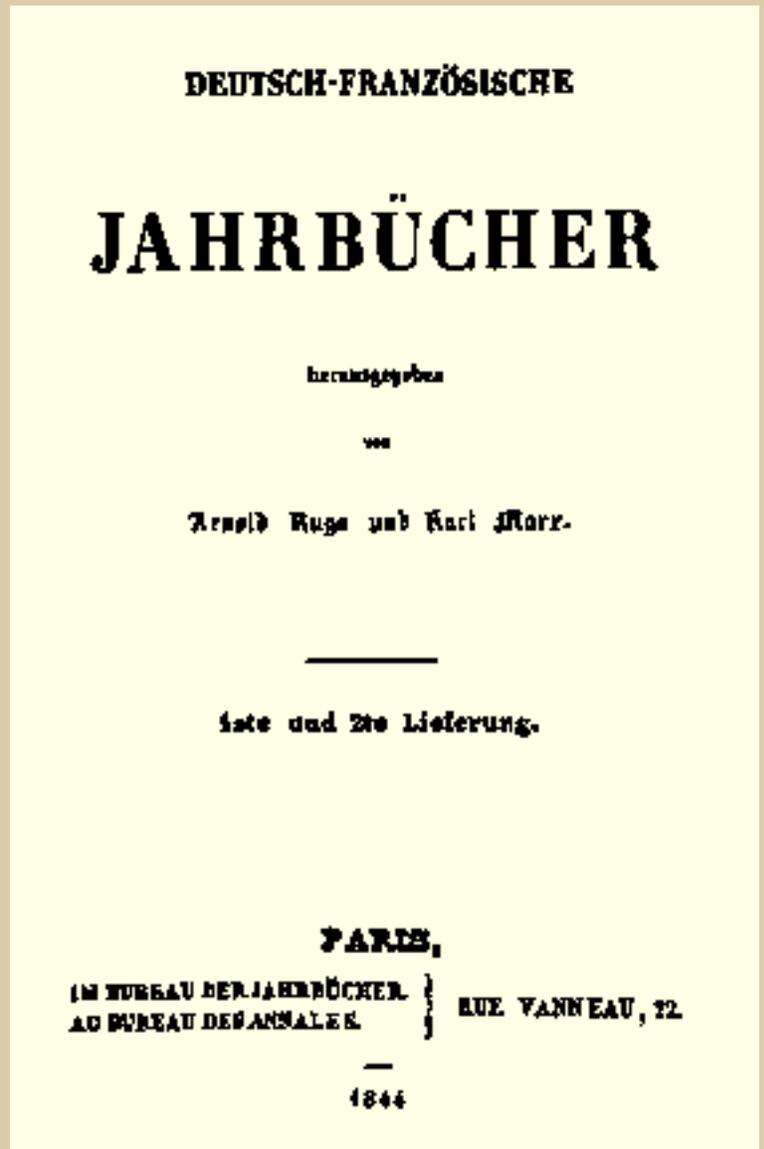


articles from the



DEUTSCH-FRANZÖSISCHE JAHRBÜCHER

[History and Information on the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher](#)

Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher

NOTE: (*M*) and (*E*) denote the author
-- that is, Marx and/or Engels.

Preparatory letters, etc.

- [Draft programme of the DFJ](#) (*M*)
- Letter: Oct 3 1843 [To Ludwig Feuerbach](#) (*M*)
- Letter: Nov 21 1843 [To Julius Fröbel](#) (*M*)

First (and only) Issue -- February 1844

- [Letters to Ruge](#) (*M*)
- [On *The Jewish Question*](#) (*M*)
- [Contribution to Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction.](#) (*M*)
- [Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy](#) (*E*)
- [Review of Thomas Carlyle's book *Past and Present*](#) (*E*)
- Letter: 1844 Apr 14 [Letter to the editor of the *Allgemeine Zeitung* \(Augsburg\)](#) (*M*)



[The Marx / Engels
Archive](#)



[The Marxist writers'
Archives](#)

Encyclopedia of Marxism

Glossary of Periodicals

De

De Tribune

A newspaper founded in 1907 by the Left wing of the Social-Democratic Labour Party of Holland. In 1909, after the expulsion of the Leftists, who formed the Social-Democratic Party of Holland, the paper became the official organ of this party; in 1918 it became the organ of the Dutch Communist Party, and appeared under this name until 1940.

Demokratisches Wochenblatt (Democratic Weekly)

German workers' newspaper published in Leipzig from January 1868 to September 1869; it was edited by Wilhelm Liebknecht. The paper played an important part in creating the [German Social-Democratic Workers' Party](#). In 1869, at the Eisenach Congress, it was made the central organ of the party and became known as [Volksstaat](#). Marx and Engels were among its contributors.

Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher (German-French Yearbook)

The Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher was created in response to the censorship and destruction of the [Rheinische Zeitung](#), which had caused a serious split in the [Young Hegelians](#). Most drifted further away in detached theorizing, devoid of immediate political action or aims. Marx and [Arnold Ruge](#) refused to take that path and teamed up to create the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*.

The paper was first planned to be based in Strasbourg, but ultimately was published in Paris, in August 1843. Paris was the centre of socialist thought and political thought, the home of the revolutions of 1789 and 1830.

The newspaper printed only one issue, in February, 1844. Publication was ended as a result of the difficulty of secretly distributing the paper (due to censorship) into Germany from France, and as a result of a disagreement between Marx and Ruge.

[Index of the Letter D](#)

[Glossary of Periodicals](#) | [Encyclopedia of Marxism](#)

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF THE *DEUTSCHFRANZÖSISCHE* *JAHRBÜCHER*

Written in August-September 1843

Translated from the French by Clemens Dutt
for the *Collected Works*

The articles of our annals will be written by Germans or Frenchmen, and will deal with

- 1) Men and systems which have acquired a useful or dangerous influence, and political questions of the day, whether they concern constitutions, political economy, or public institutions and morals.
- 2) We shall provide a review of newspapers and journals which in some way will be a castigation and correction of the servility and baseness shown by some, and which will help to call attention to the worthy efforts on behalf of humanity and freedom shown by others.
- 3) We shall include a review of the literature and publications of the old regime of Germany which is decaying and destroying itself, and finally a review of the books of the two nations which mark the commencement and continuance of the new era that we are entering.



[The Marx / Engels
Archive](#)



[The Marxist writers'
Archives](#)

TO LUDWIG FEUERBACH IN BRUCKBERG

First published in part in:

K. Grun, *Ludwig Feuerbach in seinem Brietwechsel und Nachlass*,
sowie in seiner Philosophischen Charaiterentwicklung

Bd. I, Leipzig und Heidelberg, 1874;

in full in:

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*,
second Russ. ea., Vol. 27, 1962.

Translated into English by Jack Cohen for the *Collected Works*.

Kreuznach, October 3, 1843

Dear Sir,

A few months ago while passing through [Bruckberg], Dr. Ruge informed you of our plan to publish Franco-German *Jahrbücher* and asked at the same time for your collaboration. It has now been already settled that *Paris* is to be the place for printing and publication and that the first monthly number is to appear by the end of November.

Before I leave for Paris in a few days time I feel obliged to make a brief *epistolary* approach to you since I have not had the privilege of making your personal acquaintance.

You were one of the first writers who expressed the need for a Franco-German scientific alliance. You will, therefore, assuredly be one of the first to support an enterprise aimed at bringing such an alliance into being. For German and French articles are to be published *promiscue* in the *Jahrbücher*. The best Paris writers have agreed to cooperate. Any contribution from you will be most welcome and there is probably something at your disposal that you have already written.

From your preface to the 2nd edition of *Das Wesen des Christenthums*, I am almost led to conclude that you are engaged on a fuller work on *Schelling* or that you have something about this windbag in mind. Now that would be a marvellous beginning.

Schelling, as you know, is the 38th member of the [German] Confederation. The entire German police is at his disposal as I myself once experienced when I was editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*. That is, a censorship order can prevent anything against the holy Schelling [...indecipherable word here...] from getting through. Hence it is almost impossible in Germany to attack Schelling except in books of over 21 sheets, and books of over 21 sheets are not books read by the people. *Kapp's* book is very commendable but it is too circumstantial and rather inaptly separates judgment from facts. Moreover, our governments have found a means of making such works ineffective. They must not be mentioned. They are ignored or the few official reviews dismiss them with a few contemptuous words. The great Schelling himself pretends he knows nothing about these attacks and he succeeded in diverting attention from

Kapp's book by making a tremendous *fiscal* todo about old Paulus' soup. That was a diplomatic master stroker

But just imagine Schelling exposed in Paris, before the French literary world! His vanity will not be able to restrain itself, this will wound the Prussian Government to the quick, it will be an attack on Schelling's sovereignty abroad, and a *vain* monarch sets muck greater store by his *sovereignty abroad* than at home.

How cunningly Herr von Schelling enticed the French, first of all the weak, eclectic *Cousin*, then even the gifted Leroux. For Pierre Leroux and his like still regard Schelling as the man who replaced transcendental idealism by rational realism, abstract thought by thought with flesh and blood, specialised philosophy by world philosophy! To the French romantics and mystics he cries: "I, the union of philosophy and theology", to the French materialists: "I, the union of flesh and idea", to the French sceptics: "I, the destroyer of dogmatism", in a word, "I ... Schelling!"

Schelling has not only been able to unite philosophy and theology, but philosophy and diplomacy too. He has turned philosophy into a general diplomatic science, into a diplomacy for all occasions. Thus an attack on Schelling is indirectly an attack on our entire policy, and especially on Prussian policy. Schelling's philosophy is Prussian policy *sub specie philosophiae*.

You would therefore be doing a great service to our enterprise, but even more to truth, if you were to contribute a characterisation of Schelling to the very first issue. You are just the man for this because you are *Schelling in reverse*. The *sincere thought* -- we may believe the best of our opponent -- of the *young* Schelling for the realisation of which however he did not possess the necessary qualities except imagination, he had no energy but vanity, no driving force but opium, no organ but the irritability of a feminine perceptivity, this sincere thought of his youth, which in his case remained a fantastic youthful dream, has become truth, reality manly seriousness in your case. Schelling is therefore an *anticipated caricature* of you, and as soon as reality confronts the caricature the latter must dissolve into thin air. I therefore regard you as the necessary, natural -- that is, nominated by Their Majesties Nature and History -- opponent of Schelling. Your struggle with him is the struggle of the imagination of philosophy with philosophy itself.

I confidently expect a contribution from you in the form you may find most convenient." My address is: "Herr Mäurer. Rue Vanneau No. 23, Paris, for the attention of Dr. Marx." Although she does not know you, my wife sends greetings. You would not believe how many followers you have among the fair sex.

Yours very truly,

Dr. Marx



[The Marx / Engels
Archive](#)



[The Marxist writers'
Archives](#)

TO JULIUS FROBEL IN ZURICH

First published in German and Russian

Printed according to the original

in the journal *Voprosy istorii KPSS* No. 4

Translated into English by Jack Cohen for the *Collected Works*.

Paris, November 21, 1843
rue Vanneau, No. 31, Faub. St. Germain

Dear Friend,

Your letter has just arrived, but with some very strange symptoms.

1) *Everything* which you say you enclosed is missing with the exception of *Engels' article*. This, however, is all in pieces and is therefore useless. It begins with No. 5.

2) The letters for Mäurer and myself were wrapped up in the enclosed envelope which is postmarked St. Louis. The few pages of Engels' article were in the same wrapper.

3) Mäurer's letter, which, like mine, I found open in the enclosed envelope, is also superscribed in a strange hand. I enclose the page with the writing.

Hence there are only two possibilities.

Either the *French* Government opened and seized your letters your packet. In which case return the enclosed addresses. We will then not only initiate *proceedings* against the French Post-Office but, at the same time, publicise this fact in all the opposition papers. In any event it would be better if you addressed all packets to a *French bookshop*. However, we do not believe that the French Government has perpetrated the kind of *infamy* which so far only the Austrian Government has permitted itself.

There thus remains the *second possibility*, that your *Bluntschli* and associates have played this police-spy trick. If this is so, then (1) You must bring proceedings against the Swiss and (2) Mäurer as a *French citizen* will protest to the Ministry.

As far as the business itself is concerned, it is now necessary:

a) To ask Schuller not to issue the aforesaid document for the time being, as this must be the principal ornament of our first number.

b) Send the whole of the contents to Louis Blanc's address. No. 2 or 3, rue Taitbout.

c) Ruge is not yet here. I cannot very well begin printing until he has arrived. I have had to reject the articles so far sent to me by the local people (Hess, Weill, etc.) after many protracted discussions. But Ruge is probably coming at the end of this month, and if at that time we also have the document you promised, we can begin with the printing. I have written to Feuerbach, Kapp and Hagen. Feuerbach has already replied.

d) Holland seems to me to be the most suitable place providing that your police spies have not already been in direct touch with the government.

If your Swiss people have perpetrated the infamy I will not only attack them in the *Réforme*, the *National*, the *Démocratie pacifique*, the *Siecle*, *Courrier*, *La Presse*, *Charivari*, *Commerce* and the *Revue indépendante*, but in the *Times* as well, and, if you wish, in a pamphlet written in French.

These pseudo-Republicans will have to learn that they are not dealing with young cowhands, or tailors' apprentices.

As to the *office*, I will try to acquire one along with the new lodging into which I intend moving. This will be convenient from the business and financial viewpoint.

Please excuse this scraggy letter. I can't write for indignation.

Yours, *Marx*

In any case, whether the Paris doctrinaires or the Swiss peasant lads were responsible for the trick, we will get *Arago* and *Lamartine* to make an intervention in the Chamber. If these gentlemen want to make a scandal, *ut scandalum fiat*. Reply quickly for the matter is pressing. Since Mäurer is a *French citizen*, the plot on the part of the Zurichers would be a violation of international law, with which the cowhands shall not get away.



[The Marx / Engels
Archive](#)



[The Marxist writers'
Archives](#)

Marx's letters to Arnold Ruge

This series of letters was written by Marx (at age 25) to his friend [Arnold Ruge](#). Marx and Ruge would later include the full eight-letter exchange in their first and only edition of the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, in February 1844.

[Marx to Ruge](#)

February 10, 1842

[Marx to Ruge](#)

March 5, 1842

[Marx to Ruge](#)

March 20, 1842

[Marx to Ruge](#)

April 23, 1842

[Marx to Ruge](#)

July 9, 1842

[Marx to Ruge](#)

November 11, 1842

[Ship of Fools](#)

March, 1843

[Marx to Ruge](#)

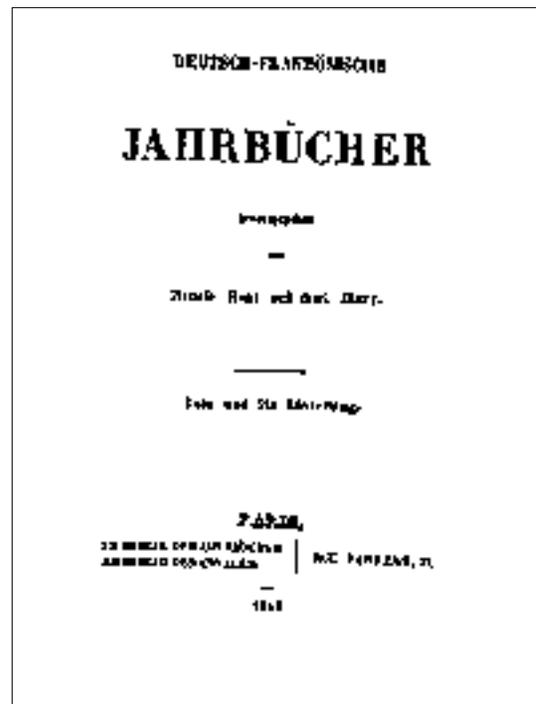
March 13, 1843

[Drag the world into the light](#)

May, 1843

[Ruthless Criticism](#)

September, 1843



[Marx/Engels Letter Archive](#)

[Marx/Engels Internet Archive](#)

ON THE JEWISH QUESTION

by
KARL MARX

written Autumn 1843

published February, 1844

Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher

ONLINE VERSION:

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 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 what 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 constraint.

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 [here, meaning, member of civil society, private life], "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 sophistically in the sphere of political life, just as the citizen only sophistically 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, 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 citizen, 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 sine 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 *rights of man*, insofar as these differ from the *rights of the citizen*.

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.

Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 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, S 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*, 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 (a son gre), 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 remains the other rights of man: equality and security.

Equality, used here in its non-political sense, is nothing but the equality of the liberty 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-like 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 citizen is declared to be the servant of egotistic man, 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 citizen, 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 in 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 Revolution francaise* 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 seigniorry, 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 isolated from the people, and of his servants.

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.



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 Laocoon 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 detail*." (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 Munzer 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 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.



[The Marx / Engels
Archive](#)



[The Marxist writers'
Archives](#)

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

by Karl Marx

Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher, February, 1844

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 focus [“speech for the altars and hearths”] 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 disillusions 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 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; open 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 regime and the ancien regime 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 regime, 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 regime, 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 regime 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 regime 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, or 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 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 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 part 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 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 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 regime, the completion of the thorn in the flesh of the modern state, the status quo of German state science expresses the incompleteness 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 *a 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 regime, 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 relations, 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 kinds who accede to the throne make a proposal, 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 private owner 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. German 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.

[Index](#)

OUTLINES OF A CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

by

FREDERICK ENGELS

Written in October and November 1843

First published in the *DeutschFranzösische Jahrbücher*, 1844

ONLINE VERSION: Translated by Martin Milligan for the *Collected Works*.

Transcribed for the Internet by director@marx.org (February 6 1996).

Political economy came into being as a natural result of the expansion of trade, and with its appearance elementary, unscientific huckstering was replaced by a developed system of licensed fraud, an entire science of enrichment.

This political economy or science of enrichment born of the merchants' mutual envy and greed, bears on its brow the mark of the most detestable selfishness. People still lived in the naive belief that gold and silver were wealth, and therefore considered nothing more urgent than the prohibition everywhere of the export of the "precious" metals. The nations faced each other like misers, each clasping to himself with both arms his precious moneybag, eyeing his neighbours with envy and distrust. Every conceivable means was employed to lure from the nations with whom one had commerce as much ready cash as possible, and to retain snugly within the customsboundary all which had happily been gathered in.

If this principle had been rigorously carried through trade would have been killed. People therefore began to go beyond this first stage. They came to appreciate that capital locked up in a chest was dead capital, while capital in circulation increased continuously. They then became more sociable, sent off their ducats as callbirds to bring others back with them, and realised that there is no harm in paying A too much for his commodity so long as it can be disposed of to B at a higher price.

On this basis the *mercantile system* was built. The avaricious character of trade was to some extent already beginning to be hidden. The nations drew slightly nearer to one another, concluded trade and friendship agreements, did business with one another and, for the sake of larger profits, treated one another with all possible love and kindness. But in fact there was still the old avarice and selfishness and from time to time this erupted in wars, which in that day were all based on trade jealousy. In these wars it also became evident that trade, like robbery, is based on the law of the strong hand. No scruples whatever were felt about exacting by cunning or violence such treaties as were held to be the most advantageous.

The cardinal point in the whole mercantile system is the theory of the balance of trade. For as it still subscribed to the dictum that gold and silver constitute wealth, only such transactions as would finally bring ready cash into the country were considered profitable. To ascertain this, exports were compared with imports. When more had been exported than imported, it was believed that the difference had come into the country in ready cash, and that the country was richer by that difference. The art of the economists, therefore, consisted in ensuring that at the end of each year exports should show a favourable

balance over imports; and for the sake of this ridiculous illusion thousands of men have been slaughtered! Trade, too, has had its crusades and inquisitions.

The eighteenth century, the century of revolution, also revolutionised economics. But just as all the revolutions of this century were onesided and bogged down in antitheses -- just as abstract materialism was set in opposition to abstract spiritualism, the republic to monarchy, the social contract to divine right -- likewise the economic revolution did not get beyond antithesis. The premises remained everywhere in force: materialism did not attack the Christian contempt for and humiliation of Man, and merely posited Nature instead of the Christian God as the Absolute confronting Man. In politics no one dreamt of examining the premises of the state as such. It did not occur to economics to question the *validity of private property*. Therefore, the new economics was only half an advance. It was obliged to betray and to disavow its own premises, to have recourse to sophistry and hypocrisy so as to cover up the contradictions in which it became entangled, so as to reach the conclusions to which it was driven not by its premises but by the humane spirit of the century. Thus economics took on a philanthropic character. It withdrew its favour from the producers and bestowed it on the consumers. It affected a solemn abhorrence of the bloody terror of the mercantile system, and proclaimed trade to be a bond of friendship and union among nations as among individuals. All was pure splendour and magnificence -- yet the premises reasserted themselves soon enough, and in contrast to this sham philanthropy produced the Malthusian population theory -- the crudest, most barbarous theory that ever existed, a system of despair which struck down all those beautiful phrases about philanthropy and world citizenship. The premises begot and reared the factory system and modern slavery, which yields nothing in inhumanity and cruelty to ancient slavery. Modern economics -- the system of free trade based on Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* -- reveals itself to be that same hypocrisy, inconsistency and immorality which now confront free humanity in every sphere.

But was Smith's system, then, not an advance? Of course it was, and a necessary advance at that. It was necessary to overthrow the mercantile system with its monopolies and hindrances to trade, so that the true consequences of private property could come to light. It was necessary for all these petty, local and national considerations to recede into the background, so that the struggle of our time could become a universal human struggle. It was necessary for the theory of private property to leave the purely empirical path of merely objective inquiry and to acquire a more scientific character which would also make it responsible for the consequences, and thus transfer the matter to a universally human sphere. It was necessary to carry the immorality contained in the old economics to its highest pitch, by attempting to deny it and by the hypocrisy introduced (a necessary result of that attempt). All this lay in the nature of the case. We gladly concede that it is only the justification and accomplishment of free trade that has enabled us to go beyond the economics of private property; but we must at the same time have the right to expose the utter theoretical and practical nullity of this free trade.

The nearer to our time the economists whom we have to judge, the more severe must our judgment become. For while Smith and Malthus found only scattered fragments, the modern economists had the whole system complete before them: the consequences had all been drawn; the contradictions came clearly enough to light; yet they did not come to examining the premises, and still accepted the responsibility for the whole system. The nearer the economists come to the present time, the further they depart from honesty. With every advance of time, sophistry necessarily increases, so as to prevent economics from lagging behind the times. This *is why Ricardo*, for instance, *is more guilty than Adam Smith*, and *McCulloch and Mill more guilty than Ricardo*.

Even the mercantile system cannot be correctly judged by modern economics since the latter is itself one-sided and as yet burdened with that very system's premises. Only that view which rises above the opposition of the two systems, which criticises the premises common to both and proceeds from a purely human, universal basis, can assign to both their proper position. It will become evident that the protagonists of free trade are more inveterate monopolists than the old mercantilists themselves. It will become evident that the sham humanity of the modern economists hides a barbarism of which their predecessors knew nothing; that the older economists' conceptual confusion is simple and consistent compared with the doubletongued logic of their attackers, and that neither of the two factions can reproach the other with anything which would not recoil upon themselves.

This is why modern liberal economics cannot comprehend the restoration of the mercantile system by List, whilst for us the matter is quite simple. The inconsistency and ambiguity of liberal economics must of necessity dissolve again into its basic components. Just as theology must either regress to blind faith or progress towards free philosophy, free trade must produce the restoration of monopolies on the one hand and the abolition of private property on the other.

The only *positive* advance which liberal economics has made is the elaboration of the laws of private property. These are contained in it, at any rate, although not yet fully elaborated and clearly expressed. It follows that on all points where it is a question of deciding which is the shortest road to wealth -- i. e., in all strictly economic controversies -- the protagonists of free trade have right on their side. That is, needless to say, in controversies with the monopolists -- not with the opponents of private property, for the English Socialists have long since proved both practically and theoretically that the latter are in a position to settle economic questions more correctly even from an economic point of view.

In the critique of political economy, therefore, we shall examine the basic categories, uncover the contradiction introduced by the freetrade system, and bring out the consequences of both sides of the contradiction.

*

The term national wealth has only arisen as a result of the liberal economists' passion for generalisation. As long as private property exists, this term has no meaning. The "national wealth" of the English is very great and yet they are the poorest people under the sun. One must either discard this term completely, or accept such premises as give it meaning. Similarly with the terms national economy and political or public economy. In the present circumstances that science ought to be called *private* economy, for its public connections exist only for the sake of private property.



The immediate consequence of private property is *trade* -- exchange of reciprocal requirements -- buying and selling. This trade, like every activity, must under the dominion of private property become a direct source of gain for the trader, i. e., each must seek to sell as dear as possible and buy as cheap as possible. In every purchase and sale, therefore, two men with diametrically opposed interests confront each other. The confrontation is decidedly antagonistic, for each knows the intentions of the other -- knows that they are opposed to his own. Therefore, the first consequence is mutual mistrust, on the one hand, and the justification of this mistrust -- the application of immoral means to attain an immoral end -- on the other. Thus, the first maxim in trade is secretiveness -- the concealment of everything which might reduce the value of the article in question. The result is that in trade it is permitted to take the utmost advantage of the ignorance, the trust, of the opposing party, and likewise to impute qualities to one's commodity which it does not possess. In a word, trade is legalised fraud. Any merchant who wants to give truth its due can bear me witness that actual practice conforms with this theory.

The mercantile system still had a certain artless Catholic candour and did not in the least conceal the immoral nature of trade. We have seen how it openly paraded its mean avarice. The mutually hostile attitude of the nations in the eighteenth century, loathsome envy and trade jealousy, were the logical consequences of trade as such. Public opinion had not yet become humanised. Why, therefore, conceal things which resulted from the inhuman, hostile nature of trade itself?

But when the *economic Luther*, Adam Smith, criticised past economics things had changed considerably. The century had been humanised; reason had asserted itself, morality began to claim its eternal right. The extorted trade treaties, the commercial wars, the strict isolation of the nations, offended too greatly against advanced consciousness. Protestant hypocrisy took the place of Catholic candour. Smith proved that humanity, too, was commerce must become "among nations, as among individuals, a bond of union and friendship" instead of being "the most fertile source of discord and animosity" (cf. *Wealth of Nations*, Bk. 4, Ch. 3, § 2); that after all it lay in the nature of things for trade, taken overall, to be advantageous to *all* parties concerned.

Smith was right to eulogise trade as humane. There is nothing absolutely immoral in the world. Trade, too, has an aspect wherein it pays homage to morality and humanity. But what homage! The law of the strong hand, the open highway robbery of the Middle Ages, became humanised when it passed over into trade; and trade became humanised when its first stage characterised by the prohibition of the export of money passed over into the mercantile system. Then the mercantile system itself was humanised. Naturally, it is in the interest of the trader to be on good terms with the one from whom he buys cheap as well as with the other to whom he sells dear. A nation therefore acts very imprudently if it fosters feelings of animosity in its suppliers and customers. The more friendly, the more advantageous. Such is the humanity of trade. And this hypocritical way of misusing morality for immoral purposes is the pride of the freetrade system. "Have we not overthrown the barbarism of the monopolies?" exclaim the hypocrites. "Have we not carried civilisation to distant parts of the world? Have we not brought about the fraternisation of the peoples, and reduced the number of wars?" Yes, all this you have done -- but *how!* You have destroyed the small monopolies so that the *one* great basic monopoly, property, may function the more freely and unrestrictedly. You have civilised the ends of the earth to win new terrain for the deployment of your vile avarice. You have brought about the fraternisation of the peoples -- but the fraternity is the fraternity of thieves. You have reduced the number of wars -- to earn all the bigger

profits in peace, to intensify to the utmost the enmity between individuals, the ignominious war of competition! When have you done anything out of pure humanity, from consciousness of the futility of the opposition between the general and the individual interest? When have you been moral without being interested, without harbouring at the back of your mind immoral, egoistical motives?

By dissolving nationalities, the liberal economic system had done its best to universalise enmity, to transform mankind into a horde of ravenous beasts (for what else are competitors?) who devour one another just *because* each has identical interests with all the others -- after this preparatory work there remained but one step to take before the goal was reached, the dissolution of the family. To accomplish this, economy's own beautiful invention, the factory system, came to its aid. The last vestige of common interests, the community of goods in the possession of the family, has been undermined by the factory system and -- at least here in England -- is already in the process of dissolution. It is a common practice for children, as soon as they are capable of work (i. e., as soon as they reach the age of nine), to spend their wages themselves, to look upon their parental home as a mere boardinghouse, and hand over to their parents a fixed amount for food and lodging. How can it be otherwise? What else can result from the separation of interests, such as forms the basis of the freetrade system? Once a principle is set in motion, it works by its own impetus through all its consequences, whether the economists like it or not.

But the economist does not know himself what cause he serves. He does not know that with all his egoistical reasoning he nevertheless forms but a link in the chain of mankind's universal progress. He does not know that by his dissolution of all sectional interests he merely paves the way for the great transformation to which the century is moving -- the reconciliation of mankind with nature and with itself.



The next category established by trade is *value*. There is no dispute between the old and the modern economists over this category, just as there is none over all the others, since the monopolists in their obsessive mania for getting rich had no time left to concern themselves with categories. All controversies over such points stem from the modern economists.

The economist who lives by antitheses has also of course a *double* value -- abstract or real value and exchangevalue. There was a protracted quarrel over the nature of real value between the English, who defined the costs of production as the expression of real value, and the Frenchman Say, who claimed to measure this value by the utility of an object. The quarrel hung in doubt from the beginning of the century, then became dormant without a decision having been reached. The economists cannot decide anything.

The English -- McCulloch and Ricardo in particular -- thus assert that the abstract value of a thing is determined by the costs of production. *Nota bene* the abstract value, not the exchangevalue, the *exchangeable value*, value in exchange -- that, they say, is something quite different. Why are the costs of production the measure of value? Because -- listen to this! -- because no one in ordinary conditions and leaving aside the circumstance of competition would sell an object for less than it costs him to produce it. Would sell? What have we to do with "selling" here, where it is not a question of value in

exchange? So we find trade again, which we are specifically supposed to leave aside -- and what trade! A trade in which the cardinal factor, the circumstance of competition, is not to be taken into account! First, an abstract value; now also an abstract trade -- a trade without competition, i. e., a man without a body, a thought without a brain to produce thoughts. And does the economist never stop to think that as soon as competition is left out of account there is no guarantee at all that the producer will sell his commodity just at the cost of production? What confusion!

Furthermore: Let us concede for a moment that everything is as the economist says. Supposing someone were to make with tremendous exertion and at enormous cost something utterly useless, something which no one desires -- is that also worth its production costs? Certainly not, says the economist: Who will want to buy it? So we suddenly have not only Say's much decried utility but alongside it -- with "buying" -- the circumstance of competition. It can't be done -- the economist cannot for one moment hold on to his abstraction. Not only what he painfully seeks to remove -- competition -- but also what he attacks -- utility -- crops up at every moment. Abstract value and its determination by the costs of production are, after all, only abstractions, nonentities.

But let us suppose once more for a moment that the economist is correct -- how then will he determine the costs of production without taking account of competition? When examining the costs of production we shall see that this category too is based on competition, and here once more it becomes evident how little the economist is able to substantiate his claims.

If we turn to Say, we find the same abstraction. The utility of an object is something purely subjective, something which cannot be decided absolutely, and certainly something which cannot be decided at least as long as one still roams about in antitheses. According to this theory, the necessities of life ought to possess more value than luxury articles. The only possible way to arrive at a more or less objective, *apparently* general decision on the greater or lesser utility of an object is, under the dominion of private property, by competition; and yet it is precisely that circumstance which is to be left aside. But if competition is admitted production costs come in as well; for no one will sell for less than what he has himself invested in production. Thus, here, too, the one side of the opposition passes over involuntarily into the other.

Let us try to introduce clarity into this confusion. The value of an object includes both factors, which the contending parties arbitrarily separate -- and, as we have seen, unsuccessfully. Value is the relation of production costs to utility. The first application of value is the decision as to whether a thing ought to be produced at all; i.e., as to whether utility counterbalances production costs. Only then can one talk of the application of value to exchange. The production costs of two objects being equal, the deciding factor determining their comparative value will be utility.

This basis is the only just basis of exchange. But if one proceeds from this basis, who is to decide the utility of the object? The mere opinion of the parties concerned? Then in any event *one* will be cheated. Or are we to assume a determination grounded in the inherent utility of the object independent of the parties concerned, and not apparent to them? If so, the exchange can only be effected by *coercion*, and each party considers itself cheated. The contradiction between the real inherent utility of the thing and the determination of that utility, between the determination of utility and the freedom of those who exchange, cannot be superseded without superseding private property; and once this is superseded, there can no longer be any question of exchange as it exists at present. The practical application of the concept of value will then be increasingly confined to the decision about production, and that is its proper sphere.

But how do matters stand at present? We have seen that the concept of value is violently torn asunder, and that each of the separate sides is declared to be the whole. Production costs, distorted from the outset by competition, are supposed to be value itself. So is mere subjective utility -- since no other kind of utility can exist at present. To help these lame definitions on to their feet, it is in both cases necessary to have recourse to competition; and the best of it is that with the English competition represents utility, in contrast to the costs of production, whilst inversely with Say it introduces the costs of production in contrast to utility. But what kind of utility, what kind of production costs, does it introduce? Its utility depends on chance, on fashion, on the whim of the rich; its production costs fluctuate with the fortuitous relationship of demand and supply.

The difference between real value and exchangevalue is based on a fact -- namely, that the value of a thing differs from the so-called equivalent given for it in trade; i.e., that this equivalent is not an equivalent. This so-called equivalent is the *price* of the thing, and if the economist were honest, he would employ this term for "value in exchange". But he has still to keep up some sort of pretence that price is somehow bound up with value, lest the immorality of trade become too obvious. It is, however, quite correct, and a fundamental law of private property, that *price is* determined by the reciprocal action of production costs and competition. This purely empirical law was the first to be discovered by the economist; and from this law he then abstracted his "real value", i.e., the price at the time when competition is in a state of equilibrium, when demand and supply cover each other. Then, of course, what remains over are the costs of production and it is these which the economist proceeds to call "real value", whereas it is merely a definite aspect of price. Thus everything in economics stands on its head. Value, the primary factor, the source of price, is made dependent on price, its own product. As is well known, this inversion is the essence of abstraction; on which see Feuerbach.

*

According to the economists, the production costs of a commodity consist of three elements: the rent for the piece of land required to produce the raw material; the capital with its profit, and the wages for the labour required for production and manufacture. But it becomes immediately evident that capital and labour are identical, since the economists themselves confess that capital is "storedup labour". We are therefore left with only two sides -- the natural, objective side, land; and the human, subjective side, labour, which includes capital and, besides capital, a third factor which the economist does not think about -- I mean the mental element of invention, of thought, alongside the physical element of sheer labour. What has the economist to do with inventiveness? Have not all inventions fallen into his lap without any effort on his part? Has *one* of them cost him anything? Why then should he bother about them in the calculation of production costs? Land, capital and labour are for him the conditions of wealth, and he requires nothing else. Science is no concern of his.

What does it matter to him that he has received its gifts through Berthollet, Davy, Liebig, Watt, Cartwright, etc. -- gifts which have benefited him and his production immeasurably? He does not know how to calculate such things; the advances of science go beyond his figures. But in a rational order which has gone beyond the division of interests as it is found with the economist, the mental element certainly belongs among the elements of production and will find its place, too, in economics among the costs of

production. And here it is certainly gratifying to know that the promotion of science also brings its material reward; to know that a single achievement of science like James Watt's steamengine has brought in more for the world in the first fifty years of its existence than the world has spent on the promotion of science since the beginning of time.

We have, then, two elements of production in operation -- nature and man, with man again active physically and mentally, and can now return to the economist and his production costs.

*

What cannot be monopolised has no value, says the economist -- a proposition which we shall examine more closely later on. If we say "has no *price*", then the proposition is valid for the order which rests on private property. If land could be had as easily as air, no one would pay rent. Since this is not the case, but since, rather, the extent of a piece of land to be appropriated is limited in any particular case, one pays rent for the appropriated, i.e., the monopolised land, or one pays down a purchase price for it. After this enlightenment about the origin of the value of land it is, however, very strange to have to hear from the economist that the rent of land is the difference between the yield from the land for which rent is paid and from the worst land worth cultivating at all. As is well known, this is the definition of rent fully developed for the first time by Ricardo. This definition is indeed correct in practice if one presupposes that a fall in demand reacts *instantaneously* on rent, and at once puts a corresponding amount of the worst cultivated land out of cultivation. This, however, is not the case, and the definition is therefore inadequate. Moreover, it does not cover the causation of rent, and is therefore even for that reason untenable. In opposition to this definition, Col. T. P. Thompson, the champion of the AntiCorn Law League, revived Adam Smith's definition, and substantiated it. According to him, rent is the relation between the competition of those striving for the use of the land and the limited quantity of available land.

Here at least is a return to the origin of rent; but this explanation does not take into account the varying fertility of the soil, just as the previous explanation leaves out competition.

Once more, therefore we have two onesided and hence only partial definitions of a single object. As in the case of the concept of value, we shall again have to combine these two definitions so as to find the correct definition which follows from the development of the thing itself and thus embraces all practice. Rent is the relation between the productivity of the land, the natural side (which in turn consists of *natural* fertility and *human* cultivation -- labour applied to effect improvement), and the human side, competition. The economists may shake their heads over this "definition"; they will discover to their horror that it embraces everything relevant to this matter.

The *landowner* has nothing with which to reproach the merchant.

He practices robbery in monopolising the land. He practices robbery in exploiting for his own benefit the increase in population which increases competition and thus the value of his estate; in turning into a source of personal advantage that which has not been his own doing -- that which is his by sheer accident. He practices robbery in *leasing his land*, when he eventually seizes for himself the improvements effected by his tenant. This is the secret of the everincreasing wealth of the big

landowners.

The axioms which qualify as robbery the landowner's method of deriving an income -- namely, that each has a right to the product of his labour, or that no one shall reap where he has not sown -- are not advanced by us. The first excludes the duty of feeding children; the second deprives each generation of the right to live, since each generation starts with what it inherits from the preceding generation. These axioms are, rather, consequences of private property. One should either put into effect the consequences or abandon private property as a premise.

Indeed, the original act of appropriation itself is justified by the assertion of the still earlier existence of *common* property rights. Thus, wherever we turn, private property leads us into contradictions.

To make land an object of huckstering -- the land which is our one and all, the first condition of our existence -- was the last step towards making oneself an object of huckstering. It was and is to this very day an immorality surpassed only by the immorality of selfalienation. And the original appropriation -- the monopolisation of the land by a few, the exclusion of the rest from that which is the condition of their life -- yields nothing in immorality to the subsequent huckstering of the land.

If here again we abandon private property, rent is reduced to its truth, to the rational notion which essentially lies at its root. The value of the land divorced from it as rent then reverts to the land itself. This value, to be measured by the productivity of equal areas of land subjected to equal applications of labour, is indeed taken into account as part of the production costs when determining the value of products; and like rent, it is the relation of productivity to competition -- but to *true* competition, such as will be developed when its time comes.

*

We have seen that capital and labour are initially identical; we see further from the explanations of the economist himself that, in the process of production, capital, the result of labour, is immediately transformed again into the substratum, into the material of labour; and that therefore the momentarily postulated separation of capital from labour is immediately superseded by the unity of both. And yet the economist separates capital from labour, and yet clings to the division without giving any other recognition to their unity than by his definition of capital as "storedup labour". The split between capital and labour resulting from private property is nothing but the inner dichotomy of labour corresponding to this divided condition and arising out of it. And after this separation is accomplished, capital is divided once more into the original capital and profit -- the increment of capital, which it receives in the process of production; although in practice profit is immediately lumped together with capital and set into motion with it. Indeed, even profit is in its turn split into interest and profit proper. In the case of interest, the absurdity of these splits is carried to the extreme. The immorality of lending at interest, of receiving without working, merely for making a loan, though already implied in private property, is only too obvious, and has long ago been recognised for what it is by unprejudiced popular consciousness, which in such matters is usually right. All these subtle splits and divisions stem from the original separation of capital from labour and from the culmination of this separation -- the division of mankind into capitalists and workers -- a division which daily becomes ever more acute, and which, as we shall see, is *bound* to

deepen. This separation, however, like the separation already considered of land from capital and labour, is in the final analysis an impossible separation. What share land, capital and labour each have in any particular product cannot be determined. The three magnitudes are incommensurable. The land produces the raw material, but not without capital and labour. Capital presupposes land and labour. And labour presupposes *at least* land, and usually also capital. The functions of these three elements are completely different, and are not to be measured by a fourth common standard. Therefore, when it comes to dividing the proceeds among the three elements under existing conditions, there is no inherent standard; it is an entirely alien and with regard to them fortuitous standard that decides -- competition, the cunning right of the stronger. Rent implies competition; profit on capital is solely determined by competition; and the position with regard to wages we shall see presently.

If we abandon private property, then all these unnatural divisions disappear. The difference between interest and profit disappears; capital is nothing without labour, without movement. The significance of profit is reduced to the weight which capital carries in the determination of the costs of production, and profit thus remains inherent in capital, in the same way as capital itself reverts to its original unity with labour.

*

Labour -- the main factor in production, the "source of wealth" free human activity -- comes off badly with the economist. Just as capital has already been separated from labour, so labour is now in turn split for a second time: the product of labour confronts labour as wages, is separated from it, and is in its turn as usual determined by competition -- there being, as we have seen, no firm standard determining labour's share in production. If we do away with private property, this unnatural separation also disappears. Labour becomes its own reward, and the true significance of the wages of labour, hitherto alienated, comes to light -- namely, the significance of labour for the determination of the production costs of a thing.

*

We have seen that in the end everything comes down to competition, so long as private property exists. It is the economist's principal category -- his most beloved daughter, whom he ceaselessly caresses -- and look out for the Medusa's head which she will show you!

The immediate consequence of private property was the split of production into two opposing sides -- the natural and the human sides, the soil which without fertilisation by man is dead and sterile, and human activity, the first condition of which is that very soil. Furthermore we have seen how human activity in its turn was dissolved into labour and capital, and how these two sides antagonistically confronted each other. Thus we already had the struggle of the three elements against one another, instead of their mutual support; now we have to add that private property brings in its wake the fragmentation of each of these elements. One piece of land stands confronted by another, one capital by

another, one labourer by another. In other words, because private property isolates everyone in his own crude solitariness, and because, nevertheless, everyone has the same interest as his neighbour, one landowner stands antagonistically confronted by another, one capitalist by another, one worker by another. In this discord of identical interests resulting precisely from this identity is consummated the immorality of mankind's condition hitherto; and this consummation is competition.

*

The opposite of *competition is monopoly*. Monopoly was the warcry of the Mercantilists; competition the battlecry of the liberal economists. It is easy to see that this antithesis is again a quite hollow antithesis. Every competitor *cannot but* desire to have the monopoly, be he worker, capitalist or landowner. Each smaller group of competitors cannot but desire to have the monopoly for itself against all others. Competition is based on selfinterest, and selfinterest in turn breeds monopoly. In short, competition passes over into monopoly. On the other hand, monopoly cannot stem the tide of competition -- indeed, it itself breeds competition; just as a prohibition of imports, for instance, or high tariffs positively breed the competition of smuggling. The contradiction of competition is exactly the same as that of private property. It is in the interest of each to possess everything, but in the interest of the whole that each possess an equal amount. Thus, the general and the individual interest are diametrically opposed to each other. The contradiction of competition is that each cannot but desire the monopoly, whilst the whole as such is bound to lose by monopoly and must therefore remove it. Moreover, competition already presupposes monopoly -- namely, the monopoly of property (and here the hypocrisy of the liberals comes once more to light); and so long as the monopoly of property exists, for so long the possession of monopoly is equally justified -- for monopoly, once it exists, is also property. What a pitiful halfmeasure, therefore, to attack the small monopolies, and to leave untouched the basic monopoly! And if we add to this the economist's proposition mentioned above, that nothing has value which cannot be monopolised -- that nothing, therefore, which does not permit of such monopolisation can enter this arena of competition -- then our assertion that competition presupposes monopoly is completely justified.

*

The law of competition is that demand and supply always strive to complement each other, and therefore never do so. The two sides are torn apart again and transformed into flat opposition. Supply always follows close on demand without ever quite covering it. It is either too big or too small, never corresponding to demand; because in this unconscious condition of mankind no one knows how big supply or demand is. If demand is greater than supply the price rises and, as a result, supply is to a certain degree stimulated. As soon as it comes on to the market, prices fall; and if it becomes greater than demand, then the fall in prices is so significant that demand is once again stimulated. So it goes on unendingly -- a permanently unhealthy state of affairs -- a constant alternation of overstimulation and flagging which precludes all advance -- a state of perpetual fluctuation without ever reaching its goal. This law with its constant adjustment, in which whatever is lost here is gained there, is regarded as

something excellent by the economist. It is his chief glory -- he cannot see enough of it, and considers it in all its possible and impossible applications. Yet it is obvious that this law is purely a law of nature and not a law of the mind. It is a law which produces revolution. The economist comes along with his lovely theory of demand and supply, proves to you that "one can never produce too much", and practice replies with trade crises, which reappear as regularly as the comets, and of which we have now on the average one every five to seven years. For the last eighty years these trade crises have arrived just as regularly as the great plagues did in the past -- and they have brought in their train more misery and more immorality than the latter. (Compare Wade: *History of the Middle and Working Classes*, London, 1835, p. 211.) Of course, these commercial upheavals confirm the law, confirm it exhaustively -- but in a manner different from that which the economist would have us believe to be the case. What are we to think of a law which can only assert itself through periodic upheavals? It is certainly a natural law based on the unconsciousness of the participants. If the producers as such knew how much the consumers required, if they were to organise production, if they were to share it out amongst themselves, then the fluctuations of competition and its tendency to crisis would be impossible. Carry on production consciously as human beings -- not as dispersed atoms without consciousness of your species -- and you have overcome all these artificial and untenable antitheses. But as long as you continue to produce in the present unconscious, thoughtless manner, at the mercy of chance -- for just so long trade crises will remain; and each successive crisis is bound to become more universal and therefore worse than the preceding one; is bound to impoverish a larger body of small capitalists, and to augment in increasing proportion the numbers of the class who live by labour alone, thus considerably enlarging the mass of labour to be employed (the major problem of our economists) and finally causing a social revolution such as has never been dreamt of in the philosophy of the economists.

The perpetual fluctuation of prices such as is created by the condition of competition completely deprives trade of its last vestige of morality. It is no longer a question of *value*; the same system which appears to attach such importance to value, which confers on the abstraction of value in money form the honour of having an existence of its own -- this very system destroys by means of competition the inherent value of all things, and daily and hourly changes the valuerelationship of all things to one another. Where is there any possibility remaining in this whirlpool of an exchange based on a moral foundation? In this continuous upanddown, everyone must seek to hit upon the most favourable moment for purchase and sale; everyone must become a speculator -- that is to say, must reap where he has not sown; must enrich himself at the expense of others, must calculate on the misfortune of others, or let chance win for him. The speculator always counts on disasters, particularly on bad harvests. He utilises everything -- for instance, the New York fire in its time -- and immorality's culminating point is the speculation on the Stock Exchange, where history, and with it mankind, is demoted to a means of gratifying the avarice of the calculating or gambling speculator. And let not the honest "respectable" merchant rise above the gambling on the Stock Exchange with a Pharisaic "I thank thee, O Lord...", etc. He is as bad as the speculators in stocks and shares. He speculates just as much as they do. He has to: competition compels him to. And his trading activity therefore implies the same immorality as theirs. The truth of the relation of competition is the relation of consumption to productivity. In a world worthy of mankind there will be no other competition than this. The community will have to calculate what it can produce with the means at its disposal; and in accordance with the relationship of this productive power to the mass of consumers it will determine how far it has to raise or lower production, how far it has to give way to, or curtail, luxury. But so that they may be able to pass a correct judgment on this relationship and on the increase in productive power to be expected from a rational state of affairs within the community, I invite my readers to consult the writings of the English Socialists, and partly also those

of Fourier.

Subjective competition -- the contest of capital against capital, of labour against labour, etc. -- will under these conditions be reduced to the spirit of emulation grounded in human nature (a concept tolerably set forth so far only by Fourier), which after the transcendence of opposing interests will be confined to its proper and rational sphere.

*

The struggle of capital against capital, of labour against labour, of land against land, drives production to a feverpitch at which production turns all natural and rational relations upsidedown. No capital can stand the competition of another if it is not brought to the highest pitch of activity. No piece of land can be profitably cultivated if it does not continuously increase its productivity. No worker can hold his own against his competitors if he does not devote all his energy to labour. No one at all who enters into the struggle of competition can weather it without the utmost exertion of his energy, without renouncing every truly human purpose. The consequence of this overexertion on the one side is, inevitably, slackening on the other. When the fluctuation of competition is small, when demand and supply, consumption and production, are almost equal, a stage must be reached in the development of production where there is so much superfluous productive power that the great mass of the nation has nothing to live on, that the people starve from sheer abundance. For some considerable time England has found herself in this crazy position, in this living absurdity. When production is subject to greater fluctuations, as it is bound to be in consequence of such a situation, then the alternation of boom and crisis, overproduction and slump, sets in. The economist has never been able to find an explanation for this mad situation. In order to explain it, he invented the population theory, which is just as senseless -- indeed even more senseless than the contradiction of coexisting wealth and poverty. The economist *could not afford* to see the truth; he could not afford to admit that this contradiction is a simple consequence of competition; for in that case his entire system would have fallen to bits.

For us the matter is easy to explain. The productive power at mankind's disposal is immeasurable. The productivity of the soil can be increased *ad infinitum* by the application of capital, labour and science. According to the most able economists and statisticians (cf. Alison's *Principles of Population*, Vol. I, Chs. I and 2), "overpopulated" Great Britain can be brought within ten years to produce a corn yield sufficient for a population six times its present size. Capital increases daily; labour power grows with population; and day by day science increasingly makes the forces of nature subject to man. This immeasurable productive capacity, handled consciously and in the interest of all, would soon reduce to a minimum the labour falling to the share of mankind. Left to competition, it does the same, but within a context of antitheses. One part of the land is cultivated in the best possible manner whilst another part -- in Great Britain and Ireland thirty million acres of good land -- lies barren. One part of capital circulates with colossal speed; another lies dead in the chest. One part of the workers works fourteen or sixteen hours a day, whilst another part stands idle and inactive, and starves. Or the partition leaves this realm of simultaneity: today trade is good; demand is very considerable; everyone works; capital is turned over with miraculous speed; farming flourishes; the workers work themselves sick. Tomorrow stagnation sets in. The cultivation of the land is not worth the effort; entire stretches of land remain untilled; the flow of

capital suddenly freezes; the workers have no employment, and the whole country labours under surplus wealth and surplus population.

The economist cannot afford to accept this exposition of the subject as correct; otherwise, as has been said, he would have to give up his whole system of competition. He would have to recognise the hollowness of his antithesis of production and consumption, of surplus population and surplus wealth. To bring fact and theory into conformity with each other -- since this fact simply could not be denied -- the population theory was invented.

Malthus, the originator of this doctrine, maintains that population is always pressing on the means of subsistence; that as soon as production increases, population increases in the same proportion; and that the inherent tendency of the population to multiply in excess of the available means of subsistence is the root of all misery and all vice. For, when there are too many people, they have to be disposed of in one way or another: either they must be killed by violence or they must starve. But when this has happened, there is once more a gap which other multipliers of the population immediately start to fill up once more: and so the old misery begins all over again. What is more, this is the case in all circumstances -- not only in civilised, but also in primitive conditions. In New Holland, with a population density of *one* per square mile, the savages suffer just as much from overpopulation as England. In short, if we want to be consistent, we must admit *that the earth was already overpopulated when only one man existed*. The implications of this line of thought are that since it is precisely the poor who are the surplus, nothing should be done for them except to make their dying of starvation as easy as possible, and to convince them that it cannot be helped and that there is no other salvation for their whole class than keeping propagation down to the absolute minimum. Or if this proves impossible, then it is after all better to establish a state institution for the painless killing of the children of the poor, such as "Marcus" t83 has suggested, whereby each workingclass family would be allowed to have two and a half children, any excess being painlessly killed. Charity is to be considered a crime, since it supports the augmentation of the surplus population. Indeed, it will be very advantageous to declare poverty a crime and to turn poorhouses into prisons, as has already happened in England as a result of the new "liberal" Poor Law. Admittedly it is true that this theory ill conforms with the Bible's doctrine of the perfection of God and of His creation; but "it is a poor refutation to enlist the Bible against facts".

Am I to go on any longer elaborating this vile, infamous theory, this hideous blasphemy against nature and mankind? Am I to pursue its consequences any further? Here at last we have the immorality of the economist brought to its highest pitch. What are all the wars and horrors of the monopoly system compared with this theory! And it is just this theory which is the keystone of the liberal system of free trade, whose fall entails the downfall of the entire edifice. For if here competition is proved to be the cause of misery, poverty and crime, who then will still dare to speak up for it?

In his abovementioned work, Alison has shaken the Malthusian theory by bringing in the productive power of the land, and by opposing to the Malthusian principle the fact that each adult can produce more than he himself needs -- a fact without which mankind could not multiply, indeed could not even exist; if it were not so how could those still growing up live? But Alison does not go to the root of the matter, and therefore in the end reaches the same conclusion as Malthus. True enough, he proves that Malthus' principle is incorrect, but cannot gainsay the facts which have impelled Malthus to his principle.

If Malthus had not considered the matter so onesidedly, he could not have failed to see that surplus population or labour-power is invariably tied up with surplus wealth, surplus capital and surplus landed

property. The population is only too large where the productive power as a whole is too large. The condition of every overpopulated country, particularly England, since the time when Malthus wrote, makes this abundantly clear. These were the facts which Malthus ought to have considered in their totality, and whose consideration was bound to have led to the correct conclusion. Instead, he selected one fact, gave no consideration to the others, and therefore arrived at his crazy conclusion. The second error he committed was to confuse means of subsistence with [means of] employment. That population is always pressing on the means of employment -- that the number of people produced depends on the number of people who can be employed -- in short, that the production of labourpower has been regulated so far by the law of competition and is therefore also exposed to periodic crises and fluctuations -- this is a fact whose establishment constitutes Malthus' merit. But the means of employment are not the means of subsistence. Only in their endresult are the means of employment increased by the increase in machinepower and capital. The means of subsistence increase as soon as productive power increases even slightly. Here a new contradiction in economics comes to light. The economist's "demand" is not the real demand; his "consumption" is an artificial consumption. For the economist, only that person really demands, only that person is a real consumer, who has an equivalent to offer for what he receives. But if it is a fact that every adult produces more than he himself can consume, that children are like trees which give superabundant returns on the outlays invested in them -- and these certainly are facts, are they not? -- then it must be assumed that each worker ought to be able to produce far more than he needs and that the community, therefore, ought to be very glad to provide him with everything he needs; one must consider a large family to be a very welcome gift for the community. But the economist, with his crude outlook, knows no other equivalent than that which is paid to him in tangible ready cash. He is so firmly set in his antitheses that the most striking facts are of as little concern to him as the most scientific principles.

We destroy the contradiction simply by transcending it. With the fusion of the interests now opposed to each other there disappears the contradiction between excess population here and excess wealth there; there disappears the miraculous fact (more miraculous than all the miracles of all the religions put together) that a nation has to starve from sheer wealth and plenty; and there disappears the crazy assertion that the earth lacks the power to feed men. This assertion is the pinnacle of Christian economics -- and that our economics is essentially Christian I could have proved from every proposition, from every category, and shall in fact do so in due course. The Malthusian theory is but the economic expression of the religious dogma of the contradiction of spirit and nature and the resulting corruption of both. As regards religion, and together with religion, this contradiction was resolved long ago, and I hope that in the sphere of economics I have likewise demonstrated the utter emptiness of this contradiction. Moreover, I shall not accept as competent any defence of the Malthusian theory which does not explain to me on the basis of its own principles how a people can starve from sheer plenty and bring this into harmony with reason and fact.

At the same time, the Malthusian theory has certainly been a necessary point of transition which has taken us an immense step further. Thanks to this theory, as to economics as a whole, our attention has been drawn to the productive power of the earth and of mankind; and after overcoming this economic despair we have been made for ever secure against the fear of overpopulation. We derive from it the most powerful economic arguments for a social transformation. For even if Malthus were completely right, this transformation would have to be undertaken straight away; for only this transformation, only the education of the masses which it provides, makes possible that moral restraint of the propagative instinct which Malthus himself presents as the most effective and easiest remedy for overpopulation. Through

this theory we have come to know the deepest degradation of mankind, their dependence on the conditions of competition. It has shown us how in the last instance private property has turned man into a commodity whose production and destruction also depend solely on demand; how the system of competition has thus slaughtered, and daily continues to slaughter, millions of men. All this we have seen, and all this drives us to the abolition of this degradation of mankind through the abolition of private property, competition and the opposing interests.

Yet, so as to deprive the universal fear of overpopulation of any possible basis, let us once more return to the relationship of productive power to population. Malthus establishes a formula on which he bases his entire system: population is said to increase in a geometrical progression -- $1+2+4+8+16+32$, etc.; the productive power of the land in an arithmetical progression -- $1+2+3+4+5+6$. The difference is obvious, is terrifying; but is it correct? Where has it been proved that the productivity of the land increases in an arithmetical progression? The extent of land is limited. All right! The labourpower to be employed on this landsurface increases with population. Even if we assume that the increase in yield due to increase in labour does not always rise in proportion to the labour, there still remains a third element which, admittedly, never means anything to the economist -- science -- whose progress is as unlimited and at least as rapid as that of population. What progress does the agriculture of this century owe to chemistry alone -- indeed, to two men alone, Sir Humphry Davy and Justus Liebig! But science increases at least as much as population. The latter increases in proportion to the size of the previous generation, science advances in proportion to the knowledge bequeathed to it by the previous generation, and thus under the most ordinary conditions also in a geometrical progression. And what is impossible to science? But it is absurd to talk of overpopulation so long as "there is 'enough waste land in the valley of the Mississippi for the whole population of Europe to be transplanted there"; so long as no more than onethird of the earth can be considered cultivated, and so long as the production of this third itself can be raised sixfold and more by the application of improvements already known.

*

Thus, competition sets capital against capital, labour against labour, landed property against landed property; and likewise each of these elements against the other two. In the struggle the stronger wins; and in order to predict the outcome of the struggle, we shall have to investigate the strength of the contestants. First of all, labour is weaker than either landed property or capital, for the worker must work to live, whilst the landowner can live on his rent, and the capitalist on his interest, or, if the need arises, on his capital or on capitalise] property in land. The result is that only the very barest necessities, the mere means of subsistence, fall to the lot of labour; whilst the largest part of the products is shared between capital and landed property. Moreover, the stronger worker drives the weaker out of the market, just as larger capital drives out smaller capital, and larger landed property drives out smaller landed property. Practice confirms this conclusion. The advantages which the larger manufacturer and merchant enjoy over the smaller, and the big landowner over the owner of a single acre, are well known. The result is that already under ordinary conditions, in accordance with the law of the stronger, large capital and large landed property swallow small capital and small landed property -- i.e., centralisation of property. In crises of trade and agriculture, this centralisation proceeds much more rapidly.

In general large property increases much more rapidly than small property, since a much smaller portion is deducted from its proceeds as property expenses. This law of the centralisation of private property is as immanent in private property as all the others. The middle classes must increasingly disappear until the world is divided into millionaires and paupers, into large landowners and poor farm labourers. All the laws, all the dividing of landed property, all the possible splitting up of capital, are of no avail: this result must and will come, unless it is anticipated by a total transformation of social conditions, a fusion of opposed interests, an abolition of private property.

Free competition, the keyword of our present day economists, is an impossibility. Monopoly at least intended to protect the consumer against fraud, even if it could not in fact do so. The abolition of monopoly, however, opens the door wide to fraud. You say that competition carries with it the remedy for fraud, since no one will buy bad articles. But that means that everyone has to be an expert in every article, which is impossible. Hence the necessity for monopoly, which many articles in fact reveal. Pharmacies, etc., must have a monopoly. And the most important article -- money -- requires a monopoly most of all. Whenever the circulating medium has ceased to be a state monopoly it has invariably produced a trade crisis; and the English economists, Dr. Wade among them, do concede in this case the necessity for monopoly. But monopoly is no protection against counterfeit money. One can take one's stand on either side of the question: the one is as difficult as the other. Monopoly produces free competition, and the latter, in turn, produces monopoly. Therefore both must fall, and these difficulties must be resolved through the transcendence of the principle which gives rise to them.

*

Competition has penetrated all the relationships of our life and completed the reciprocal bondage in which men now hold themselves. Competition is the great mainspring which again and again jerks into activity our aging and withering social order, or rather disorder; but with each new exertion it also saps a part of this order's waning strength. Competition governs the numerical advance of mankind; it likewise governs its moral advance. Anyone who has any knowledge of the statistics of crime must have been struck by the peculiar regularity with which crime advances year by year, and with which certain causes produce certain crimes. The extension of the factory system is followed everywhere by an increase in crime. The number of arrests, of criminal cases -- in deed, the number of murders, burglaries, petty thefts, etc., for a large town or for a district -- can be predicted year by year with unflinching precision, as has been done often enough in England. This regularity proves that crime, too, is governed by competition, that society creates a *demand* for crime which is met by a corresponding *supply*; that the gap created by the arrest, transportation or execution of a certain number is at once filled by others, just as every gap in population is at once filled by new arrivals; in other words, that crime presses on the means of punishment just as the people press on the means of employment. How just it is to punish criminals under these circumstances, quite apart from any other considerations, I leave to the judgment of my readers. Here I am merely concerned in demonstrating the extension of competition into the moral sphere, and in showing to what deep degradation private property has brought man..



In the struggle of capital and land against labour, the first two elements enjoy yet another special advantage over labour -- the assistance of science; for in present conditions science, too, is directed against labour. Almost all mechanical inventions, for instance, have been occasioned by the lack of labourpower; in particular Hargreaves', Crompton's and Arkwright's cotton spinning machines. There has never been an intense demand for labour which did not result in an invention that increased labour productivity considerably, thus diverting demand away from human labour. The history of England from 1770 until now is a continuous demonstration of this. The last great invention in cottonspinning, the selfacting mule, was occasioned solely by the demand for labour, and rising wages. It doubled machinelabour, and thereby cut down handlabour by half; it threw half the workers out of employment, and thereby reduced the wages of the others by half; it crushed a plot of the workers against the factory owners, and destroyed the last vestige of strength with which labour had still held out in the unequal struggle against capital. (Cf. Dr. Ure, *Philosophy of Manufactures*, Vol. 2.) The economist now says, however, that in its final result machinery is favourable to the workers, since it makes production cheaper and thereby creates a new and larger market for its products, and thus ultimately reemploys the workers put out of work. Quite right. But is the economist forgetting, then, that the production of labourpower is regulated by competition; that labourpower is always pressing on the means of employment, and that, therefore, when these advantages are due to become operative, a surplus of competitors for work is already waiting for them, and will thus render these advantages illusory; whilst the disadvantages -- the sudden withdrawal of the means of subsistence from one half of the workers and the fall in wages for the other half -- are not illusory? Is the economist forgetting that the progress of invention never stands still, and that these disadvantages, therefore, perpetuate themselves? Is he forgetting that with the division of labour, developed to such a high degree by our civilisation, a worker can only live if he can be used at this particular machine for this particular detailed operation; that the changeover from one type of employment to another, newer type is almost invariably an absolute impossibility for the adult worker?

In turning my attention to the effects of machinery, I am brought to another subject less directly relevant -- the factory system; and I have neither the inclination nor the time to treat this here. Besides, I hope to have an early opportunity to expound in detail the despicable immorality of this system, and to expose mercilessly the economist's hypocrisy which here appears in all its brazenness.

Signed: *Frederick Engels in Manchester*



[The Marx / Engels
Archive](#)



[The Marxist writers'
Archives](#)

THE CONDITION OF ENGLAND

A review of

Past and Present

by Thomas Carlyle, London, 1843

by

FREDERICK ENGELS

Written in January 1844

Published in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, 1844

ONLINE VERSION: Reprinted according to the journal.

First published in English in the *Collected Works*,

translation by Christopher Upward.

Transcribed for the Internet by director@marx.org (February 6 1996).

Of all the fat books and thin pamphlets which have appeared in England in the past year for the entertainment or edification of "educated society", the above work is the only one which is worth reading. All the multivolume novels with their sad and amusing intricacies, all the edifying and meditative, scholarly and un scholarly Bible commentaries -- and novels and books of edification are the two staples of English literature -- all these you may with an easy conscience leave unread. Perhaps you will find some books on geology, economics, history or mathematics which contain a small grain of novelty -- however these are matters which one studies, but does not *read*, they represent dry, specialised branches of science, arid botanising, plants whose roots were long ago torn out of the general soil of humanity from which they derived their nourishment. Search as you will, Carlyle's book is the only one which strikes a human chord, presents human relations and shows traces of a human point of view.

It is remarkable how greatly the upper classes of society, such as the Englishman calls "*respectable people*", or "*the better sort of people*", etc., have intellectually declined and lost their vigour in England. All energy, all activity, all substance are gone; the landed aristocracy goes hunting, the moneyed aristocracy makes entries in the ledger and at best dabbles in literature which is equally empty and insipid. Political and religious prejudices are inherited from one generation to another; everything is now made easy and there is no longer any need to worry about principles as one had to formerly; they are now picked up already in the cradle, ready made, one has no notion where they come from. What more does one need? One has enjoyed a good education, that is, one has been tormented to no avail with the Romans and Greeks at school, for the rest one is "respectable", that is, one has so many thousand pounds to one's name and thus does not have to bother about anything except marrying, if one does not already have a wife.

And now, to cap it all, this bugbear which people call "intellect"! Where should intellect come from, in such a life, and if it did come, where might it find a home with them? Everything there is as fixed and formalised as in China -- woe be to the man who oversteps the narrow bounds, woe, thrice woe to the man who offends against a timehonoured prejudice, nine times woe to him if it is a religious prejudice.

For all questions they have just two answers, a Whig answer and a Tory answer; and these answers were long ago prescribed by the sage supreme masters of ceremony of both parties, you have no need of deliberation and circumstantiality, everything is cut and dried, Dicky Cobden or Lord John Russell has said this, and Bobby Peel or *the Duke*, that is, the Duke of Wellington, has said that, and that is an end of the matter.

You good Germans are told year in, year out by the liberal journalists and parliamentarians what wonderful people, what independent men the English are, and all on account of their free institutions, and from a distance it all looks quite impressive. The debates in the Houses of Parliament, the free press, the tumultuous popular meetings, the elections, the jury system -- these cannot fail to impress the timid spirit of the average German, and in his astonishment he takes all these splendid appearances for true coin. But ultimately the position of the liberal journalist and parliamentarian is really far from being elevated enough to provide a comprehensive view, whether it be of the development of mankind or just that of a single nation. The English Constitution was quite good in its day and has achieved a fair number of good things, indeed since 1828 it has set to work on its greatest achievement -- that is to say, on its own destruction -- but it has not achieved what the liberal attributes to it. It has not made independent men of the English. The English, that is, the educated English, according to whom the national character is judged on the Continent, these English are the most despicable slaves under the sun. Only that part of the English nation which is unknown on the Continent, only the workers, the pariahs of England, the poor, are really respectable, for all their roughness and for all their moral degradation. It is from them that England's salvation will come, they still comprise flexible material; they have no education, but no prejudices either, they still have the strength for a great national deed -- they still have a future. The aristocracy -- and nowadays that also includes the middle classes -- has exhausted itself; such ideas as it had, have been worked out and utilised to their ultimate logical limit, and its rule is approaching its end with giant strides. The Constitution is its work, and the immediate consequence of this work was that it entangled its creators in a mesh of institutions in which any free intellectual movement has been made impossible. The rule of public prejudice is everywhere the first consequence of so-called free political institutions, and in England, the politically freest country in Europe, this rule is stronger than anywhere else -- except for North America, where public prejudice is legally acknowledged as a power in the state by Lynch law. The Englishman crawls before public prejudice, he immolates himself to it daily -- and the more liberal he is, the more humbly does he grovel in the dust before his idol. Public prejudice in "educated society" is however either of Tory or of Whig persuasion, or at best radical -- and even that no longer has quite the odour of propriety. If you should go amongst educated Englishmen and say that you are Chartists or democrats -- the balance of your mind will be doubted and your company fled. Or declare you do not believe in the divinity of Christ, and you are done for; if moreover you confess that you are atheists, the next day people will pretend not to know you. And when the independent Englishman for once -- and this happens rarely enough -- really begins to think and shakes off the fetters of prejudice he has absorbed with his mother's milk, even then he has not the courage to speak out his convictions openly, even then he feigns an opinion before society that is at least tolerated, and is quite content if occasionally he can discuss his views with some likeminded person in private.

Thus the minds of the educated classes in England are closed to all progress and only kept to some degree in movement by the pressure of the working class. It cannot be expected that the literary diet of their decrepit culture should be different from these classes themselves. The whole of fashionable literature moves in a neverending circle and is just as boring and sterile as this blasé and effete fashionable society.

When Strauss' *Das Leben Jesu* and its fame crossed the Channel, no respectable man dared to translate the book, nor any bookseller of repute to print it. Finally it was translated by a socialist "lecturer" (there is no German word for this propagandist term) -- a man, therefore, in one of the world's least fashionable situations -- a small socialist printer printed it in instalments at a penny each, and the workers of Manchester, Birmingham and London were the only readers Strauss had in England.

If, by the way, either of the two parties into which the educated section of the English people is split deserves any preference, it is the Tories. In the social circumstances of England the Whig is himself too much of an interested party to be able to judge; industry, that focal point of English society, is in his hands and makes him rich; he can find no fault in it and considers its expansion the only purpose of all legislation, for it has given him his wealth and his power. The Tory on the other hand, whose power and unchallenged dominance have been broken by industry and whose principles have been shaken by it, hates it and sees in it at best a necessary evil. This is the reason for the formation of that group of philanthropic Tories whose chief leaders are Lord Ashley, Ferrand, Walter, Oastler, etc., and who have made it their duty to take the part of the factory workers against the manufacturers. Thomas Carlyle too was originally a Tory and still stands closer to that party than to the Whigs. This much is certain: a Whig would never have been able to write a book that was half so humane as *Past and Present*.

Thomas Carlyle has become known in Germany through his efforts to make German literature accessible to the English. For several years he has been mainly occupied with the social conditions of England -- the only educated man of his country to do so! -- and as early as 1838 he wrote a brief work entitled *Chartism*. At that time the Whigs were in office and proclaimed with much trumpeting that the "spectre" of Chartism, which had arisen round 1835, was now destroyed. Chartism was the natural successor to the old radicalism which had been appeased for a few years by the Reform Bill and reappeared in 1835/36 with new strength and with its ranks more solid than ever before. The Whigs thought they had suppressed this Chartism, and Thomas Carlyle took this as his cue to expound the real causes of Chartism and the impossibility of eradicating it before these causes were eradicated. It is true that as a whole the position taken by that book is the same as in *Past and Present*, though with rather stronger Tory colouring, but this is perhaps merely a result of the fact that the Whigs as the ruling party were the most open to criticism. At all events, everything that is in the smaller book is to be found in *Past and Present*, with greater clarity, with the argument further developed, and with an explicit description of the consequences, and therefore makes a critical analysis of *Chartism* on our part superfluous.

Past and Present is a parallel between England in the twelfth and in the nineteenth centuries and consists of four sections, entitled "Proem", "The Ancient Monk", "The Modern Worker" and "Horoscope". Let us consider these sections in turn, I cannot resist the temptation to translate the finest of the book's often marvellously fine passages. -- Criticism will no doubt take care of itself.

The first chapter of the "Proem" is called "Midas".

"The condition of England ... is justly regarded as one of the most ominous, and withal one of the strangest, ever seen in this world. England is full of wealth [...] in every kind; yet England is dying of inanition. With unabated bounty the land of England blooms and grows; waving with yellow harvests; thickstudded with workshops, industrial implements, with fifteen millions of workers, understood to be the strongest, the cunningest and the willingest our Earth ever had; these men are

here; the work they have done, the fruit they have realised is here, abundant, exuberant on every hand of us: and behold, some baleful fiat as of Enchantment has gone forth, saying, 'Touch it not, ye workers, ye masterworkers, ye master-idlers; none of you can touch it, no man of you shall be the better for it, this is enchanted fruit!'"

This fiat falls on the workers first. In 1842 England and Wales counted 1,430,000 paupers, of whom 222,000 were incarcerated in workhouses -- Poorlaw Bastilles the common people call them. -- Thanks to the humanity of the Whigs! Scotland has no poor law, but poor people in plenty. Ireland, incidentally, can boast of the gigantic number of 2,300,000 paupers.

"At Stockport Assizes" (Cheshire) "a Mother and a Father are arraigned and found guilty of poisoning three of their children, to defraud a 'burialsociety' of some 31. 8s. due on the death of each child: [...] and the official authorities, it is whispered, hint that perhaps the case is not solitary, that perhaps you had better not probe farther into that department of things.... Such instances are like the highest mountain apex emerged into view; under which lies a whole mountain region and land, not yet emerged. A human Mother and Father had said to themselves, What shall we do to escape starvation? We are deep sunk here, in our dark cellar; and help is far. -- Yes, in the Ugolino Hungertower stern things happen; bestloved little Gaddo fallen dead on his Father's knees! -- The Stockport Mother and Father think and hint: Our poor little starveling *Tom*, who cries all day for victuals, who will see only evil and not good in this world: if he were out of misery at once; ... and the rest of us perhaps kept alive? It is thought, and hinted; at last it is done. And now *Tom* being killed, and all spent and eaten, Is it poor little starveling *Jack* that must go, or poor little starveling *Will*? -- What an inquiry of ways and means!

"In starved sieged cities, in the uttermost doomed ruin of old Jerusalem fallen under the wrath of God, it was prophesied and said, 'The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children.' The stern Hebrew imagination could conceive no blacker gulf of wretchedness; that was the ultimatum of degraded godpunished man. And we here, in modern England, exuberant with supply of all kinds, [...] are *we* reaching that? -- How come these things? Wherefore are they, wherefore should they be?"

This happened in 1841. I would add that five months ago Betty Eules of Bolton was hanged in Liverpool; she had poisoned three children of her own and two stepchildren for the same reason.

So much for the poor. How do things stand with the rich?

"This successful industry of England, with its plethoric wealth, has as yet made nobody rich; it is an enchanted wealth, and belongs yet to nobody. [...] We can spend thousands where we once spent hundreds; but can purchase nothing good with them. [...] Many men eat finer cookery, drink dearer liquors, [...] what increase of blessedness is there? Are they better, beautifuller, stronger, braver? Are they even what they call 'happier'?"

The masterworker is not happier, the masteridler -- that is, the aristocratic landowner -- is not happier.

"To whom, then, is this wealth of England wealth? Who is it that it blesses; makes happier, wiser, beautifuller, [...] better? [...] As yet no one. [...] Our successful industry is hitherto unsuccessful; [...] In the midst of plethoric plenty, the people perish; with gold walls, and full barns, no man feels himself safe or satisfied. [...]"

"Midas longed for gold, and insulted the Olympians. He got gold, so that whatsoever he touched became gold, -- and he, with his long ears, was little the better for it. Midas had misjudged the celestial musictones; Midas had insulted Apollo and the gods: the gods gave him his wish, and a pair of long ears, which also were a good appendage to it. What a truth in these old Fables!"

"How true," he continues in the second chapter, "is that other old Fable of the Sphinx [...] Nature, like the Sphinx, [...] is a goddess, but one not yet disimprisoned", still half encased in brutishness, in the inarticulate -- there is order and wisdom on the one hand, but also darkness, ferocity and fatality.

Sphinxlike nature -- German mysticism, say the English, when they read this chapter -- has a question to put to every man and every age -- happy is the man who answers it aright; he who does not answer it or answers wrongly, falls a prey to that part of the Sphinx which is brutish and ferocious, instead of the beautiful bride he finds a devouring lioness. And so it is with nations too: can you solve the riddle of destiny? And all unfortunate peoples, like all unfortunate individuals, have answered the question wrongly, have taken the semblance for the truth, have abandoned the eternal inner facts of the universe in favour of transient outer' appearances, and England too has done this. England, as Carlyle later puts it, has fallen a prey to atheism and its present condition is the necessary consequence of that. We shall have occasion to speak of this later, for the present let us simply observe that the parable of the Sphinx, if it is to be accepted in the above pantheistic sense reminiscent of the older Schelling, could well have been developed somewhat further by Carlyle -- the answer to the riddle today is, as it was in the myth: man; indeed he is the answer in the widest possible sense. That too will be settled.

The next chapter gives us the following description of the Manchester insurrection of August 1842.^{9t}

"A million of hungry operative men [...] rose all up, came all out into the streets, and -- stood there. What other could they do? Their wrongs and grief were bitter, insupportable, their rage against the same was just: but who are they that cause these wrongs, who that will [...] make effort to redress them? Our enemies are we know not who or what; our friends are we know not where! How shall we attack any one, shoot or be shot by any one? O, if the accursed invisible Nightmare, that is crushing out the life of us and ours, would take a shape approach us like the Hyrcaniana tiger, the Behemoth of Chaos, the Archfiend himself; in any shape that we could see, and fasten on!"

But the misfortune of the workers in the summer insurrection of 1842 was precisely that they did not know whom to fight against. The evil they suffered was social -- and social evils cannot be abolished as the monarchy or privileges are abolished. Social evils cannot be cured by People's Charters, and the

people sensed this -- otherwise the People's Charter would be today the basic law of England. Social evils need to be studied and understood, and this the mass of the workers has not yet done up till now. The great achievement of the uprising was that England's most vital question, the question of the final destiny of the working class, was, as Carlyle says, raised in a manner audible to every thinking ear in England. The question can now no longer be evaded. England must answer it or perish.

Let us pass over the final chapters of this section, and for the moment too the whole of that which follows, and let us straightaway take the third section which treats of "*The Modern Worker*", so that we may have before us all of a piece the description of the condition of England which was begun in the "Proem".

We have abandoned, Carlyle continues, the piety of the Middle Ages and acquired nothing in its place: we have

"forgotten God [...] We have quietly closed our eyes to the eternal Substance of things, and opened .them only to the Shews and Shams of things. We quietly believe this Universe to be intrinsically a great unintelligible Perhaps; extrinsically, clear enough, it is a great, most extensive Cattlefold and Workhouse, with most extensive Kitchenranges, Diningtables, -- whereat he is wise who can find a place! All the Truth of this Universe is uncertain; only the profit and loss of it, the pudding and praise of it, are and remain very visible to the practical man.

"There is no longer any God for us! God's Laws are become a Greatest Happiness Principle, a Parliamentary Expediency: the Heavens overarch us only as an Astronomical Timekeeper; a butt for Herscheltelesopes to shoot science at, to shoot sentimentalities at: -- in our and old Jonson's dialect, man has lost the soul out of him, and now [...] begins to find the want of it! This is verily the plaguespot; centre of the universal Social Gangrene [...] There is no religion; there is no God; man has lost his soul, and vainly seeks antiseptic salt. Vainly: in killing Kings, in [passing] Reform Bills,' in French Revolutions, Manchester Insurrections, is found no remedy. The foul [...] leprosy, alleviated for an hour, reappears in new force and desperateness next hour."

Since however the place of the old religion could not remain entirely vacant, we have acquired a new gospel in its stead, a gospel that accords with the hollowness and lack of substance of the age -- the gospel of Mammon. The Christian heaven and the Christian hell have been abandoned, the former as doubtful, and the latter as absurd -- and you have acquired a new hell; the hell of modern England is the consciousness of "not succeeding, of not making money".

"True [...] we [...] with our MammonGospel, have come to strange conclusions. We call it a *Society*; and go about professinge openly the totalest separation, isolation. Our life is not a mutual helpfulness; but rather, cloaked under due lawsofwar, named 'fair competition' and so forth, it is a mutual hostility. We have profoundly forgotten [...] that Cashpayment is not the sole relation of human beings; [...] 'My starving workers?' answers the rich Millowner: 'Did not I hire them fairly in the market? Did I not pay them, to the last sixpence, the sum covenanted for? What have I to do with them more?' -- Verily Mammonworship is a melancholy creed." f

"A poor Irish Widow [...] of Edinburgh, went forth with her three children [...] to solicit help from the Charitable Establishments of that City." At every establishment "she was refused; [...] her strength and heart failed her: she sank down in typhusfever; died, and infected her Lane with fever, so that 'seventeen other persons' died of fever there in consequence. The humane Physician" who tells this story -- Dr. W. P. Alison -- "asks thereupon [...] Would it not have been *economy* to help this poor Widow? She took typhusfever, and killed seventeen of you! -- Very curious. The forlorn Irish Widow applies to her fellowcreatures [...] 'Behold I am sinking, bare of help: ye must help me! I am your sister, bone of your bone; *one* God made us: ye must help me!' They answer, 'No; impossible: thou art no sister of ours.' But she proves her sisterhood; her typhusfever kills *them*: they actually were her brothers, though denying it! Had man ever to go lower for a proof?"

Carlyle, incidentally, is in error here, as is Alison. The rich have no sympathy, no interest in the death of the "seventeen". Is it not a public blessing that the "surplus population" should be reduced by seventeen? If only it were a few million instead of a miserly "seventeen", it would be by so much the better. -- This is the reasoning of wealthy English Malthusians.

And then there is the other, even worse gospel of dilettantism which has produced a government which does not govern; this gospel has deprived people of all seriousness and impels them to want to appear that which they are not -- the striving for "happiness", that is, for good food and drink; this gospel has lifted crude matter on to the throne and destroyed all spiritual substance, what shall be the consequence of all this?

"But what will reflective readers say of a Governing Class such as ours, addressing its Workers with an indictment of 'Overproduction'! Overproduction: runs it not so? 'Ye miscellaneous [...] manufacturing individuals, ye have produced too much! We accuse you of making above twohundred thousand shirts for the bare backs of mankind. Your trousers too, which you have made, of fustian, of cassimere, of Scotchplaid, of [...] nankeen and woollen broadcloth, are they not manifold? Of hats [...], of shoes [...], of stools to sit on, spoons to eat with -- Nay [...] You produce goldwatches, jewelleries, silverforks [...], commodes, chiffoniers, stuffed sofas -- Heavens, the Commercial Bazaar and multitudinous HowelandJameses cannot contain you. You have produced, produced; -- he that seeks your indictment, let him look around. Millions of shirts, and empty pairs of breeches, hang there in judgment against you. We accuse you of overproducing: you are criminally guilty of producing shirts, breeches, hats, shoes and commodities, in a frightful overabundance. And now there is a glut, and your operatives cannot be fed!'"

My lords and gentlemen, of what do you accuse those poor workers? "My lords and gentlemen, -- why, it was you that were appointed [...] to guard against 'gluts' [...] you were appointed to preside over the Distribution and Apportionment of the Wages of Work done; and to see well that there went no labourer without his hire, were it of moneycoins, were it of hemp gallowsropes: that function was yours, and from immemorial time has been [...]. These poor shirtspinners have forgotten much, which by the virtual unwritten law of their position they should have remembered: but by any *written* recognised law of their position, what have they forgotten? They were set to make shirts. The Community [...] commanded them, saying, 'Make shirts'; -- and there the shirts are! Too many shirts? Well, that is a novelty, in this intemperate Earth, with its ninehundred

millions of bare backs! But the Community commanded you", my lords and gentlemen, "saying, 'See that the shirts are well apportioned [...]'; -- and where is the apportionment? Two million shirtless or illshined workers sit [...] in Workhouse Bastilles, five million more [...] in Ugolino Hungercellars; and for remedy, you say [...] 'Raise *our* rents!' [...] You continue [...] in L ~ a [...] triumphant manner: 'Will you bandy accusations, will you accuse us of overproduction? We take the Heavens and the Earth to witness that we have produced nothing at all. [...] In the wide domains of created Nature, circulates no shirt or thing of our producing. [...] We are innocent of producing; -- ye ungrateful, what mountains of things have we not, on the contrary, had to "consume", and make away with! [...] have they not disappeared before us; as if we had the talent of ostriches [...] and a kind of divine faculty to eat? Ye ungrateful! -- and did you not grow under the shadow of our wings? Are not your filthy mills built on these fields of *ours* [...]? And we shall not offer you our own wheat at the price that pleases us [...]? What would become of you, if we'" who own the soil of England "'chose [...] to decide on growing no wheat more?'"

This attitude of the aristocracy, this barbaric question, what would become of you if we did not deign to allow corn to grow, has produced the "mad and miserable Corn Laws" *t93*; the Corn Laws which are so insane that no arguments can be brought against them but such as "must needs make an Angel in Heaven and an Ass on Earth weep". The Corn Laws prove that the aristocracy has not yet learned to do no mischief, to sit still and do nothing, to say nothing of doing good, and yet this, according to Carlyle, is their duty:

"You are bound to furnish guidance and governance to England! That is the law of your position." And every worker in the workhouse has the right to ask *them* above all, "'Why am I here?' His appeal is audible in Heaven; and will become audible enough on Earth too, if it remain unheeded here. His appeal is against you", my lords and gentlemen; "you stand in the frontrank of the accused; you, by the very place you hold, have first of all to answer him [...]"

"The fate of the Idle Aristocracy, as one reads its horoscope hitherto in CornLaws and such like, is an abyss that fills one with despair. Yes, my rosy foxhunting brothers [...] through those fresh buxom countenances of yours, through your CornLaw Majorities, *Sliding-Scales*, ProtectingDuties, BriberyElections and triumphant Kentishfire, a thinking eye discerns ghastly images of ruin, too ghastly for words; a handwriting as of Mene, Mene. [...] Good God! did not a French Donothing Aristocracy, hardly above half a century ago, declare in like manner [...] 'We cannot exist, and continue to dress and parade ourselves, on the [...] rent of the soil [...] we must have farther payment than rent of the soil, we must be exempted from taxes too,' -- we must have a CornLaw to extend our rent? This was in 1789; in four years more" -- have you heard of "the Tanneries of Meudon, and the longnaked making for themselves breeches of human skins! May the merciful Heavens avert the omen; may we be wiser, that so we be less wretched."

And the working aristocracy is caught in the partridge nets of the idle aristocracy and with its "Mammonism" eventually finds itself in dire straits too.

"The Continental people it would seem, are 'exporting our machinery, beginning to spin cotton and manufacture for themselves, to cut us out of this market and then out of that!' Sad news indeed; [...] -- by no means the saddest news. The saddest news is, that we should find our National Existence, as I sometimes hear it said, depend on selling manufactured cotton at a farthing an ell cheaper than any other People. A most narrow stand for a great Nation to base itself on! A stand which, with all the CornLaw Abrogations conceivable, I do not think will be capable of enduring."

"No great Nation can stand on the apex of such a pyramid; screwing itself higher and higher; balancing itself on its greattoe!" "In brief, all this MammonGospel" with its Hell of "failing to make money", "of Supplyanddemand, Competition" freetrade, "*Laissezfaire*, and Devil take the hindmost, begins to be [...] the shabbiest Gospel ever preached on Earth'."

"Yes, were the CornLaws ended tomorrow, there is nothing yet ended; there is only room made for all manner of things beginning. The CornLaws gone, and Trade made free, it is [...] certain this paralysis of industry will pass away. We shall have another period of commercial enterprise, of victory and prosperity [...]. The strangling band of Famine will be loosened from our necks; we shall have room again to breathe; time to bethink ourselves, to repent and consider! A [...] thriceprecious space of years; wherein to struggle as for life in reforming our foul ways; in alleviating, instructing, regulating our people [...] that something like spiritual food be imparted them, some real governance and guidance be provided them! It will be a priceless time. For our new period [...] of commercial prosperity will and can, on the old methods of 'Competition and Devil take the hindmost', prove but a paroxysm: [...] likely enough, [...] our last. [...] If our Trade in twenty years [...] double itself, yet then also [...] our Population is doubled: we shall then be as we are, only twice as many of us, twice and ten times as unmanageable!"

"Ah me, into what [...] latitudes, in this TimeVoyage, have we wandered; [...] -- where the men go about as if by galvanism, with meaningless glaring eyes, and have no soul, but only a beaverfaculty and stomach! The haggard despair of Cottonfactory, Coalmine [operatives], Chandos Farmlabourers, in these days, is painful to behold; but not so painful [...] to the inner sense, as that brutish godforgetting ProfitandLoss Philosophy, and Lifetheory, which we hear jangled on all hands of us, in senatehouses, spoutingclubs, leadingarticles, pulpits and platforms, everywhere as the Ultimate Gospel and candid PlainEnglish of Man's Life."

"And yet I will venture to believe that in no time, since the beginnings of Society, was the lot of those same dumb millions of toilers so entirely unbearable as it is [...] now [...]. It is not to die, or even to die of hunger, that makes a man wretched [...] all men must die, -- the last exit of us all is in a FireChariot of Pain. But it is to live miserable we know not why; to work sore and yet gain nothing; to be heartworn, weary, yet isolated, unrelated, girt in with a cold universal *Laissezfaire*: it is to die slowly all our life long, imprisoned in a deaf, dead, Infinite Injustice, as in the accursed [iron] belly of a Phalaris' Bull! This is and remains forever intolerable to all men whom God has made. Do we wonder at French Revolutions, Chartisms, Revolts of Three Days? The times, if we will consider them, are really unexampled."

If in such unexampled times the aristocracy shows itself incapable of guiding public affairs, it is necessary to expel it. Hence democracy.

"To what extent Democracy has now reached, how it advances irresistibly with ominous, ever-increasing speed, he that will open his eyes on any province of human affairs may discern. [...] From the thunder of Napoleon battles, to the jabbering of Openvestry in St. Mary Axe, all things announce Democracy."

But what, after all, is democracy?

Nothing but the absence of masters who could govern you, and the acceptance of this unavoidable absence, the attempt to manage without them. "No man oppresses thee, O free and independent Franchiser: but does not this stupid Porterpot oppress thee? No Son of Adam can bid thee come or go; but this absurd Pot of *Heavy-wet*, this can and doest Thou art the thrall not of Cedric the Saxon, but of thy own brutal appetites [...] And thou pretest of thy 'liberty'? Thou entire blockhead!"

"The notion that a man's liberty consists in giving his vote at electionhustings, and saying, 'Behold now I too have my twentythousandth part of a Talker in our National Palaver; will not all the gods be good to me?' -- is one of the pleasantest! [...] The liberty especially which has to purchase itself by social isolation, and each man standing separate from the other, haying 'no business with trim' but a cash account. [...] This liberty turns out, before it have long continued in action, [...] to be, for the Working Millions a liberty to die by want of food; for the Idle Thousands and Units [...] a [...] liberty to *live in want of work* [...] Brethren, we know but imperfectly yet, after ages of Constitutional Government, what Liberty is and Slavery is. Democracy [...] shall go its full course [...]. The Toiling Millions [...], in most vital need and passionate instinctive desire of Guidance, shall cast away FalseGuidance; and hope, for an hour, that NoGuidance will suffice them: but it can be for an hour only. [...] The oppression of man by his MockSuperiors [...] let him shake off [...]; I blame him not, I pity and commend him. But oppression by your MockSuperiors well shaken off, the grand problem yet remains to solve: That of finding government by your RealSuperiors!"

"The leadership, as it now exists, is, to be sure, wretched enough. "In the case of the late Bribery Committee" of Parliament "it seemed to be the conclusion of the soundest practical minds that Bribery could not be put down; that Pure Election was a thing we had seen the last of, and must now go on without, as we best could."

"A Parliament, [...] which proclaims itself elected and eligible by bribery [...] What Legislating can you get out of" that? [...] "Bribery means not only length of purse, [...] but it means dishonesty, and even impudent dishonesty; -- brazen insensibility to lying and to making others lie [...] What an improvement, were there once fairly, in Downingstreet, an ElectionOffice opened, with a Tariff of Boroughs! Such and such a population, amount of propertytax, groundrental [...] returns two Members, returns one Member, for so much money down: Ipswich so many thousands Nottingham so many, -- [...] now at least you have it fairly by length of purse, and leave the dishonesty, the impudence, the unveracity all handsomely aside."

"Our [...] Parliament announces itself elected and eligible in this manner [...] What is to become of a Parliament elected or eligible in this manner? Unless Belial and Beelzebub have got

possession of the throne of this Universe, such Parliament is preparing itself for new Reformbills. We shall have to try it by Chartism, or any conceivable *ism*, rather than put up with this! [...] A Parliament working with a lie in its mouth, will have to take itself away. [...] At all hours of the day and night some Chartism' is advancing, some armed Cromwell is advancing, to apprise such Parliament: 'Ye are no Parliament. In the name of God, go!'"

This is the condition of England, according to Carlyle. An idle landowning aristocracy which "have not yet learned even to sit still and do no mischief", a working aristocracy submerged in Mammonism, who, when they ought to be collectively the leaders of labour, "captains of industry", are just a gang of industrial buccaneers and pirates. A Parliament elected by bribery, a philosophy of simply looking on, of doing nothing, of *laissezfaire*, a wornout, crumbling religion, a total disappearance of all general human interests, a universal despair of truth and humanity, and in consequence a universal isolation of men in their own "brute individuality", a chaotic, savage confusion of all aspects of life, a war of all against all, a general death of the spirit, a dearth of "soul", that is, of truly human consciousness: a disproportionately strong working class, in intolerable oppression and wretchedness, in furious discontent and rebellion against the old social order, and hence a threatening, irresistibly advancing democracy -- everywhere chaos, disorder, anarchy, dissolution of the old ties of society, everywhere intellectual insipidity, frivolity, and debility. -- That is the condition of England. Thus far, if we discount a few expressions that have derived from Carlyle's particular standpoint, we must allow the truth of all he says. He, alone of the "respectable" class, has kept his eyes open at least towards the facts, he has at least correctly apprehended the immediate present, and that is indeed a very great deal for an "educated" Englishman.

How does the future appear? Matters will not and cannot remain as they are now. We have seen that Carlyle has, as he himself admits, no "Morison's pill", no panacea for curing the ills of society. In that too he is right. All social philosophy, as long as it still propounds a few principles as its final conclusion, as long as it continues to administer Morison's pills, remains very imperfect; it is not the bare conclusions of which we are in such need, but rather study; the conclusions are nothing without the reasoning that has led up to them; this we have known since Hegel; and the conclusions are worse than useless if they are final in themselves, if they are not turned into premises for further deductions. But the conclusions must also assume a distinct form for a time, they must in the course of development evolve from vague imprecision into clear ideas, and then of course, in the case of such an exclusively empirical nation as the English are, they cannot avoid becoming "Morison's pills". Carlyle himself, although he has absorbed much that is German and is quite far removed from crass empiricism, would probably have a few pills to hand if he were less vague and hazy about the future.

Meanwhile he declares everything to be useless and unprofitable as long as mankind persists in atheism, as long as it has not recovered its "soul". Not that traditional Catholicism can be restored in its vigour and vitality, nor that today's religion can be maintained -- he knows very well that rituals, dogmas, litanies and Sinai thunder cannot help, that all the thunder of Sinai does not make the truth any truer, nor does it frighten any sensible person, that we are far beyond the religion of fear, but religion itself must be restored, we ourselves see where "two centuries of Atheist Government" -- since the "blessed" restoration of Charles II -- have brought us, and we shall gradually also be obliged to recognise that this atheism is beginning to show signs of wear and tear. But we have seen what Carlyle calls atheism: it is not so much disbelief in a personal God, as disbelief in the inner essence, in the infinity of the universe, disbelief in reason, despair of the intellect and the truth; his struggle is not against disbelief in the revelation of the

Bible, but against the most frightful disbelief, the disbelief in the "Bible of Universal History". That is the eternal book of God in which every man, while his spirit and the light of his eyes are yet with him, may see God's finger write. To make mockery of this is disbelief like none other, a disbelief you would punish, not by burning at the stake, but nevertheless with the most imperative command to keep one's silence until one has something better to say. Why should blissful silence be broken by loud noise, just to proclaim such stuff? If there is no divine reason in the past, but merely diabolic unreason, it will pass away for ever, speak no more of it; we whose fathers were all hanged, should not talk of ropes!

"But modern England cannot believe in history." The eye sees of all things only so much as it can see by its own inherent capacity. A godless century cannot comprehend epochs filled with God. It sees in the past (the Middle Ages) only empty strife, the universal rule of brute force, it does not see that in the last analysis might and right coincide, it just sees stupidity, savage unreason, more fitting to Bedlam than to a human world. From this it naturally follows that the same qualities should continue to prevail in our own time. Millions held in Bastille workhouses; Irish widows who prove that they are human beings by typhusfever: what would you have? It was ever so, or worse. Has history not always been the exploitation of obdurate stupidity by successful mountebanks? There was no God in the past; nothing but mechanisms and chaotic brutegods: -- how shall the poor "philosophic historian", to whom his own century is all godless, "see any God in other centuries"?

And yet our age is not so utterly forsaken.

"Nay, in our poor distracted a Europe itself, in these newest times, have there not religious voices risen, -- with a religion new and yet the oldest; entirely indisputable to all hearts of men? Some I do know, who did not call or thin} themselves 'Prophets' [...]; but who were, in very truth, melodious Voices from the eternal Heart of Nature once again; souls forever venerable to all that have a soul. A French Revolution is one phenomenon; as complement and spiritual exponent thereof, a Poet Goethe and German Literature is to me another. The old Secular or Practical World [...] having gone up in fire, is not here the prophecy and dawn of a new Spiritual World, parent of far nobler, wider, new Practical Worlds? A Life of Antique devoutness, Antique veracity and heroism, has again become possible, is again seen actual there, for the most modern man. A phenomenon, as quiet as it is, comparable for greatness to no other! [...] Touches there are [...] of new Spheremelody; audible once more, in the infinite jargoning discords [...] of the thing called Literature."

Goethe is the prophet of the "religion of the future", and its cult is work.

"For there is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in Work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works: in Idleness alone is there perpetual despair. Work, never so Mammonish, mean, is in communication with Nature; the real desire to get Work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, to Nature's appointments and regulations....

"An endless significance lies in Work; a man perfects himself by working. Foul jungles are cleared away, fair seedfields rise instead, and stately cities; and withal the man himself first ceases

to be a jungle and foul unwholesome desert thereby Consider how, even in the meanest sorts of Labour, the whole soul of a man is composed into a kind of real harmony, the instant he sets himself to work! Doubt, Desire, Sorrow, Remorse,. Indignation, Despair itself, all these like helldogs lie beleaguering the soul of the poor dayworker, as of every man: but he bends himself with free velour against his task, and [...] all these shrink murmuring far off into their caves. The man is now a man. The blessed glow of Labour in him, is it not as purifying fire, wherein all poison is burnt up, and of sour smoke itself there is made bright blessed flame!"

"Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a lifepurpose; he has found it, and will follow it! How, as a freeflowing channel, dug [...] through the sour mudswamp of one's existence, [...] its runs and flows; -- draining off the sour festering water, gradually from the root of the remotest grassblade; making, instead of pestilential swamp, a green fruitful meadow [...] Labour is Life [...] Properly thou hast no other knowledge but what thou hast got by working: the rest is yet all a hypothesis [...] a thing to be argued of in schools, a thing floating in the clouds, in endless logicvortices, till we try it and fix it. 'Doubt of whatever kind, can be ended by Action alone.'"

"Admirable was that saying' of the old Monks, '*Laborare est Orare*, Work is Worship.' Older than all preached Gospels was this unpreached, inarticulate, but ineradicable, foreverenduring Gospel: Work, and therein have well-being. Man [...] lies there not, in the innermost heart of thee, a Spirit of active Method, a Force for Work; -- and burns like a painfully smouldering fire, giving thee no rest till thou unfold it, till thou write it down in beneficent Facts around thee! What is immethodic, waste, thou shalt make methodic, regulated, arable; obedient and productive to thee. Wheresoever thou findest Disorder, there is thy eternal enemy attack him swiftly, subdue him; make Order of him, the subject not of Chaos, but of Intelligence, Divinity and Thee! [...] But above all, where thou findest Ignorance, Stupidity, Brutemindedness [...] attack it, I say; smite it wisely, unweariedly, and rest not while thou livest and it lives; but smite, smite, in the name of God! [...] Thou [...] shalt work while it is called Today. For the Night cometh, wherein no man can work.

"All true Work is sacred [...] Sweat of the brow; [...] sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart; which includes all Kepler calculations, Newton meditations, all Sciences all spoken Epics, all acted Heroisms, Martyrdoms, -- up to that 'Agony of bloody sweat', which all men have called divine! [...] If this is not 'worship' [...] the more pity for worship [...]. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. [...] To thee Heaven, though severe, is not unkind; Heaven is kind, -- as a noble Mother; as that Spartan Mother, saying while she gave her son his shield, 'With it, my son, or upon it!' [...] Complain not; the very Spartans did not complain."

"*One* monster there is in the world: the idle man. What is his 'Religion'? That Nature is a Phantasm [...]. That God is a lie; and that Man and his Life are a lie."

But work too has been dragged into the furious vortex of disorder and chaos, the principle which was to cleanse, enlighten, evolve, has succumbed to involution, confusion and obscurity. This really leads to the main issue, the future of work.

"What a business will this be, which our Continental friends, groping this long while somewhat

absurdly about it and about it, call 'organization of Labour', -- which must be taken out of the hands of absurd windy persons, and put into the hands of wise, laborious [...] and valiant men, to begin with it straightway; to proceed with it, and succeed in it more and more, if Europe, at any rate if England, is to continue habitable much longer. Looking at the kind of most noble CornLaw Dukes [or Practical Duces] we have, and also of right reverend SoulOverseers, Christian Spiritual Duces 'on a minimum of four thousand five hundred', one's hopes are a little chilled. Courage, nevertheless; there are many brave men in England! My indomitable Plugson, -- nay is there not even in thee some hope? Thou art hitherto a Bucanier [...] but in that grim brow, in that indomitable heart which can conquer Cotton, do there not perhaps lie other ten times nobler conquests?"

"Look around you. Your worldhosts are all in mutiny, in confusion, destitution; on the eve of fiery wreck and madness! They will not march farther for you, on the sixpence a day and supplyanddemand principle: they will not; nor ought they, nor can they. [...] Their souls are driven nigh mad; let yours be [...] saner. Not as a bewildered bewildering mob; but as a firm regimented mass, with real captains over them, will these men march any more. All human interests, combined human endeavours [...] have, at a certain stage of their development, required organising: and Work, the grandest of human interests, does now require it."

In order to effect this organisation, in order to put true guidance and true government in the place of false guidance, Carlyle longs for a "true aristocracy", a "heroworship", and puts forward the second great problem to discover the a'ptg~or, the best, whose task it is to combine "with inevitable Democracy indispensable Sovereignty".

From these excerpts Carlyle's position emerges fairly clearly. His whole outlook is essentially pantheistic, and, more specifically, pantheistic with German overtones. The English have no pantheism but merely scepticism; the conclusion of all English philosophising is the despair of reason, the confessed inability to solve the contradictions with which one is ultimately faced, and consequently on the one hand a relapse into faith and on the other devotion to pure practice, without a further thought for metaphysics, etc. Carlyle with his pantheism derived from German literature is therefore a "phenomenon" in England, and for the practical and sceptical English a pretty incomprehensible one. People gape at him, speak of "German mysticism" and distorted English; others claim there is at bottom something in it, his English, though unusual, is very fine, he is a prophet, etc. -- but nobody really knows what to make of it all.

For us Germans, who know the antecedents of Carlyle's position, the matter is clear enough. On the one hand vestiges of Tory romanticism and humane attitudes originating with Goethe, and on the other scepticalempirical England, these factors are sufficient for one to deduce the whole of Carlyle's view of the world from them. Like all pantheists, Carlyle has not yet resolved the contradiction, and Carlyle's dualism is aggravated by the fact that though he is acquainted with German literature, he is not acquainted with its necessary corollary, German philosophy, and all his views are in consequence ingenuous, intuitive, more like Schelling than Hegel. With Schelling -- that is to say, with the old Schelling not the Schelling of the philosophy of revelation -- Carlyle really has a great deal in common; with Strauss, whose outlook is similarly pantheistic, he is on common ground in his "heroworship" or "cult of genius".

The critique of pantheism has recently been so exhaustively set forth in Germany that little more

remains to be said. Feuerbach's "Theses" in the *Anekdoten* and Bruno Bauer's works contain all the relevant material. We will therefore be able to confine ourselves simply to following up the implications of Carlyle's position and showing that it is basically only a first step towards the position adopted by this journal.

Carlyle complains about the emptiness and hollowness of the age, about the inner rottenness of all social institutions. The complaint is fair; but by simply complaining one does not dispose of the matter; in order to redress the evil, its cause must be discovered; and if Carlyle had done this, he would have found that this desultoriness and hollowness, this "soullessness" this irreligion and this "atheism" have their roots in religion itself. Religion by its very essence drains man and nature of substance, and transfers this substance to the phantom of an otherworldly God, who in turn then graciously permits man and nature to receive some of his superfluity. Now as long as faith in this otherworldly phantom is vigorous and alive, thus long man will acquire in this roundabout way at least some substance. The strong faith of the Middle Ages did indeed give the whole epoch considerable energy in this way, but it was energy that did not come from without but was already present within human nature, though as yet unperceived and undeveloped. Faith gradually weakened, religion crumbled in the face of the rising level of civilisation, but still man did not perceive that he had worshipped and deified his own being in the guise of a being outside himself. Lacking awareness and at the same time faith, man can have no substance, he is *bound* to despair of truth, reason and nature, and this hollowness and lack of substance, the despair of the eternal facts of the universe will last until mankind perceives that the being it has worshipped as God was its own, as yet unknown being, until -- but why should I copy Feuerbach.

The hollowness has long been there, for religion represents man's action of making himself hollow; and you are surprised that now, when the purple that concealed it has faded, when the fog that enveloped it has passed away, that now, to your consternation, it emerges in the full light of day?

Carlyle accuses the age furthermore -- this is the immediate consequence of the foregoing -- of hypocrisy and lying. Naturally the hollowness and enervation must be decently concealed and kept upright by accessories, padded clothes and whalebone stays! We too attack the hypocrisy of the present Christian state of the world; the struggle against it, our liberation from it and the liberation of the world from it are ultimately our sole occupation; but because through the development of philosophy we are able to discern this hypocrisy, and because we are waging the struggle scientifically, the nature of this hypocrisy is no longer so strange and incomprehensible to us as it admittedly still is to Carlyle. This hypocrisy is traced back by us to religion, the first word of which is a lie -- or does religion not begin by showing us something human and claiming it is something superhuman, something divine? But because we know that all this Lying and immorality follows from religion, that religious hypocrisy, theology, is the archetype of all other lies and hypocrisy, we are justified in extending the term "theology" to the whole untruth and hypocrisy of the present, as was originally done by Feuerbach and Bruno Bauer. Carlyle should read their works if he wishes to know the origin of the immorality that plagues our whole society.

A new religion, a pantheistic heroworship, a cult of work, ought to be set up or is to be expected; but this is impossible; all the possibilities of religion are exhausted; after Christianity, after absolute, i.e., abstract, religion, after "religion as such", no other form of religion can arise. Carlyle himself realises that Catholic, Protestant or any other kind of Christianity is irresistibly moving towards its downfall; if he knew the nature of Christianity, he would realise that after it no other religion is possible. Not even pantheism! Pantheism itself is another consequence of Christianity and cannot be divorced from its

antecedent, at least that is true of modern pantheism, of Spinoza's, Schelling's, Hegel's and also Carlyle's pantheism. Once more, Feuerbach relieves me of the trouble of providing proof of this.

As I have said, we too are concerned with combating the lack of principle, the inner emptiness, the spiritual deadness, the untruthfulness of the age; we are waging a war to the death against all these things, just as Carlyle is, and there is a much greater probability that we shall succeed than that he will, because we know what we want. We want to put an end to atheism, as Carlyle portrays it, by giving back to man the substance he has lost through religion; not as divine but as human substance, and this whole process of giving back is no more than simply the awakening of selfconsciousness. We want to sweep away everything that claims to be supernatural and superhuman, and thereby get rid of untruthfulness, for the root of all untruth and Lying is the pretension of the human and the natural to be superhuman and supernatural. For that reason we have once and for all declared war on religion and religious ideas and care little whether we are called atheists or anything else. If however Carlyle's pantheistic definition of atheism were correct, it is not we but our Christian opponents who would be the true atheists. We have no intention of attacking the "eternal inner Facts of the universe", on the contrary, we have for the first time truly substantiated them by proving their perpetuity and rescuing them from the omnipotent arbitrariness of an inherently selfcontradictory God. We have no intention of pronouncing "the world, man and his life a lie"; on the contrary, our Christian opponents are guilty of this act of immorality when they make the world and man dependent on the grace of a God who in reality was only created from the reflected image of man in the crude *hyle* of his own undeveloped consciousness. We have no intention whatever of doubting or despising the "revelation of history", for history is all and everything to us and we hold it more highly than any other previous philosophical trend, more highly than Hegel even, who after all used it only as a case against which to test his logical problem.

It is the other side that scorns history and disregards the development of mankind; it is the Christians again who, by putting forward a separate "History of the Kingdom of God" deny that real history has any inner substantiality and claim that this substantiality belongs exclusively to their otherworldly, abstract and, what is more, fictitious history; who, by asserting that the culmination of the human species is their Christ, make history attain an imaginary goal, interrupt it in midcourse and are now obliged, if only for the sake of consistency, to declare the following eighteen hundred years to be totally nonsensical and utterly meaningless. *We* lay claim to the meaning of history; but we see in history not the revelation of "God" but of man and only of man. We have no need, in order to see the splendour of the human character, in order to recognise the development of the human species through history, its irresistible progress, its evercertain victory over the unreason of the individual, its overcoming of all that is apparently supernatural, its hard but successful struggle against nature until the final achievement of free, human self-consciousness, the discernment of the unity of man and nature, and the independent creation -- voluntarily and by its own effort -- of a new world based on purely human and moral social relationships -- in order to recognise all that in its greatness, we have no need first to summon up the abstraction of a "God" and to attribute to it everything beautiful, great, sublime and truly human; we do not need to follow this roundabout path, we do not need first to imprint the stamp of the "divine" on what is truly human, in order to be sure of its greatness and splendour. On the contrary, the "more divine", in other words, the more inhuman, something is, the less we shall be able to admire it. Only the *human* origin of the content of all religions still preserves for them here and there some claim to respect; only the consciousness that even the wildest superstition nevertheless has within it at bottom the eternal determinants of human nature, in however dislocated and distorted a form, only this awareness saves the history of religion, and particularly of the Middle Ages, from total rejection and *eternal* oblivion, which

would otherwise certainly be the fate of these "godly" histories. The more "godly" they are, the more inhuman, the more bestial, and the "godly" Middle Ages did indeed produce the culmination of human bestiality, serfdom, *jus primae noctis*, etc. The *godlessness* of our age, of which Carlyle so much complains, is precisely its *saturation* with God. From this it also becomes clear why, above, I gave man as the solution to the riddle of the Sphinx. The question has previously always been: what is God? and German philosophy has answered the question in this sense: God is man. Man has only to understand himself, to take himself as the measure of all aspects of life, to judge according to his being, to organise the world in a truly human manner according to the demands of his own nature, and he will have solved the riddle of our time. Not in otherworldly, nonexistent regions, not beyond time and space, not with a "God" immanent in or opposed to the world, is the truth to be found, but much nearer, in man's own breast. Man's own substance is far more splendid and sublime than the imaginary substance of any conceivable "God", who is after all only the more or less indistinct and distorted image of man himself. So when Carlyle follows Ben Jonson in saying, man has lost his soul and is only now beginning to notice the want of it, the right formulation would be: in religion man has lost his own substance, has alienated his humanity, and now that religion, through the progress of history, has begun to totter, he notices his emptiness and instability. But there is no other salvation for him, he cannot regain his humanity, his substance, other than by thoroughly overcoming all religious ideas and returning firmly and honestly, not to "God", but to himself.

All of this may also be found in Goethe, the "prophet", and anyone who has his eyes open can read this between the lines. Goethe did not like to be concerned with "God"; the word made him uncomfortable, he felt at home only in human matters, and this humanity, this emancipation of art from the fetters of religion is precisely what constitutes Goethe's greatness. Neither the ancients nor Shakespeare can measure up to him in this respect. But this consummate humanity, this overcoming of the religious dualism can only be apprehended in its full historical significance by those who are not strangers to that other aspect of German national development, philosophy. What Goethe could only express spontaneously, and therefore, it is true, in a certain sense "prophetically", has been developed and substantiated in contemporary German philosophy. Carlyle too embodies assumptions which, logically, must lead to the position set forth above. Pantheism itself is but the last, preliminary step towards a free and human point of view. History, which Carlyle presents as the real "revelation", contains only what is human, and only by an arbitrary act can its content be taken away from humanity and credited to the account of a "God". Work, free activity, in which Carlyle similarly sees a "cult", is again a purely human matter and can only be linked with "God" in an arbitrary manner. What is the point of continually pushing to the fore a word which *at best* only expresses the boundlessness of indetermination and, what is more, maintains the illusion of dualism, a word which in itself is the denial of nature and humanity?

So much for the inward, religious aspect of Carlyle's standpoint. It serves as a point of departure for the assessment of the outward, politicosocial aspect; Carlyle has still enough religion to remain in a state of unfreedom; pantheism still recognises something higher than man himself. Hence his longing for a "true aristocracy", for "heroes"; as if these heroes could at best be more than men. If he had understood man as man in all his infinite complexity, he would not have conceived the idea of once more dividing mankind into two lots, sheep and goats, rulers and ruled, aristocrats and the rabble, lords and dolts, he would have seen the proper social function of talent not in ruling by force but in acting as a stimulant and taking the lead. The role of talent is to convince the masses of the truth of its ideas, and it will then have no need further to worry about their application, which will follow entirely of its own accord. Mankind is surely not passing through democracy to arrive back eventually at the point of departure. -- What Carlyle says

about democracy, incidentally, leaves little to be desired, if we discount what we have just been referring to, his lack of clarity about the goal, the purpose of modern democracy. Democracy, true enough, is only a transitional stage, though not towards a new, improved aristocracy, but towards real human freedom; just as the irreligiousness of the age will eventually lead to complete emancipation from everything that is religious, superhuman and supernatural, and not to its restoration.

Carlyle recognises the inadequacy of "competition, demand" and "supply, Mammonism", etc., and is far removed from asserting the absolute justification of landownership. So why has he not drawn the straightforward conclusion from all these assumptions and rejected the whole concept of property? How does he think he will destroy "competition", "supply and demand", Mammonism, etc., as long as the root of all these things, private property, exists? "Organisation of labour" cannot help in this respect, it cannot even be applied without a certain identity of interests. Why then does he not act consistently and decisively, proclaiming the identity of interests the only truly human state of affairs, and thereby putting an end to all difficulties, all imprecision and lack of clarity?

In all Carlyle's rhapsodies, there is not a syllable mentioning the English Socialists. As long as he adheres to his present point of view, which is admittedly infinitely far in advance of that of the mass of educated people in England but still abstract and theoretical, he will indeed not be able to view their efforts with particular sympathy. The English Socialists are purely practical and therefore also propose remedies, homecolonies, etc., rather in the manner of Morison's pills; their philosophy is truly English, sceptical, in other words they despair of theory, and for all practical purposes they cling to the materialism upon which their whole social system is based; all this will have little appeal for Carlyle, but he is as onesided as they. Both have only overcome the contradiction *within* the contradiction; the Socialists within the sphere of practice, Carlyle within the sphere of theory, and even there only spontaneously, whereas the Socialists, by means of reasoning, have definitely overcome the practical aspect of the contradiction. The Socialists are still Englishmen, when they ought to be simply men, of philosophical developments on the Continent they are only acquainted with materialism but not with German philosophy, that is their only shortcoming, and they are directly engaged on the rectification of this deficiency by working for the removal of national differences. We have no need to be very hasty in forcing German philosophy on them, they will come to it of their own accord and it could be of little use to them now. But in any case they are the only party in England which has a future, relatively weak though they may be. Democracy, Chartism must soon be victorious, and then the mass of the English workers will have the choice only between starvation and socialism.

For Carlyle and his standpoint, ignorance of German philosophy is not a matter of such indifference. He is himself a theoretician of the German type, and yet at the same time his nationality leads him to empiricism; he is beset by a flagrant contradiction which can only be resolved if he continues to develop his German-theoretical viewpoint to its final conclusion, until it is totally reconciled with empiricism. To surmount the contradiction in which he is working, Carlyle has only *one* more step to take, but as all experience in Germany has shown, it is a difficult one. Let us hope that he will take it, and although he is no longer young, he will still probably be capable of it, for the progress shown in his last book proves that his views are still developing.

All this shows that Carlyle's book is ten thousand times more worth translating into German than all the legions of English novels which every day and every hour are imported into Germany, and I can only advocate such a translation. But let our hack translators just keep their hands off it! Carlyle writes a very particular English, and a translator who does not thoroughly understand English and references to

English conditions would make the most absurd howlers.

Following this somewhat general introduction, I shall examine in greater detail in the following numbers of this journal the condition of England and the essential part of it, the condition of the working class. The condition of England is of immense importance for history and for all other countries; for as regards social matters England is of course far in advance of all other countries.

Signed: *Frederick Engels in Manchester*



[The Marx / Engels
Archive](#)



[The Marxist writers'
Archives](#)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE *ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG* (AUGSBURG)

First published in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*

Augsburg, No. 3, April 20, 1844

Translated from German by Jack Cohen

for the *Collected Works*

The diverse rumours which have been spread by German newspapers concerning the discontinuation of the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* impel me to state that the Swiss publishers of the *Jahrbücher* suddenly withdrew from this enterprise for economic reasons and thus made impossible the continuation of this journal for the time being.

Paris, April 14, 1844

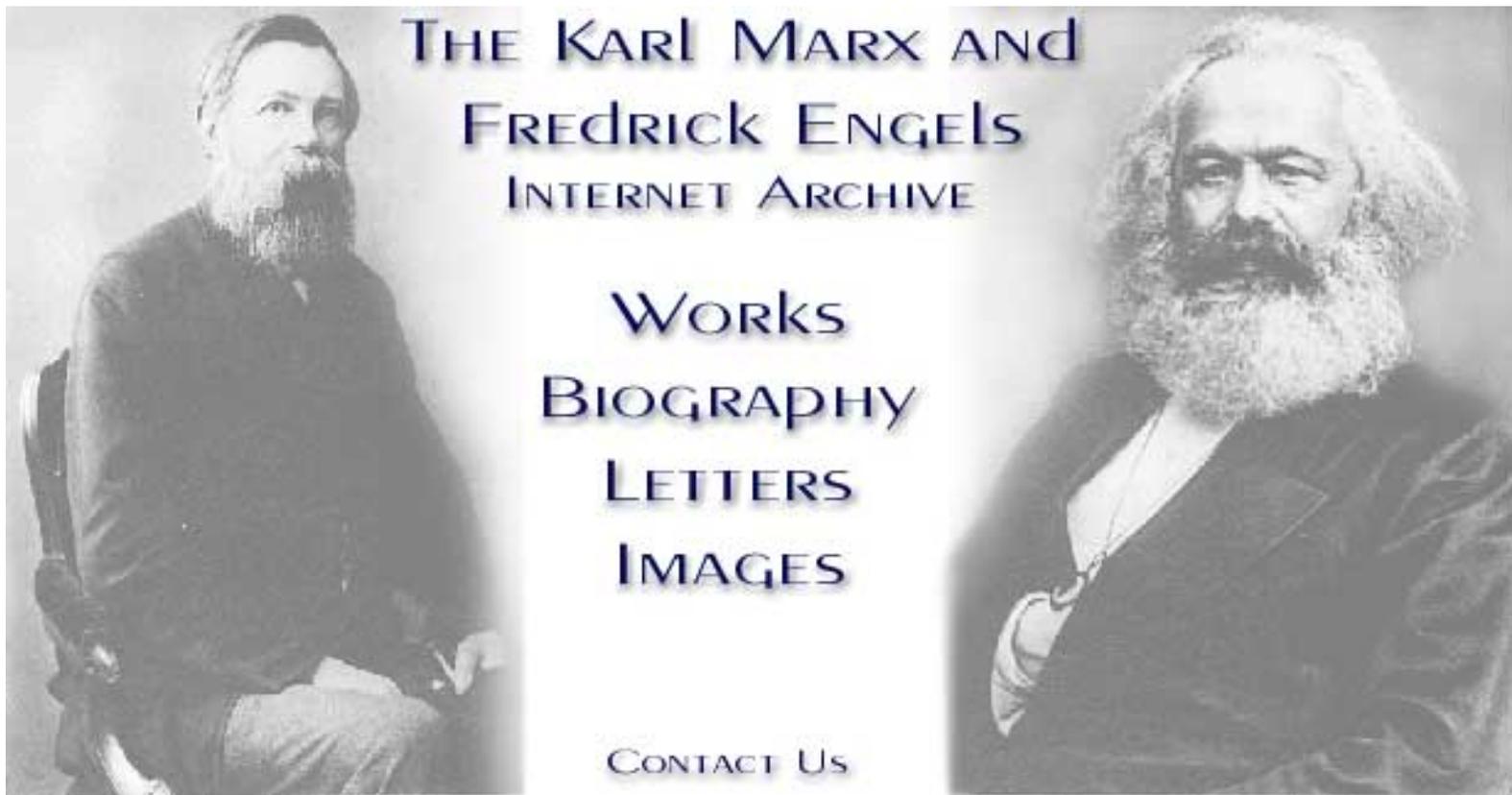
Karl Marx



[The Marx / Engels
Archive](#)



[The Marxist writers'
Archives](#)



THE KARL MARX AND
FREDRICK ENGELS
INTERNET ARCHIVE

WORKS
BIOGRAPHY
LETTERS
IMAGES

CONTACT US

[Text Index](#) | [MIA Index](#)

MARXIST WRITERS

PEOPLE WHO WERE IN PRACTICE COMMUNISTS
& IN THEORY DIALECTICAL MATERIALISTS

Large Collections:

[Marx & Engels](#)

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific
Capital
The German Ideology
[over 200 other works]

[Lenin](#)

What is to be Done?
State and Revolution
Left-Wing Communism
[over 200 other works]

[Trotsky](#)

History of the Russian Revolution
My Life
The Revolution Betrayed
[over 75 other works]

[Subject Index](#)

On Women
On Political Economy
Student's Section
[etc.]

[Connolly](#)

The Future of Labour (Socialism made
easy)
Workshop Talks
Street Fighting- a Summary
[over 100 other works]

[DeLeon](#)

Reform or Revolution
The Burning Question of Trades
Unionism
Socialist Reconstruction of Society
[over 40 other works]

[Luxemburg](#)

On Mass Action
The Socialisation of Society
The Russian Revolution
[13 other works]

[Maclean](#)

The Foundation of the British Socialist
Party
The Irish Tragedy: Scotland's Disgrace..
A Scottish Communist Party
[12 other works]

Small Collections:

[Cannon](#)

Speech at the First Workers Party
Convention
Against Expulsion from the Communist
Party
Decision to join the Trotskyst camp
[1 other work]

[Draper](#)

The ABC of National Liberation
Movements
Toward a New Beginning
A Fourth of July Oration
[4 other works]

[Dunayevskaya](#)

Mao Perverts Lenin [abstract]
Philosophy & Revolution [abstract]

[Elkonin](#)

Toward the Problem of Stages in the
Mental Development of Children

[Guevara](#)

Revolutionary Medicine
Man & Socialism in Cuba
Message to the Tricontinental
[3 other works]

[Ilyenkov](#)

Dialectics of the Abstract & Concrete
Dialectical Logic
Leninist Dialectics & Metaphysics of
Positivism [abstract]

[CLR James](#)

Notes on Dialectics [abstract]
Articles on Socialism & Black
Power[abstracts]

[Kautsky](#)

The Intellectuals and the Workers

[Luria](#)

Cognitive Development: Its Social and
Cultural Foundations
The Making of Mind: A Personal Account
of Soviet Psychology

[Mariategui](#)

History of the World Crisis 1924
Anti-Imperialist Viewpoint
The Exile of Trotsky
[2 other works]

[Mészáros](#)

Marx's Theory of Alienation

[Mikhailov](#)

The Riddle of the Self

[Morris](#)

How We Live and How We Might Live
Art and Socialism
Socialism and Anarchism
[1 other work]

[Novack](#)

Introduction to the Logic Of Marxism
[abstract]
Empiricism and Its Evolution — A
Marxist View [abstract]

[Pablo](#)

The 4th International...
The Arab Revolution
Self-management in the struggle...
[1 other work]

[Pannekoek](#)

Marx and Darwin

[Pilling](#)

Ethics and the Materialist Conception of
History
The Social Revolution
[4 other works]

[Kollontai](#)

Internatioanl Women's Day
Red Love
Workers' Opposition

[Labriola](#)

On Socialism and Philosophy
Historical Materialism

[Lafargue](#)

The Right To Be Lazy
The Bankruptcy of Capitalism
The Rights of the Horse and the Rights of
Man
[4 other works]

[Leontev](#)

Activity, Consciousness and Personality

[Lukacs](#)

History & Class Consciousness [abstract]
The Young Hegel [abstract]
1967 [abstract]

[Lunacharsky](#)

Potraits on Lenin, Trotsky, etc

Marx's Capital, Philosophy and Political
Economy [abstract]

[Plekhanov](#)

For the 60th Anniversary of Hegel's Death
[abstract]
The Materialist conception of History
[abstract]

[Pouliopoulos](#)

On Trotsky

[Reed](#)

The Traders' War
Soviets in Action

[Riazanov](#)

On Engels' The Peasants' war in Germany
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

[Shachtman](#)

Genesis of Trotskyism
The Struggle for the New Course
The Fight for Socialism
[14 other works]

[Vygotsky](#)

The Crisis in Psychology[abstract]
Thinking & Speaking[abstract]
The Psychology of Art

[Non-English Archive:](#)

[Dansk](#)

[Chinese](#)

[Deutsch](#)

[Espanol](#)

[Bahasa Indonesia](#)

[Euskara](#)

[Italiano](#)

[Norsk](#)

[Nederlands](#)

[Français](#)

[Ellinika](#)

[Türkçe](#)

[Português](#)

[Nihon go](#)

[Suomi](#)

[Svenska](#)

[Russkij](#)

[Marxists Internet Archive](#)