material life of society, as the determining force of social development; not on the good wishes of "great men," but on the real needs of development of the material life of society.

The fall of the utopians, including the Narodniks, anarchists and Socialist-Revolutionaries, was due, among other things to the fact that they did not recognize the primary role which the conditions of the material life of society play in the development of society, and, sinking to idealism, did not base their practical activities on the needs of the development of the material life of society, but, independently of and in spite of these needs, on "ideal plans" and "all-embracing projects", divorced from the real life of society.

It does not follow from Marx's words, however, that social ideas, theories, political views and political institutions are of no significance in the life of society, that they do not reciprocally affect social being, the development of the material conditions of the life of society. We have been speaking so far of the origin of social ideas, theories, views and political institutions, of the way they arise, of the fact that the spiritual life of society is a reflection of the conditions of its material life. As regards the significance of social ideas, theories, views and political institutions, as regards their role in history, historical materialism, far from denying them, stresses the important role and significance of these factors in the life of society, in its history.

There are different kinds of social ideas and theories. There are old ideas and theories which have outlived their day and which serve the interests of the moribund forces of society. Their significance lies in the fact that they hamper the development, the progress of society. Then there are new and advanced ideas and theories which serve the interests of the advanced forces of society. Their significance lies in the fact that they facilitate the development, the progress of society; and their significance is the greater the more accurately they reflect the needs of development of the material life of society.

New social ideas and theories arise only after the development of the material life of society has set new tasks before society. But once they have arisen they become a most potent force which facilitates the carrying out of the new tasks set by the development of the material life of society, a force which facilitates the progress of society. It is precisely here that the tremendous organizing, mobilizing and transforming value of new ideas, new theories, new political views and new political institutions manifests itself. New social ideas and theories arise precisely because they are necessary to society, because it is impossible to carry out the urgent tasks of development of the material life of society

without their organizing, mobilizing and transforming action. Arising out of the new tasks set by the development of the material life of society, the new social ideas and theories force their way through, become the possession of the masses, mobilize and organize them against the moribund forces of society, and thus facilitate the overthrow of these forces, which hamper the development of the material life of society.

Thus social ideas, theories and political institutions, having arisen on the basis of the urgent tasks of the development of the material life of society, the development of social being, themselves then react upon social being, upon the material life of society, creating the conditions necessary for completely carrying out the urgent tasks of the material life of society, and for rendering its further development possible.

In this connection, Marx says:

"Theory becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses." (Marx and Engels, Vol. I, p. 406.)

Hence, in order to be able to influence the conditions of material life of society and to accelerate their development and their improvement, the party of the proletariat must rely upon such a social theory, such a social idea as correctly reflects the needs of development of the material life of society, and which is therefore capable of setting into motion broad masses of the people and of mobilizing them and organizing them into a great army of the proletarian party, prepared to smash the reactionary forces and to clear the way for the advanced forces of society.

The strength and vitality of Marxism-Leninism is derived from the fact that it relies upon an advanced theory which correctly reflects the needs of development of the material life of society, that it elevates theory to a proper level, and that it deems it its duty to utilize every ounce of the mobilizing, organizing and transforming power of this theory.

That is the answer historical materialism gives to the question of the relation between social being and social consciousness, between the conditions of development of material life and the development of the spiritual life of society.



History of the CPSU (B)

Short Course

In 1904, prior to the Putilov strike, the police had used the services of an agent-provocateur, a priest by the name of Gapon, to form an organization of the workers known as the Assembly of Russian Factory Workers. This organization had its branches in all the districts of St. Petersburg. When the strike broke out the priest Gapon at the meetings of

his society put forward a treacherous plan: all the workers were to gather on January 9 and, carrying church banners and portraits of the tsar, to march in peaceful procession to the Winter Palace and present a petition to the tsar stating their needs. The tsar would appear before the people, listen to them and satisfy their demands. Gapon undertook to assist the tsarist *Okhrana* by providing a pretext for firing on the workers and drowning the working-class movement in blood. But this police plot recoiled on the head of the tsarist government.

The petition was discussed at workers' meetings where amendments were made. Bolsheviks spoke at these meetings without openly announcing themselves as such. Under their influence, the petition was supplemented by demands for freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of association for the workers, the convocation of a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of changing the political system of Russia, equality of all before the law, separation of church from the state, termination of the war, an 8-hour working day, and the handing over of the land to the peasants.

Early in the morning of January 9, 1905, the workers marched to the Winter Palace where the tsar was then residing. They came with their whole families—wives, children and old folk—carrying portraits of the tsar and church banners. They chanted hymns as they marched.

The defeat of the Revolution of 1905 started a process of disintegration and degeneration in the ranks of the fellow-travelers of the revolution. Degenerate and decadent tendencies grew particularly marked among the intelligentsia.

The offensive of the counter-revolution was waged on the ideological front as well. There appeared a whole horde of fashionable writers who "criticized" Marxism, and "demolished" it, mocked and scoffed at the revolution, extolled treachery, and lauded sexual depravity under the guise of the "cult of individuality."

In the realm of philosophy increasing attempts were made to "criticize" and revise Marxism; there also appeared all sorts of religious trends camouflaged by pseudo-scientific theories.

"Criticizing" Marxism became fashionable.

All these gentlemen, despite their multifarious colouring, pursued one common aim: to divert the masses from the revolution.

The more hypocritical grew this criticism, which aimed at undermining the theoretical foundations of Marxism, the more dangerous it was to the Party, for the more it merged with the general campaign of the reactionaries against the Party, against the revolution. Some of the intellectuals who had deserted Marxism went so far as to advocate the founding of a new religion (these were known as "god-seekers" and "god-builders").

Actually, the book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* is something more than a criticism of Bogdanov, Yushkevich, Bazarov and Valentinov and their teachers in philosophy, Avenarius and Mach, who endeavoured in their writings to offer a refined and polished idealism as opposed to Marxist materialism; it is at the same time a defence of the theoretical foundations of Marxism— dialectical and historical materialism—and a materialist generalization of everything important and essential acquired by science, and especially the natural sciences, in the course of a whole historical period, the period from Engels' death to the appearance of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*.

Having effectively criticized in this book the Russian empirio-critics and their foreign teachers, Lenin comes to the following conclusions regarding philosophical and theoretical revisionism:

- 1) "An ever subtler falsification of Marxism, an ever subtler presentation of anti-materialist

doctrines under the guise of Marxism —this is the characteristic feature of modern revisionism in political economy, in questions of tactics and in philosophy generally." (*Ibid.*, p. 382.)

2) "The whole school of Mach and Avenarius is moving towards idealism." (*Ibid.*, p. 406.)

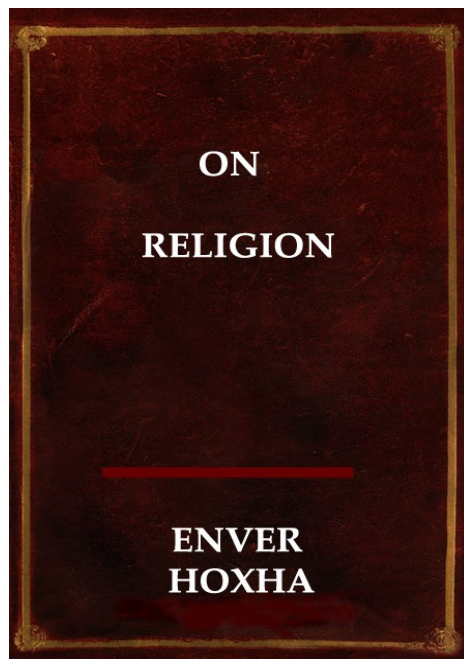
3) "Our Machians have all got stuck in idealism." (*Ibid.*, p. 396.)

4) "Behind the gnosiological scholasticism of empirio-criticism it is impossible not to see the struggle of parties in philosophy, a struggle which in the last analysis expresses the tendencies and ideology of the antagonistic classes in modern society." (*Ibid.*, p. 407.)

5) "The objective, class role of empirio-criticism reduces itself to nothing but that of servitor of the fideists (the reactionaries who hold faith above science—*ed.*) in their struggle against materialism in general and historical materialism in particular." (*Ibid.*, p. 407.)

6) "Philosophical idealism is . . . a road to clerical obscurantism." (*Ibid.*, p. 84.)

In order to appreciate the tremendous part played by Lenin's book in the history of our Party and to realize what theoretical treasure Lenin safeguarded from the motley crowd of revisionists and renegades of the period of the Stolypin reaction, we must acquaint ourselves, if only briefly, with the fundamentals of dialectical and historical materialism.



ENVER HOXHA
ON RELIGION

selection of works arranged by Wolfgang Eggers
on February 1, 2015
published by the Comintern (SH)

**Albania was the first country in the world
without religious institutions and clergy.**



CONSTITUTION
PEOPLE'S SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF
ALBANIA

Approved by the People's Assembly on December 28, 1976

Article 37

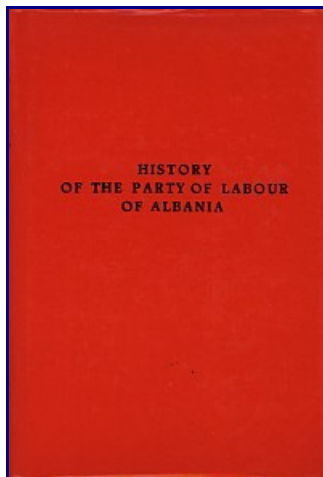
The state recognizes no religion whatever and supports atheist propaganda for the purpose of inculcating the scientific materialist world outlook in people.

Article 55

The creation of any type of organization of a fascist, anti-democratic, religious, and anti-socialist character is prohibited.

Fascist, anti-democratic, religious, war-mongering, and anti-socialist activities and propaganda, as well as the incitement of national and racial hatred are prohibited.

*** * ***



The History of the Party of Labour of Albania

CHAPTER VII

**THE STRUGGLE OF THE PLA FOR THE FURTHER REVOLUTIONIZATION OF THE PARTY AND THE LIFE OF THE COUNTRY
(1966-1971)**

3. THE GREAT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS

Comrade Enver Hoxha's speech of February 6, 1967 [*Enver Hoxha. Report to the 4th Congress of the Democratic Front of Albania, «Reports and Speeches 1967-*

1968», pp. 176-177, Alb. ed.] and the entire struggle of the Party to implement the decisions of the 5th Congress added even more fire to the revolutionary activity of the working masses. Young and old rose to their feet, boldly criticizing themselves and others in order to combat shortcomings, weaknesses and mistakes, to purge the socialist society of the remnants of the old society and the influences of the bourgeois-revisionist ideology, to inculcate revolutionary socialist norms and attitudes, the proletarian teachings of the Party in life and work. Remarkable initiatives burst forth among the working people, and these were embodied in a number of concrete actions and transformed into great revolutionary movements. These movements were a direct outcome of the Marxist-Leninist line, of the whole revolutionary work and struggle of the Party, past and present, for the uninterrupted development of the socialist revolution.

At the head of these movements stood the working class with its Marxist-Leninist party.

The Movement against Religion, Religious Prejudices and Backward Customs

The Party of Labour of Albania has always waged a systematic struggle against religion as an ideology of the exploiting classes hostile to socialism and opium for the people. The Party has considered the struggle against religion, against religious prejudices, against backward customs directly or indirectly linked with religion, as essential for the social liberation of the working people, for their ideological revolutionary tempering and for the construction of socialist society. On the other hand, it has regarded the struggle for the abolition of socio-economic oppression and exploitation closely linked with the development of the economy and culture on a socialist basis, as the primary indispensable condition for the emancipation of workers from the spiritual enslavement of religion. In the struggle against religion and backward customs it has used revolutionary forms and methods which have varied according to the historical conditions and the real situation of religious beliefs in the country, according to the stages of the revolution and the level of socialist consciousness of the workers.

In this struggle it has always been guided by the principle that people must be convinced from their own experience of the futility of religion and the harm it does to socialist society.

The various religions in Albania and the respective clergy have been utilized by the occupiers to split and enslave the people. For this reason the liberation struggle of the Albanian people against foreign domination and oppressors through the centuries has been directed also against the reactionary clergy which has been a tool of the invaders. As a result the Albanian people have not been strongly linked with religion, have not been so fanatical, and the clergy has not had the same influence among the popular masses as in many other countries.

This has made the struggle of the Party against the religious ideology and the reactionary clergy easier.

During the Anti-fascist National Liberation War the Party defeated the attempts of the Italian and German occupiers and the local traitors to split the people into Muslims and Christians.

It exposed and thwarted the attempts of the top clergy, particularly the Catholic one, to detach the masses of the people from the Party and the National Liberation Front. The attempts of the reactionary clergy and other class enemies after Liberation to hinder the socialist construction of the country by means of «the word of God» also failed.

These efforts did not win the support of the masses. The people listened to the word

of the Party and carried it out.

At the time of the proclamation of the People's Republic, the separation of the Church from the state and the school from the Church were proclaimed by the Constitution, and the utilization of the Church and religion for political ends, as well as the creation of political organizations on a religious basis, were prohibited. The bulk of the land and other possessions belonging to religious institutions were expropriated by law. The publication of religious literature was banned and the possibilities for training religious cadres were restricted, and later totally abolished. However, the Party and the state did not prohibit religious beliefs, the presence of religious communities, or the performance of religious rites. Neither could they prohibit those customs related to religion, which did not constitute direct violations of the state laws, even though they were reactionary in essence.

The Party could not insult the feelings of a mass of working people, especially in the countryside, who were closely linked with the Party and the people's power, but continued to believe in one or the other religion, although they did not display any exaggerated fanaticism. The eradication of the religious outlook would come as a result of convincing the masses ideologically.

The Anti-fascist National Liberation War and the socialist construction of the country themselves were a great school for the atheist education of the working people. They taught the people that freedom and independence, progress and prosperity do not come in answer to prayers and are not given by «God,» but are won through the struggle and efforts of the people themselves, are a deed of the popular masses. At the same time, in order to liberate people from religious beliefs and backward customs, the Party carried on extensive atheist-scientific propaganda work by means of the radio and the press, books, lectures and talks, films, etc. By disseminating culture, education and scientific knowledge, the school played a major role in this direction.

By this time the conditions had been created to go over to a higher stage of the struggle against religion, religious prejudices and backward customs. After the 5th Congress and Comrade Enver Hoxha's speech of February 6, 1967, this struggle began over a broad front and assumed the character of a major movement with a profound ideological content. It comprised all strata of the people, especially the youth, but the elderly were included, too. It was manifested in concrete actions, not only against the reactionary religious outlook, but also against any material base which preserved and fostered religion and backward customs.

The youth and other masses of the people in villages and cities rose to their feet, demanding that the churches and mosques, temples and monasteries, all the «holy places» be closed down; that the clergy give up their parasitic life and become working people living like everyone else, by their own work and sweat. In people's meetings and assemblies organized by the Democratic Front and the Youth Union, where heated discussions took place, the people condemned the anti-national and anti-popular role of religion, the reactionary clergy and religious customs, decided to wipe out religious centres and transform them into cultural and other centres, to give up performance of religious rites and backward customs and to clear the icons, religious books and other symbols out of their homes.

These initiatives of the people had the powerful support of the party organizations and the organs of the people's power.

With the destruction of religious centres, important bases, which poisoned human minds and served as hot-beds for hostile activity, were also wiped out.

Thus, Albania became the first country in the world without churches and mosques, without priests and hodjas.

While supporting the people's movement in the struggle against religion, religious

prejudices and backward customs, the Party guided it carefully. It did not allow distortions and took timely action to avert any hasty act not based on the will of the mass of population. It instructed the people to replace religious celebrations and customs with new celebrations, customs and norms with a socialist content. The actions of the masses to destroy the bases of religion were accompanied with intensive atheist-scientific work of clarification by the Party.

The Central Committee instructed the party organizations that any narrow concept of the problem of the struggle against religion, any manifestation of self-satisfaction stemming from the brilliant results achieved in a very short time with the destruction of religious centres, should be combated. The elimination of churches and mosques did not wipe out religion as a world outlook. Religion is very deep-rooted. It has been interwoven and linked with a thousand threads with the backward customs stemming from remote centuries, which live on and operate for a very long time. For this reason it was necessary to reveal the source, the reactionary, idealist philosophical basis of backward customs and religious practices and dogmas, and to struggle to destroy this basis.

«We must be realistic,» taught Comrade Enver Hoxha. **«The struggle against outdated customs, traditions, norms and religious world outlooks... is not over. This is a protracted, complicated and difficult struggles.»** [Enver Hoxha, Speeches and writings; 1967 – 1968, page 206).

Along with the educational work, the creation of all the respective material and moral conditions in the course of the revolutionary process of the complete construction of socialist society also served the aim of wiping out religious prejudices and inculcating the revolutionary materialist world outlook in the consciousness of the people.



COLLECTION OF QUOTATIONS



"The revolution disperses the religious fog."

(Enver Hoxha)

*** * ***

We Marxist-Leninists always understand clearly that religion is opium for the people.

In no instance do we alter our view on this and we must not fall into the errors of "religious socialism", etc. The Moslem religion is no different in this regard.

Those who have adopted and exploited the Moslem religion to exert social oppression over these peoples and to exploit them in the most ferocious ways are the anti-popular oppressive regimes and the reactionary clergy.

They have protected and continue to protect their blood-thirsty power through the weapons and support which they have received from abroad, that is, from the imperialist powers, the neo-colonialist robbers, as well as through inciting and developing religious fanaticism.

(Enver Hoxha)

*** * ***

«The struggle against outdated customs, traditions, norms and religious world outlooks... is not over.

This is a protracted, complicated and difficult struggles.»

[Enver Hoxha, Speeches and writings; 1967 – 1968, page 206).

* * *

"Can we affirm that we have eradicated religion and all backward customs completely? No. This will take scores and scores of years, even longer perhaps."

Enver Hoxha, "The Revolution Triumphs Only When the Marxist-Leninist Party Rouses the Masses and Makes Them Conscious of its Indispensability: From a Conversation with Two Sudanese Comrades", 12 July 1967, in Hoxha, E., Speeches, Conversations and Articles (1967-1968), Tirana, 1978, p. 122.

* * *

The solution of the great and difficult tasks of the complete construction of socialist society demanded people with a high level of socialist consciousness, liberated from the bourgeois, feudal and patriarchal customs and concepts and religious prejudices, people imbued with the proletarian ideology, with great revolutionary tempering and determination.

* * *

Church and bourgeoisie have despised the woman alike.

* * *

"The ideological and cultural revolution is a part of the all-round class struggle for carrying the socialist revolution through to the end in all fields. . . .

Class struggle in itself is the struggle . . . against religious ideology, prejudices, backward customs and superstitions."
Enver Hoxha, Report on the Activity of the CC of the PLA: Submitted to the V Congress of the PLA, 1 November 1966, Tirana, 1966, pp. 149, 151.

* * *

"The work of many years that has been accomplished by the Party, state, Democratic Front and all the social organisations to spread education and culture and to educate the masses in the spirit of atheism. In its attitude towards religion, the Party has stuck to the Marxist-Leninist principle that religious world outlook and communist world outlook . . . are irreconcilable . . . because they express and uphold the interests of different antagonistic classes. It has always subordinated the struggle against religion ideology to the struggle to free the workers from social oppression and economic exploitation."

Enver Hoxha, "On the Role and Tasks of the Democratic Front in the Struggle towards the Full Success of Socialism in Albania: Report to the 4th Congress of the Democratic Front of Albania", 14 September 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 36, Tirana, 1982, pp. 375.

* * *

". . . the principal aspect is the ideological and scientific work of the Party. The poison of religion is not being fought against by means of orders from the state, but through an endless work, with perseverance and continuously on the part of the Party."

Enver Hoxha, "Let Us Improve the Management of the Propaganda and the Agitation of the Party: Discussion at a Meeting of the Political Bureau of the CC of the PLA", 15 January 1952, in Hoxha, E., Vepra [Works], n. 9, Tirana, 1972, p. 49.

* * *

"To believe or not to believe is a personal right, a question of conscience and not an institutional question."

Enver Hoxha, Speech Prior to the Elections for the 10th Legislature of the People's Assembly fo the PSR of Albania: Delivered in the Electoral Zone n. 210 of Tirana, 10 November 1982, Tirana, 1982, pp. 38-9.

* * *

"The uprooting of religious prejudices, vain beliefs and harmful habits is a difficult and delicate work. They do not disappear suddenly, neither with decrees nor with meetings. This is a work that requires perseverance, intelligence and tact."

Enver Hoxha, "Report to the IV Congress of the PLA 'On the Activity of the CC of the PLA'", 13 February 1961, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 20, Tirana, 1976, p. 270.

* * *

"The struggle to uproot these vestiges of the past, inherited from other centuries, is, above all, an ideological struggle, the aim of which is the spiritual liberation of humanity. . . .

. . . For this purpose, we must activate better all the propaganda activities of the Party, our cultural institutions, the schools, teachers and all other intellectuals, the press and the radio, the literature and the arts; those who are struggling for the education of the workers with the new Communist ethic and outlook must regard this as their principal duty."

Enver Hoxha, "Upon the Economic, Social and Cultural Situation in the Countryside and the Measures to Improve it: Report to the X Plenum of the CC of the PLA", 6 June 1963, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 25, Tirana, 1977, p. 138.

* * *

". . . also in the struggle against religion we have to act tactfully. . . .

The Marxists, in particular, fight against this ideology in a dialectical, revolutionary way, not by means of administrative measures, but through the method of persuasion, and not through a superficial and formal persuasion, since this will prove to be ineffective and will soon translate into orders."

Enver Hoxha, "Let Us All Understand how to Better Implement the Directives of the Party: Talk with Cadres and Some Workers of the Agricultural Cooperative 'Stalin' of Kruja in the District of Sushnja", 8 March 1966, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 31, Tirana, 1980, p. 415.

* * *

". . . the Party must carry out a thoughtful, scientific task . . . not in a heartless manner, hurting people's feelings, but by means of profound political activity. We cannot give orders to the effect that the churches and mosques which exist in the countryside be destroyed. . . . Marxism fights reactionary and religious ideologies not by administrative methods, but through persuasion."

Enver Hoxha, "The Experience of the Party Shall Teach How to Improve Our Work: Speech at the Meeting of the Secretariat of the CC of the PLA", 14 March 1966, in Hoxha, Vepra, n. 31, Tirana, 1980, pp. 464-5.

* * *

"Can the question of religious belief be eradicated simply by closing some Catholic churches, as the students are doing, or by replacing the icons in churches with busts and portraits of Mao?!! Of course not. Religious belief in China must be a major problem, which cannot be solved with these measures."

Enver Hoxha, "A Sixteen-Point Document on the Cultural Revolution is Approved," 26 August 1966, in Hoxha, E., Reflections on China, vol. I, Tirana, 1979, p. 255.

* * *

"How can one consider on vanguard positions that local Party organisation of the Durrës wharves, or how can one consider a revolutionary that worker of these wharves, who does well by day and is even praised for his work, but who at home by night makes church icons and sells them to the faithful in the morning?"

Enver Hoxha, "The Further Revolutionization of the Party and Government", 6 February 1967, in Hoxha, E., Speeches: 1967-1968, Tirana, 1974, p. 5.

* * *

"It was sufficient for a single spark struck by the revolutionary students of the Durrës 'Naim Frashëri' school . . . to kindle an immense fire that swept away from the face of the earth all hotbeds of religious obscurantism."

Enver Hoxha, "On the Role and Tasks of the Democratic Front in the Struggle towards the Full Success of Socialism in Albania: Report to the 4th Congress of the Democratic Front of Albania", 14 September 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 36, Tirana, 1982, pp. 376

* * *

"It is impossible to fight to the end, if the communists and the masses are not politically and ideologically clear about the harm of religion. . . .

The Party, like a good doctor, has to make all efforts to cure the sick always in a persuasive, and never in an offensive manner.

. . . The successful development of the struggle against religious beliefs requires us to be careful, since we are dealing with the feelings of the people which, in one way or another, are associated with the religious institutions . . .

Let us be realistic and assess things always politically. For each step forward along the road of struggle against religion, we require the approval of the people and must not infringe their feelings in any way. . . .

The struggle which we have carried out, all the measures we are taking, represent a major qualitative step forward based on the great experience of the Party, on the great work the Party has done until today. . . .

. . . Let us realise that we are not dealing here with campaigns, but with political, ideological questions of the masses, of the people. All these questions must be better reflected in our press organs, since this work requires extraordinarily great skill.

Our main task is to put greater efforts into making a qualitative leap forward in the education of the communists, the workers and the youth."

Enver Hoxha, "The Problems of the Organs of Internal Affairs Are not Outside the Controll of the Party: Discussion at a Meeting of the Secretariat of the CC of the PLA", 23 February 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 35, Tirana, 1982, pp. 85-8.

*** * ***

"In this matter violence, exaggerated or inflated actions must be condemned. Here it is necessary to use persuasion and only persuasion, political and ideological work, so that the ground is prepared for each concrete action against religion." Enver

Hoxha, "The Communists Lead by Means of Example, Sacrifices, Abnegation: Discussion in the Organization of the Party, Sector C, of the 'Enver' Plant", 2 March 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 35, Tirana, 1982, pp. 130-1.

* * *

". . . the struggle against religion does not end with the destruction of the churches and mosques. Their destruction is a relatively simple task. It is much more difficult to struggle against religious habits, to uproot them from the consciousness of our people. . . . All these do not disappear either by decrees, or at a stroke, or by declarations alone. . . .

Then, how do those customs, so deeply rooted for centuries, disappear? Have the Party committees considered how to organise systematically this great and difficult politico-ideological struggle, by means of lectures, by deepening and broadening initiatives, by special meetings, by increasing the activities of the youth and women's organisations in this work, etc.? This - I believe - is not done as it should be, if it is not, we shall not have the desired results and the blame for this will not lie with the masses who believe, but with us, the leaders, who have not learned how to utilise, organise and appropriately implement the belief, enthusiasm and readiness of the masses."

Enver Hoxha, "The Party Can Solve Nothing without the Masses and without Helping Them: Discussion at a Meeting of the Secretariat of the CC of the PLA," 22 March 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 35, Tirana, 1982, pp. 138-9.

* * *

". . . Let us work with perseverance, with perseverance, since this is not a work of a day or a month, but a work which will continue year after year we are not dealing here with a matter of time and speed, but with uprooting what is negative and deepening the socialist revolution."

Enver Hoxha, 30 March 1967, in Hoxha, E., Ditar [Diary], n. 9, Tirana, 1990, p. 116. Emphasis in the original.

* * *

"We shall not allow the use of administrative measures to eliminate useless religious institutions, customs and beliefs. There is only one road for the solution of these problems: political, ideological work and persuasion. . . . Backward customs and religious beliefs do not disappear suddenly, but gradually, through long and continuous work In no way must we hurt the feelings of the people over the tower of a minaret which, if it is not destroyed today, will be destroyed next year, when the people have become convinced of the uselessness of religious beliefs."

Enver Hoxha, "In the Struggle against Religious Beliefs there is only One Road - Political, Ideological Work, Persuasion: From a Talk with the First Secretary of the Party Committee in the Dibra District," 7 April 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 35, Tirana, 1982, p. 226.

* * *

". . . in this question [the struggle against religion] we shall not allow . . . the employment of administrative measures. There is only one method: . . . political, ideological and convincing work with the people."

Enver Hoxha, 7 April 1967, in Hoxha, E., Ditar [Diary], n. 9, Tirana, 1990, p. 133.

". . . The Party has given the directive to be very prudent, very mature in this question ."

Enver Hoxha, "The True Friendship is only the One which is Characterized by Faithfulness towards Marxism-Leninism: From a Talk during a Meeting with the Chinese Ambassador in Tirana", 12 April 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 35, Tirana, 1982, p. 234.

* * *

"The people rose to their feet and destroyed the mosques and churches . . . all this work was done by the people themselves."

Enver Hoxha, "Albania was Born from the Revolution and Builds Socialism through the Revolution: From the Speech Organized on the Occasion of the 24th Anniversary of the Struggle in Rec", 3 September 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 36, Tirana, 1982, p. 250.

* * *

"This movement . . . has began through the initiative of the masses themselves and developed and deepened through their active participation."

Enver Hoxha, "On the Role and Tasks of the Democratic Front in the Struggle towards the Full Success of Socialism in Albania: Report to the 4th Congress of the Democratic Front of Albania", 14 September 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 36, Tirana, 1982, pp. 374-7.

* * *

"One should combat the erroneous concept that religion is only the church, the mosque, the priest, the hodja, the icons, etc., and that once these disappear religion and its influence over the people would automatically disappear too."

Enver Hoxha, "On the Role and Tasks of the Democratic Front in the Struggle towards the Full Success of Socialism in Albania: Report to the 4th Congress of the Democratic Front of Albania", 14 September 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 36, Tirana, 1982, pp. 374-7.

* * *

". . . The great struggle against religion must be carried out in the consciousness, in the outlook of people. The elimination of a church building alone does not make idealist belief disappear from people's consciousness. . . . At the same time, the fact is that the churches and the mosques may quickly disappear materially. But, together with this does belief disappear in a short time from the people's consciousness? Certainly not. When considering this problem, has the Party and the mass organisations organised a well co-ordinated political and ideological struggle against religion? No, this leaves much to be desired."

Enver Hoxha, "For Struggle against Backward Customs: Discussion at the Meeting of the Secretariat of the CC of the PLA", 31 January 1969, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 40, Tirana, 1983, p. 106.

* * *

"One action with great results is the fight to smash the influence of religion. Within a very short period, this struggle succeeded in definitely stripping of their functions all the institutions and preachers of religion . . . Albania became a country without churches and mosques, without Christian or Muslim priests.

. . . this was a decisive blow and a victory which creates a new and powerful premise for the further emancipation of people's consciousness, for their complete liberation from religious beliefs and prejudices."

Enver Hoxha, Report on the Activity of the Central Committee of the Party of Labor of Albania: Submitted to the 6th Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania, 1 November 1971, Tirana, 1971, p. 135.

*** * ***

"The working people of their own free will decided the fate of the religious institutions."

Enver Hoxha, Report on the Activity of the Central Committee of the Party of Labor of Albania: Submitted to the 6th Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania, 1 November 1971, Tirana, 1971, p. 135.

*** * ***

"Of course this does not mean that the complete liberation of the working people from the influence of religious opium has been achieved; on the contrary, a long process of education and re-education is needed for this."

Enver Hoxha, Report on the Activity of the Central Committee of the Party of Labor of Albania: Submitted to the 6th Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania, 1 November 1971, Tirana, 1971, p. 135.

*** * ***

"Our Party and people destroyed this structure within a few decades, but the fight to root out this cancer from the mentality of the people, is still far from ended. . . and if a consistent and persuasive battle is waged in this direction, it will no longer take centuries but a few decades, a few generations."

Enver Hoxha, "How We Should Understand and Fight the Imperialist-Revisionist Encirclement of Our Country and the Effect of Its Pressure on Us: Speech Delivered at the General Meeting of the Communists of the Apparatus of the Central Committee of the Party to Render Account and Hold Elections", 15 March 1973, in Hoxha, E., On the Further Revolutionization of the Party and the Whole Life of the Country: Speeches (1971-1973), Tirana, 1974, p. 278.

*** * ***

"There are old people who practise some religious rites. In respect of these, we must follow the road of persuasion, of working to rescue these people from religious bondage."

Enver Hoxha, "Let Us Be Attentive in Taking Decisions: From the Discussion at the Meeting of the Presidium of the Popular Assembly of the PRA", 31 January 1976, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 56, Tirana, 1987, p. 343.

* * *

**"Our state is atheistic by the will of its people."
Enver Hoxha, Speech Prior to the Elections for the 10th
Legislature of the People's Assembly of the PSR of Albania:
Delivered in the Electoral Zone n. 210 of Tirana, 10 November
1982, Tirana, 1982, pp. 39.**

* * *

**"On the Struggle against Religion, Religious Prejudices and Customs"
27 February 1967**

original text in Albanian language:

**PRAKTIKAT FETARE T'I L PATRIOTIKE DHE UFTOJMË ME
FRYNIEN REVOLUCIONARE TE MASAVE**

Excerpts:

**"We have continually to bear in mind that we must not enter into open struggle with persons who believe in religion, since among these people there will be honest people, linked with the Party and ardent patriots, who will retain in their consciousness for a long time, perhaps even until they die, their beliefs. With them the task of persuasion must be carried on, continuously and with great patience, in ways which we must not allow to be offensive. . . .
. . . Without slackening for a moment anti-religious propaganda, we must always bear in mind that we are dealing with people.
Exaggerated, extreme actions must be avoided; we must carefully**

prepare political ground for each action we undertake."

*** * ***

"The elimination of churches, mosques, *teqe* and monasteries naturally introduces a difficulty."

*** * ***

"It must not go ahead in direct opposition to that part of the people which believes. That is why care and tact must be exercised in this direction."

*** * ***

"To close mosques and churches by means of campaigns or orders is easy, but it is more difficult to spiritually and ideologically prepare believers to understand the futility of these institutions, to eradicate religion from the habits of their existence and give up its practices with conviction. . . . The people . . . must be prepared spiritually and politically."

*** * ***

"But enough of them have been eliminated without provoking any reaction. . . . It is interesting that in our countryside there has been no resistance to these things."

*** * ***

"With these forms we must continue until they have been wiped from the face of the earth."

Enver Hoxha, "Let Us Struggle against Religious Practices with the Patriotic and Revolutionary Spirit of the Masses: Letter of the CC of the PLA Addressed to the Party District Committees on the Struggle against Religion, Religious Prejudices and Customs", 27 February 1967, in Hoxha, E., Vepra, n. 35, Tirana, 1982, pp.102-13.

*** * ***



ENVER HOXHA

**In the fight against religion there is only one
road
- political work, Ideological conviction**

**From the first conversation with the Secretary of the Committee
Party District of Dibra
April 7, 1967**

[excerpt - translated by the Comintern (SH) - we apologize possible mistakes of our translation]

With bureaucratic measures, the party can not eradicate religious institutions, customs and false beliefs.

Instead, we must rely on political work, ideological conviction. Otherwise, we can not solve this problem. We have repeatedly pointed out that outdated customs and religious beliefs do not immediately disappear at once, but only gradually, through individual approach to the problems of each family of the district and not by a general sweeping blow.

We must never hurt the feelings of the people. You can not preach futility of religious belief neither from the tower of a minaret nor enforced by governmental decrees or even by violence.

If we want to curb the influence of religion and religious rites, then I urge you to win the women for the according party work.

The problem of women, and I stress this again and again, is a central problem of the Party and socialism.

For the party and the working class, it is clear that the women is - in addition to young people - among the most progressive people. The woman is involved in life, burdened with troubles, with work, with family, with the home. Despite previous big successes of the emancipation of woman over man, the centuries-old religious traditions in the family are still effective - namely directed against the woman.

We need to realize that these habits are further maintained in the families through the man. The woman continues to suffer from these outdated habits, often without being aware of it.

This is not a matter for the woman, but for the whole party and especially for the male party members. It is the joint responsibility of the husband and wife to abolish the outmoded religious customs. Of course, women need to take the initiative, but not against the man. Women have their husbands actively involved.

There are comrades who talk a lot about the "Increase of the image of women", but do little for it or do it out of pity. Some men in the party consider the woman not as an equal member of the party. This inevitably leads to reactionary thought and action.

In the younger age there is no difference between girls and boys. Although both sexes grow up equally in our socialist society, the patriarchal spirit is still not disappeared in this issue.

It is absolutely necessary that the party in her work turns to this issue of women. The party must rely more on women. The better the party will succeed in relying on the force of the women , the faster the outdated religious morals will disappear.

The question of religious belief on the status of women and the man has nothing to do with the philosophical conviction.

This is more of a pragmatic issue, a matter of bad habits. Of course, much has already changed for the better, religious influence fades away even without intensive atheist convictions through strengthening the material basis of socialism. This becomes clear when we compare the current situation with the previous historical periods.

Nowhere in the world, the influence of the Catholic Church is lower than here. The prayers in mosques and churches are held only relatively rarely and religious holidays are becoming less important. The fasts lose their effect, especially among young people, but also in the cities.

With the founding of the People's Power, with the great advance in culture and education, by raising the living standards of the people, the influence of religion was pushed back further and further.

It is important to convince people with the correct political and ideological means.

Central Archives of the Party

* * *



FOR THE FURTHER REVOLUTIONIZATION OF OUR SCHOOL

*Speech delivered at the meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central
Committee of the PLA*

March 7, 1968

[Excerpts]

Science must be liberated completely from theology.

Some say simply: «Why do we need these things at all?» But such people do not understand that without learning these things, without dealing with them in various forms, from the lowest to the highest, it is impossible to impart a materialist philosophical world outlook to our people of socialism, and far from advancing, we shall fall back and be overwhelmed by ignorance, theology and bourgeois philosophy. Lenin expressed the idea that without sound philosophical arguments, neither natural science nor materialism are able to withstand the pressure of bourgeois ideas and the revival of the bourgeois world outlook. Our scientists of socialism must apply themselves patiently to study and be the most ardent supporters of Marxist philosophy, in short, must be dialectical materialists.

The epoch of our Renaissance is a democratic revolutionary epoch, of great importance in the history and literature of our people, an epoch enlightened and guided by the illuminist ideas of our most outstanding men of that period, which has rightly been called the rebirth of the nation, its emergence from mediaeval-feudal and imperialist darkness to light, to insurrection, to the fight for freedom, independence and democracy, for enlightenment and education.

In one of his works Engels has written about the Renaissance, not our Renaissance, but the «Cinquecento» (the period of the second half of the 16th century). He says it was a brilliant epoch which brought forth prominent men, not only artists and painters but also scientists and philosophers who were burned at the stake by the church, physicists, astronomers and others who burst asunder the heavy mediaeval darkness, destroyed faiths and systems and gave a further impulse to economic, cultural and scientific development.

But the analysis Engels makes of the epoch of the Renaissance is a materialist dialectical analysis and not an idealist one, since the impulse the men of the Renaissance imparted to society was neither complete nor perfect, it would be transformed and developed further and local and general upheavals would occur in the development of human society and in the various sciences. New or complementary laws would emerge and, as Lenin says, these upheavals «in most cases give birth to major and minor reactionary philosophical schools and trends» [V .I. Lenin, «On the Importance of Militant Materialism», Collected Works, vol. 33. p. 254 (Alb. ed.)]

And only our materialist philosophy can disperse the fog of them and ward off the damage they bring.

It is precisely from this angle that our Party has viewed the epoch of our Renaissance, which must be reexamined more thoroughly from the viewpoint of dialectical materialism, so that this period will be transmitted to the school children, students, teachers, professors, and the people as clearly and correctly as possible, analyzed in a Marxist-Leninist way from both the social and economic, and the educational, cultural and historical angles, and not to suit the inclinations of this or that individual.

This must be done in this way.

The men of our Renaissance must be seen in the proper perspective, in the epoch in which they lived, worked and fought; their ideas, which were the product of the development of society of that epoch, and their immediate and long-term aims must be brought out. If matters are presented in this correct way, it will emerge that the men of our Renaissance were outstanding people with progressive ideas, were courageous revolutionary illuminists, burning with ardent love for their country.

They fought with rifle and pen for the freedom and independence of the people, for their awakening. All of these are their great positive aspects. All these attributes and characteristics of the Renaissance and of the men who led it we must present to the people.

But we must not forget for one moment that these men of our Renaissance also have their negative aspects, which must be subjected to our Marxist-Leninist criticism.

Their weaknesses lie in their philosophical concepts which are idealist. This is a heavy impediment, it is the philosophy of their epoch which is in contradiction and struggle with our ideology.

Should we keep quiet about this antagonism, about this merciless, life-and-death struggle we Marxists wage against idealist philosophy, against religion and religious beliefs? Should we consider the ideas of the men of our Renaissance inviolable, taboo, just because they have expressed them? Can we co-exist with these ideas at a time when we are waging a stern fight against theology, religion, the churches and mosques, the priests and hodjas? Can we exalt those parts of the work of Naim Frashëri where he expresses his Bektashi philosophy, or of Mjeda where he speaks of Christian theology, or of Çajup where he says, for example, that Baba Tomorri is «the throne of God», etc. and feed all this to the people as ideological nutriment, simply because they are men of our Renaissance, great men who laid the bases of and developed our written language, because their political verses are beautiful and rich in delightful figures?

No, as Marxists and in the interest of the people and socialism, we must combat these negative aspects. In ideology we cannot make concessions to the beauty of verse or the language. The assessment Engels made of Luther's language as the basis of the German literary language did not in any way prevent him from judging the role of the Reform, before and after the Peasant Revolt in Germany, in its true light and exposing it as reactionary.

Therefore, for us, too, the question of textbooks on all these subjects, and especially on literature, within and outside the school, must be subjected to a thorough analysis and examination from the angle of our philosophy.

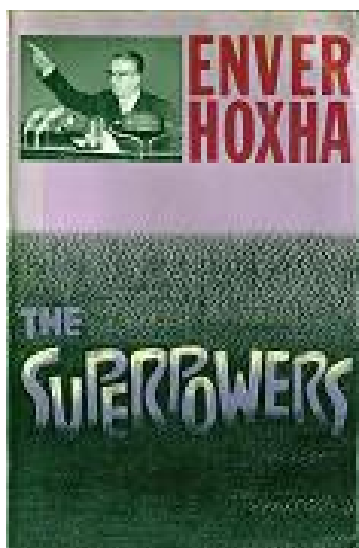
The question I raise about the men of our Renaissance must be understood and solved correctly. It is impermissible and not Marxist to obscure this epoch. We must make selections on sound criteria from the works of the authors of our Renaissance for the different categories of schools and the public, eliminating the negative passages without hesitation, for if you give the children of the 8-year schools poems and writings of an author of our Renaissance in which he speaks of God, and on the other hand you praise this author highly, then you have also exalted his idealist, deistic or polydeistic philosophy. No matter how much you criticize it, the school child will not understand you, will not understand what you are eulogizing and what you are criticizing. In the higher schools, however, their texts can be more extensive, but never without serious Marxist-Leninist criticism of their idealist views.

On the other hand, we must be on our guard against the idealization and cult of the men of our Renaissance.

We must view this question from the angle of our Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Since the time of our Renaissance, colossal changes have taken place in our country in the economic, social, cultural and educational fields.

Albania is no longer what it used to be, nor are its economy, culture, education, language, regime, politics or ideology. According to the law of materialist dialectics, everything has changed and is in the process of change. If you do not keep all these changes in mind, if you exalt one and forget the others, if you live only with the old and forget the new, if you think that the old alone should influence the new and that the new plays a minor role, then you are heading into a blind alley. While bearing these things in mind, we must combat any tendency to belittle the literature of the period of people's power. The doors of our schools should be flung open wide to this new literature of socialist realism, for it reflects the sentiments and efforts of a glorious new epoch and can and should assist the all-round education of the masses with the lofty ideals of socialist and communist society.

The other periods of the development in thinking, in science and literature, in art and music which are portrayed in textbooks, should also be examined with these same criteria. As I said earlier, in the textbooks these must be complete, but we must not permit the exaggerated mania of certain prominent erudites who are unduly keen to teach pupils, within a short period, all these things which they themselves took a whole lifetime to learn.



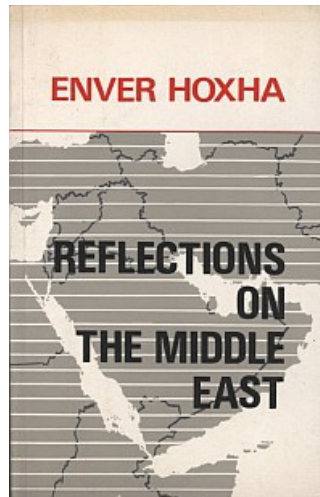
The Superpowers

SUNDAY OCTOBER 22, 1978

A POLISH POPE AT THE HEAD OF THE VATICAN

A new Pope in the Vatican. He is a Pole, the former cardinal of Cracow, the famous centre of Polish Catholicism. As everyone knows, the Church has exceptionally great influence in Poland. Poland is second only to Italy in matters of religion. The Polish cardinals, headed by Wyszyński, have stood up to all the pseudo-communist, pseudo-socialist governments in Poland under Ochab, Gomułka, Gierek, etc., etc., and have gained great privileges. Recently, Gierek has given them a completely free hand: Wyszyński makes the law in Poland. The state there has not only left the believers free to fill the churches and cathedrals, but it pays for the building of new churches instead of halls of culture. Therefore, the advent of a new Pope to the head of the Vatican is not only of great importance for the Roman Catholic religion, but it has to do with a specific political aspect. The new cardinal, Wojtyła, who took the name John-Paul II, will pursue a Roman-Christian international policy. Now, for the first time in four centuries, the Pope elected to head the Vatican is not an Italian, but precisely a Pole. I think the advent of this Pope to the head of the Roman Catholic Church is the work of the CIA, the United States of America, of Brzezinski, this Pole who is actually adviser to the American president on national security. His predecessor, John-Paul I, the former cardinal of Venice, was found dead in his bed one morning only one month after he was elected "unanimously" as they say, by the conclave. They said he "died suddenly", but it is possible that neither his election nor his death were normal. This might have been a cleverly arranged manoeuvre, because the deceased was not very old and did not suffer from heart disease. A tactic was employed so that his election would seem in order, very satisfactory, without opposition, but then they secretly sang de profundis over him in order to bring the new Polish Pope, the Pope appointed by the United States of America to the head of the Vatican, the man who, with his policy will serve American imperialism first of all. The election of this new Pope will have an influence in many countries of Europe and the world, especially to build support for imperialism and to deceive the proletariat and the peoples. This event will exert a major influence in Poland as well as in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and France, where the bourgeoisie is pleased that the Roman Church is not headed by an Italian cardinal. On the other hand the Italians are very disappointed, especially the Christian Democrats and the

whole bourgeoisie of that country, all the different parties of the Italian bourgeoisie and the Italian Catholics, because the Pope is no longer theirs, a Pope from the Italian Church, but one of Polish citizenship who has the backing of the United States of America...



REFLECTIONS ON THE MIDDLE EAST

1958 — 1983. Extracts from the political diary, TIRANA, 1984

(extracts)

* * *

Hua Guofeng, the chairman of «socialist» China, held intimate talks in the palace of the Shahanshah, while SAVAK was slaughtering Iranian patriots and people en masse.

Chairman Hua is fixing up his connections with the leaders of Iran, with the Islamic countries, with Pakistan and with the Americans. It is self-evident that China is serving as a vanguard of American imperialism and the CIA in Iran. It was not accidental that Hua Guofeng, the leader of a big country, came to support the Shah against the people in revolt precisely in his last days. It is of no importance to the Chinese whether you are a Shia or a Sunni, a Buddhist or a Moslem, a Catholic or a Protestant.

They are all the same to the Chinese, all «cats» are the same so long as they catch «mice».

extracts:

THE EVENTS WHICH ARE TAKING PLACE IN THE MOSLEM COUNTRIES MUST BE SEEN IN THE LIGHT OF DIALECTICAL AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

written January 1980

* * *

The glorious past of peoples cannot be ignored

July-August 1983. . . page 451

