RESOURCE NOTES -1

MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

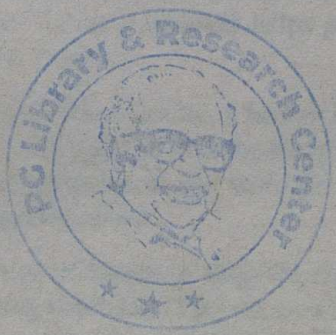
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FOREWORD

The Education Sub Committee of the CPI(M) Central Committee has decided to provide resource material for teachers taking political classes on fundamentals of Marxism. This material is also intended to help students who wish to learn Marxism from primary sources.

The CPI(M) has waged a vigorous ideological struggle against the onslaught on Marxism in the post-Soviet era. The developments in Latin America in the beginning of the 21st century indicate a new situation around the world, in which the working class is once again consolidating its position. The new situation helps provide greater ideological space for Communists.

Utilising this opportunity in this situation, a further ideological offensive has to be launched. As a part of this, the Party has decided to conduct an intensive drive for political education for cadre through classes and bringing out publications.

Towards this end, a series of books in English, Hindi and other regional languages are being published. This series, titled "Resource Notes," will start with a set of books on Marxist Philosophy, Political Economy, State and Revolution and Party Organisation along with suggested readings. The source of the material provided in these books are mainly from works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin which were published by our Party in 1969. Relevant study material on these topics suggested by Maurice Cornforth has also been incorporated for those interested in following up the study of these subjects.

This booklet introduces Marxist Philosophy drawing upon Marxist classics. The first part comprises extracts taken from classics written by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. The second part is written by Maurice Cornforth, and introduces some of the relevant classics.

The Party Education Sub Committee hopes that this material will be used by Party cadre at all levels. It is to be emphasised, however, that this material is not a replacement for self-study. This should help as a tool for further study of Marxist classics and Party documents. The Party Education Sub Committee also decided to publish prescribed syllabus text books on certain basic subjects. We will be coming out with these books for cadre shortly.

PART-1
(EXTRACTS FROM MARXIST CLASSICS)

Essence of Historical Materialism

... In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development; the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production. No social order ever perishes before all the productive forces for which there is

room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself. Therefore mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the task itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation. In broad outlines Asiatic, ancient, feudal, and modern bourgeois modes of production can be designated as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society. The bourgeois relations of production are the last antagonistic form of the social process of production—antagonistic not in the sense of individual antagonism, but of one arising from the social conditions of life of the individuals; at the same time the productive forces developing in the womb of bourgeois society create the material conditions for the solution of that antagonism. This social formation brings, therefore, the prehistory of human society to a close.

(MARX, "Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy", Marx-Engel, *Selected Works,* Moscow 1968, One-Volume Edition, pp. 182-83)

The Contrast Between the Materialist And Idealist Conception

Ideology In General, German Ideology In Particular

The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be verified in a purely empirical way.

The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals.* Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organisation of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature. Of course, we cannot here go either into the actual physical nature of man, or into the natural conditions in

which man finds himself—geological, orohydrographical, climatic and so on.** The writing of history must a always set out from these natural bases and their modification in the course of history through the action of men.

Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to *produce* their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organisation. By producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their actual material life.

The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the actual means of subsistence they find in existence and have to reproduce. This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite *mode of life* on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with *what* they produce and with *how* they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production.

This production only makes its appearance with the *increase of population.* In its turn this presupposes the *intercourse (Verkehr)** of individuals with one another. The form of this intercourse is again determined by production...

The fact is, therefore, that definite individuals who are productively active in a definite way enter into these definite social and political relations, empirical observation must in each separate instance bring out empirically, and without any mystification and speculation, the connection of the social and political structure with production. The social structure and the state are continually evolving out of the life-process of definite individuals, but of individuals, not as they may appear in their own or other people's imagination, but as they *really* are; i. e., as they operate, produce materially, and hence as they work under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will.*

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc., of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc.—real active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process. If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura,* this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process.

In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven. That is to say, we do not set out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh. We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life. In the first method of approach the starting-point is consciousness taken as the living individual; in the second method, which conforms to real life, it is the real living individuals themselves, and consciousness is considered solely as *their* consciousness.

This method of approach is not devoid of premises. It starts

out from the real premises and does not abandon them for a moment. Its premises are men, not in any fantastic isolation and rigidity, but in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions. As soon as this active life-process is described, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists (themselves still abstract), or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists.

Where speculation ends—in real life—there real, positive science begins: the representation of the practical activity, of the practical process of development of men. Empty talk about consciousness ceases, and real knowledge has to take its place. When reality is depicted, philosophy as an independent branch of knowledge loses its medium of existence. At the best its place can only be taken by a summing-up of the most general results, abstractions which arise from the observation of the historical development of men. Viewed apart from history, these abstractions have in themselves no value whatsoever. They can only serve to facilitate the arrangement of historical material, to indicate the sequence of its separate strata. But they by no means afford a recipe or schema, as does philosophy, for neatly trimming the epochs of history. On the contrary, our difficulties begin only when we set about the observation and the arrangement—the real depiction—of our historical material, whether of a past epoch or of the present. The removal of these difficulties is governed by premises which it is quite impossible to state here, but which only the study of the actual life-process and the activity of the individuals of each epoch will make evident.

(MARX and ENGELS, *The German I ideology*, Moscow 1964, Pp. 31-32 and 36-39)

Negation of The Negation Thesis, Anti-thesis, Synthesis

Economic categories are only the theoretical expressions, the abstractions of the social relations of production...men make cloth, linen or silk materials in definite relations of production. But these definite social relations are just as much produced by men as linen,

flax, etc. Social relations are closely bound with productive forces. In acquiring new productive forces, men change their mode of production, and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations. The handmill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist.

The same men, who establish social relations in conformity with their material productivity, produce also principles, ideas and categories, in conformity with their social relations.

Thus these ideas, these categories, be as little eternal as the relations they express. They are *historical and transitory products.*

There is a continual movement of growth in the productive forces, of destruction in social relations, of formation in ideas; the only immutable thing is the abstraction of movement—mors immortalis. * ...

Economists explain how production takes place in the above mentioned relations, but what they do not explain is how these relations are produced, that is, the historical movement which gave them birth.... The economists' material is the active, energetic life of man; but the moment we cease to pursue the historical movement of production relations, of which the categories are but the theoretical expression, the moment we want to see in these categories no more than ideas, spontaneous thoughts, independent of real relations, we are forced to attribute the origin of these thoughts to the movement of pure reason. How does pure reason, eternal, impersonal reason, give rise to these thoughts? How does it proceed in order to produce them? If we had M. Proudhon's intrepidity in the matter of Hegelianism we should say: it is distinguished in itself from itself. What does this mean?

Impersonal reason having outside of itself neither a base on which it can pose itself, nor an object to which it can oppose itself, nor a subject with which it can compose itself is forced to turn head over heels, in posing itself, opposing itself and composing itself—position, opposition, composition. Or to speak Greek—we have the thesis, antithesis and synthesis...affirmation, negation, and negation of the negation...it is the language of this pure reason, separated from

the individual.

Instead of the ordinary individual with his ordinary manner of speaking and thinking, we have nothing but this ordinary manner in itself—without the individual.

Is it surprising that everything, in the final abstraction—for we have here an abstraction, and not an analysis, presents itself as a logical category? Is it surprising that, if you drop little by little all that constitutes the individuality of a house, leaving out first of all the materials of which it is composed, then the form that distinguishes it, you end up with nothing but a body; that if you leave out of account the limits of this body, you soon have nothing but a space—that if, finally, you leave out of account the dimensions of this space, there is absolutely nothing left but pure quantity, the logical category? If we abstract thus from every subject all the alleged accidents, animate and inanimate, men or things, we are right in saying that in the final abstraction, the only substance left is the logical categories. Thus the metaphysicians who, in making these abstractions, think they are making analysis, and who the more they detach themselves from things imagine themselves to be getting all the nearer to the point of penetrating to their core—these metaphysicians in turn are right in saying that things here below are embroideries of which the logical categories constitute the canvas.... If all that exists, all that lives on land and under water can be reduced by abstraction to a logical category—if the whole real world can be drowned thus in a world of abstractions, in the world of logical categories, who need be astonished at it?

[For Hegel] There is no longer a "history according to the order in time"; there is only "the sequence of ideas in the understanding." He thinks he is constructing the world by the movement of thought whereas he is merely reconstructing systematically and classifying by the absolute method the thoughts which are in the minds of all.

... We all know that competition was engendered by feudal monopoly. Thus competition was originally the opposite of monopoly and not monopoly the opposite of competition. So that modern monopoly is not a simple antithesis, it is on the contrary the true synthesis.

Thesis: Feudal monopoly, before competition.

Antithesis: Competition.

Synthesis: Modern monopoly, which is the negation of feudal monopoly in so far as it implies the system of competition, and the negation of competition in so far as it is monopoly.

Thus modern monopoly, bourgeois monopoly, is synthetic monopoly, the negation of the negation, the unity of opposites. It is monopoly in the pure, normal, rational state ...

In practical life we find not only competition, monopoly, and the antagonism between them, but also the synthesis of the two, which is not a formula, but a movement. Monopoly produces competition, competition produces monopoly. Monopolists are made from competition; competitors become monopolists. If the monopolists restrict their mutual competition by means of partial associations, competition increases among the workers; and the more the mass of the proletarians grows as against the monopolists of one nation, the more desperate competition becomes between the monopolists of different nations. The synthesis is of such a character that monopoly can only maintain itself by continually entering into the struggle of competition.

(KARL MARX, *The Poverty of Philosophy,* Pages 117-23 and 169-70)

What Marx Discovered

Of the many important discoveries through which Marx has inscribed his name in the annals of science, we can here dwell on only two.

The first is the revolution brought about by him in the whole conception of world history. The whole previous view of history was based on the conception that the ultimate causes of all historical changes are to be looked for in the changing ideas of human beings, and that of all historical changes political changes are the most important and dominate the whole of history. But the question was not asked as to whence the ideas come into men's minds and what the driving causes of the political changes are. Only upon the newer school of French, and partly also of English, historians had the

conviction forced itself that, since the Middle Ages at least, the driving force in European history was the struggle of the developing bourgeoisie with the feudal aristocracy for social and political domination. Now Marx has proved that the whole of previous history is a history of class struggles, that in all the manifold and complicated political struggles the only thing at issue has been the social and political rule of social classes, the maintenance of domination by older classes and the conquest of domination by newly arising classes. To what, however, do these classes owe their origin and their continued existence? They owe it to the particular material, physically sensible conditions in which society at a given period produces and exchanges its means of subsistence. The feudal rule of the Middle Ages rested on the self-sufficient economy of small peasant communities, which themselves produced almost all their requirements, in which there was almost no exchange and which received from the arms-bearing nobility protection from without and national or at least political cohesion. When the towns arose and with them separate handicraft industry and trade intercourse, at first internal and later international, the urban bourgeoisie developed, and already during the Middle Ages achieved, in struggle with the nobility, its inclusion in the feudal order as likewise a privileged estate. But with the discovery of the extra-European world, from the middle of the fifteenth century onwards, this bourgeoisie acquired a far more extensive sphere of trade and therewith a new spur for its industry; in the most important branches handicrafts were supplanted by manufacture, now on a factory scale, and this again was supplanted by large-scale industry, become possible owing to the discoveries of the previous century, especially that of the steam engine. Large-scale industry, in its turn, reacted on trade by driving out the old manual labour in backward countries, and creating the present-day new means of communication: steam engines, railways, electric telegraphy, in the more developed ones. Thus the bourgeoisie came more and more to combine social wealth and social power in its hands, while it still for a long period remained excluded from political power, which was in the hands of the nobility and the monarchy supported by the nobility. But at a certain stage—in France since the Great Revolution—it also conquered political power, and now in turn became the ruling class over the proletariat and small peasants. From

this point of view all the historical phenomena are explicable in the simplest possible way—with sufficient knowledge of the particular economic condition of society, which it is true is totally lacking in our professional historians, and in the same way the conceptions and ideas of each historical period are most simply to be explained from the economic conditions of life and from the social and political relations of the period, which are in turn determined by these economic conditions. History was for the first time placed on its real basis; the palpable but previously totally overlooked fact that men must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, therefore must work, before they can fight for domination, pursue politics, religion, philosophy, etc.—this palpable fact at last came into its historical rights.

This new conception of history, however, was of supreme significance for the socialist outlook. It showed that all previous history moved in class antagonisms and class struggles, that there have always existed ruling and ruled, exploiting and exploited classes, and that the great majority of mankind has always been condemned to arduous labour and little enjoyment. Why is this? Simply because in all earlier stages of development of mankind production was so little developed that the historical development could proceed only in this antagonistic form, that historical progress as a whole was assigned to the activity of a small privileged minority, while the great mass remained condemned to producing by their labour their own meagre means of subsistence and also the increasingly rich means of the privileged. But the same investigation of history, which in this way provides a natural and reasonable explanation of the previous class rule, otherwise only explicable from the wickedness of man, also leads to the realisation that, in consequence of the so tremendously increased productive forces of the present time, even the last pretext has vanished for a division of mankind into rulers and ruled, exploiters and exploited, at least in the most advanced countries; that the ruling big bourgeoisie has fulfilled its historic mission, that it is no longer capable of the leadership of society and has even become a hindrance to the development of production, as the trade crises, and especially the last great collapse, and the depressed condition of industry in all countries have proved; that historical leadership has passed to the proletariat, a class which, owing to its whole position in society, can

only free itself by abolishing altogether all class rule, all servitude and all exploitation; and that the social productive forces, which have outgrown the control of the bourgeoisie, are only waiting for the associated proletariat to take possession of them in order to bring about a state of things in which every member of society will be enabled to participate not only in production but also in the distribution and administration of social wealth, and which so increases the social productive forces and their yield by planned operation of the whole of production that the satisfaction of all reasonable needs will be assured to everyone in an ever-increasing measure.

The second important discovery of Marx is the final elucidation of the relation between capital and labour, in other words, the demonstration how, within present society and under the existing capitalist mode of production, the exploitation of the worker by the capitalist takes place. Ever since political economy had put forward the proposition that labour is the soccer of all wealth and of all value, the question became inevitable: how is this then to be reconciled with the fact that the wage-worker does not receive the whole sum of value created by his labour but has to surrender a part of it to the capitalist? Both the bourgeois economists and the socialists exerted themselves to give a scientifically valid answer to this question, but in vain, until at last Marx came forward with the solution. This solution is as follows: the present-day capitalist mode of production presupposes the existence of two social classes—on the one hand, that of the capitalists, who are in possession of the means of production and subsistence, and, on the other hand, that of the proletarians, who, being excluded from this possession, have only a single commodity for sale, their labour power, and who therefore have to sell this labour power of theirs in order to obtain possession of means of subsistence. The value of a commodity is, however, determined by the socially necessary quantity of labour embodied in its production, and, therefore, also in its reproduction; the value of the labour power of an average human being during a day, month or year is determined, therefore, by the quantity of labour embodied in the quantity of means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of this labour power during a day, month or year. Let us assume that the means of subsistence of a worker for one day require six hours of labour for

their production or, what is the same thing, that the labour contained in them represents a quantity of labour of six hours; then the value of labour power for one day will be expressed in a sum of money which also embodies six hours of labour. Let us assume further that the capitalist who employs our worker pays him this sum in return, pays him, therefore, the full value of his labour power. If now the worker works six hours of the day for the capitalist, he has completely replaced the latter's outlay—six hours' labour for six hours' labour. But then there would be nothing in it for the capitalist, and the latter therefore looks at the matter quite differently. He says: I have bought the labour power of this worker not for six hours but for a whole day, and accordingly he makes the worker work 8,10,12,14 or more hours, according to circumstances, so that the product of the seventh, eighth and following hours is a product of unpaid labour and wanders, to begin with, into the pucker of the capitalist. Thus the worker in the service of the capitalist not only reproduces the value of his labour power, for which he receives pay, but over and above that he also produces a *surplus value* which, appropriated in the first place by the capitalist, is in its further course divided according to definite economic laws among the whole capitalist class and forms the basic stock from which arise ground rent, profit, accumulation of capital, in short, all the wealth consumed or accumulated by the non-labouring classes. But this proved that the acquisition of riches by the present-day capitalists consists just as much in the appropriation of the unpaid labour of others as that of the slave-owner or the feudal lord exploiting serf labour, and that all these forms of exploitation are only to be distinguished by the difference in manner and method by which the unpaid labour is appropriated. This, however, also removed the last justification for all the hypocritical phrases of the possessing classes to the effect that in the present social order right and justice, equality of rights and duties and a general harmony of interests prevail, and present-day bourgeois society, no less than its predecessors, was exposed as a grandiose institution for the exploitation of the huge majority of the people by a small, ever-diminishing minority.

Modern, scientific socialism is based on these two important facts. In the second volume of *Capital* these and other hardly less important scientific discoveries concerning the capitalist system of

society will be further developed, and thereby those aspects also of political economy not touched upon in the first volume will undergo revolutionsation. May it be vouchsafed to Marx to be able soon to have it ready for the press.

ENGELS, "Karl Marx", Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Moscow 1968, One Volume Edition, Pp. 374-78

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* [The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript:] The first *historical* act of these individuals distinguishing them from animals is not that they think, but that they begin to *produce their means of subsistence.*

** [The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript: Not only the original, spontaneous organisation of men, especially racial differences, depends on these conditions but also the entire further development, or lack of development, of men up to the present time.

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* In *The German Ideology* the world *"Verkehr"* is used in a very wide sense, encompassing the material and spiritual intercourse of separate individuals, social groups and entire countries. Marx and Engels show that material intercourse, and above all the intercourse of men with each other in the production process, is the basis of every other form of intercourse. The terms *"Verkehrsform"* (form of intercourse), *"Verkehrssuese"* (mode of intercourse) and *"Verkehrsuerhaltnisse"* (relations, or conditions, of intercourse) which we encounter in *The German Ideology* are used by Marx and Engels to express the concept "relations of production" which during that period was taking shape in their mind. The ordinary dictionary meanings of *"Verkehr"* are traffic, intercourse, and commerce. In this translation the word *"Verkher"* has been mostly rendered as "intercourse" and occasionally as "association" or "commerce".

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* [The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript:] The ideas which these individuals form are ideas either about their relation to nature or about their mutual relations or about their own nature. It is evident that in all these cases their ideas are the conscious expression—real or illusory—of their real relationships and activities, of their production and intercourse and of their social and political organisation. The opposite assumption is only possible if in addition to the spirit of the real, materially evolved individuals a separate spirit is presupposed. If the conscious expression of the real relations of these individuals is illusory, if in their imagination they turn reality upside-down, then this in its turn is the result of their limited material mode of activity and their limited social relations arising from it.

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* Marx quotes these words from Lucretius: *On the Nature of Things* (Book III, line 869). *"Mortalem uitam mors immortalis ademit."—Ed*

Letters On Historical Materialism

Engels to I. Bloch in Kongsberg

London, September 21-22, 1890

...According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimately* determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas—also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their *form.* There is an interaction of all these elements in which, amid all the endless host of accidents (that is, of things and events whose inner interconnection is so remote or so impossible of proof that we can regard it as nonexistent, as negligible) the economic movement, finally asserts itself as necessary. Otherwise the application of the theory to any period of history would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree.

We make our history ourselves, but, in the first place, under very definite assumptions and conditions. Among these the economic ones are ultimately decisive. But the political ones etc., and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds also play a part, although not the decisive one. The Prussian state also arose and developed from historical, ultimately economic, causes. But it could scarcely be maintained without pedantry that among the many small states of North Germany, Brandenburg was specifically determined by economic necessity to become the great power embodying the economic, linguistic and after the Reformation, also the religious difference between North and South, and not by other elements as well (above all by its entanglement with Poland, owing to the

possession of Prussia, and hence with international political relations—which were indeed also decisive in formation of the Austrian dynastic power). Without making oneself ridiculous it would be a difficult thing to explain in terms of economics the existence of every small state in Germany, past and present, or the origin of the High German consonant permutations, which widened the geographic partition wall formed by the mountains from the Sudetic range to the Taunus to form a regular fissure across all Germany.

In the second place, however, history is made in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, of which each in turn has been made what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant—the historical event. This may again itself be viewed as the product of a power which works as *unconsciously* and without volition. For what each individual wills is obstructed by everyone else, and what emerges is something that no one willed. Thus history has proceeded hitherto in the manner of a natural process and is essentially subject to the same laws of motion. But from the fact that the wills of individuals—each of whom desires what he is impelled to by his physical constitution and external, in the last resort economic, circumstances (either his own personal circumstances or those of society in general)—do not attain what they want, but are merged into an aggregate mean, a common resultant, it must not be concluded that they are equal to zero. On the contrary, each contributes to the resultant and is to this extent included in it.

I would furthermore ask you to study this theory from its original sources and not at second-hand; it is really much easier. Marx hardly wrote anything in which it did not play a part. But especially *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* is a most excellent example of its application. There are also many allusions to it in *Capital.* Then may I also direct you to my writings: *Herr Eugen Duhring's Revolution in Science* and *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy,* in which I have given the most detailed account of historical materialism which, as far as I know, exists.

Marx and I are ourselves partly to blame for the fact that the younger people sometimes lay more stress on the economic side than is due to it. We had to emphasize the main principle *vis-à-vis* our adversaries, who denied it, and we had not always the time, the place or the opportunity to give their due to the other elements involved in the interaction. But when it came to presenting a section of history, that is, to making a practical application, it was a different matter and there no error was permissible. Unfortunately, however, it happens only too often that people think they have fully understood a new theory and can apply it without more ado from the moment they have assimilated its main principles, and even those not always correctly. And I cannot exempt many of the more recent "Marxists" from this reproach, for the most amazing rubbish has been produced in this quarter, too...

(Marx-Engels, *Selected Works,* One Volume Edition, Moscow 1968, pp. 692-93)

Engels To C. Schmidt In Berlin

London, October 27, 1890

Dear Schmidt,

I am taking advantage of the first free moments to reply to you. I think you would do very well to accept the offer of the *Zuricher Post.* You could always learn a good deal about economics there, especially if you bear in mind that Zurich is after all only a third-rate money and speculation market, so that the impressions which make themselves felt there are weakened by two-fold or three-fold reflection or are deliberately distorted. But you will get a practical knowledge of the mechanism and be obliged to follow the stock exchange reports from London, New York, Paris, Berlin and Vienna at first-hand, and thus the world market, in its reflex as money and stock market, will reveal itself to you. Economic, political and other reflections are just like those in the human eye: they pass through a condensing lens and therefore appear upside down, standing on their heads. Only the

nervous apparatus which would put them on their feet again for presentation to us is lacking. The money market man sees the movement of industry and of the world market only in the inverted reflection of the money and stock market and so effect becomes cause to him. I noticed that already in the forties in Manchester: the London stock exchange reports were utterly useless for understanding the course of industry and its periodical maxima and minima because these gentry tried to explain everything by crises on the money market, which of course were themselves generally only symptoms. At that time the point was to disprove temporary over-production as the origin of industrial crises, so that the thing had in addition its tendentious side, provocative of distortion. This point now ceases to exist—for us, at any rate, for good and all—besides which it is indeed a fact that the money market can also have its own crises, in which direct disturbances of industry play only a subordinate part or no part at all. Here there is still much to be established and examined, especially in the history of the last twenty years.

Where there is division of labour on a social scale there the separate labour processes become independent of each other. In the last instance production is the decisive factor. But as soon as trade in products becomes independent of production proper, it follows a movement of its own, which, while governed as a whole by that of production, still in particulars and within this general dependence again follows laws of its own inherent in the nature of this new factor; this movement has phases of its own and in its turn reacts on the movement of production. The discovery of America was due to the thirst for gold which had previously driven the Portuguese to Africa (Soetbeer's *Production of Precious Metals),* because the enormously extended European industry of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the trade corresponding to it demanded more means of exchange than Germany, the great silver country from 1450 to 1550, could provide. The conquest of India by the Portuguese, Dutch and English between 1500 and 1800 had *imports from* India as its object—nobody dreamt of exporting anything there. And yet what a colossal reaction these discoveries and conquests, brought about solely by trade interests, had upon industry: it was only the need for *exports to* these countries that created and developed modern large-scale industry.

So it is, too, with the money market. As soon as trade in money becomes separate from trade in commodities it has—under certain conditions imposed by production and commodity trade and within these limits—a development of its own, special laws determined by its own nature and separate phases. If to this is added that money trade, developing further, comes to include trade in securities and that these securities are not government papers but also industrial and transport stocks, so that money trade gains direct control over a portion of the production by which, taken as a whole, it is itself controlled, then the reaction of money trading on production becomes still stronger and more complicated. The traders in money are the owners of railways, mines, iron works, etc. These means of production take on a double aspect: their operation has to be directed sometimes in the interests of direct production but sometimes also according to the requirements of the shareholders, so far as they are money traders. The most striking example of this is furnished by the North American railways, whose operation is entirely dependent on the daily stock exchange operations of a Jay Gould or a Vanderbilt, etc., which have nothing whatever to do with the particular railway and its interests as a means of communication. And even here in England we have seen contests lasting decades between different railway companies over the boundaries of their respective territories—contests on which an enormous amount of money was thrown away, not in the interests of production and communication but simply because of a rivalry whose sole object usually was to facilitate the stock exchange transactions of the shareholding money traders.

With these few indications of my conception of the relation of production to commodity trade and of both to money trade, I have answered, in essence, your questions about "historical materialism" generally. The thing is easiest to grasp from the point of view of the division of labour. Society gives rise to certain common functions which it cannot dispense with. The persons appointed for this purpose form a new branch of the division of labour *within society.* This gives them particular interests, distinct, too, from the interests of those who empowered them; they make themselves independent of the latter and—the state is in being. And now things proceed in a way similar to that in commodity trade and later in money trade: the new

independent power, while having in the main to follow the movement of production, reacts in its turn, by virtue of its inherent relative independence—that is, the relative independence once transferred to it and gradually further developed—upon the conditions and course of production. It is the interaction of two unequal forces: on the one hand, the economic movement, on the other, the new political power, which strives for as much independence as possible, and which, having once been established, is endowed with a movement of its own. On the whole, the economic movement gets its way, but it has also to suffer reactions from the political movement which it itself established and endowed with relative independence, from the movement of the state power, on the one hand, and of the opposition simultaneously engendered, on the other. Just as the movement of the industrial market is, in the main and with the reservations already indicated, reflected in the money market and, of course, in *inverted* form, so the struggle between the classes already existing and fighting with one another is reflected in the struggle between government and opposition, but likewise in inverted form, no longer directly but indirectly, not as a class struggle but as a fight for political principles, and so distorted that it has taken us thousands of years to get behind it.

The reaction of the state power upon economic development can be of three kinds: it can run in the same direction, and then development is more rapid; it can oppose the line of development, in which case nowadays it will go to pieces in the long run in every great people; or it can prevent the economic development from proceeding along certain lines, and prescribe other lines. This case ultimately reduces itself to one of the two previous ones. But it is obvious that in cases two and three the political power can do great damage to the economic development and cause a great squandering of energy and material.

Then there is also the case of the conquest and brutal destruction of economic of economic resources, by which, in certain circumstances, a whole local or national economic development could formerly be ruined. Nowadays such a case usually has the opposite effect, at least with great peoples: in the long run the vanquished often gains more economically, politically and morally than the victor.

Similarly with law. As soon as the new division of labour which

creates professional lawyers becomes necessary, another new and independent sphere is opened up which, for all its general dependence on production and trade, has also a special capacity for reacting upon these spheres. In a modern state, law must not only correspond to the general economic condition and be its expression, but must also be an *internally coherent* expression which does not, owing to inner contradictions, reduce itself to nought. And in order to achieve this, the faithful reflection of economic conditions suffers increasingly. All the more so the more rarely it happens that a code of law is the blunt, unmitigated, unadulterated expression of the domination of a class—this in itself would offend the "conception of right." Even in the *Code Napoleon* the pure, consistent conception of right held by the revolutionary bourgeoisie of 1792-96 is already adulterated in many ways, and, in so far as it is embodied there, has daily to undergo all sorts of attenuations owing to the rising power of the proletariat. This does not prevent the *Code Napoleon* from being the statute book which serves as the basis of every new code of law in every part of the world. Thus to a great extent the course of the "development of right" consists only, first, in the attempt to do away with the contradictions arising from the direct translation of economic relations into legal principles, and to establish a harmonious system of law, and then in the repeated breaches made in this system by the influence and compulsion of further economic development, which involves it in further contradictions. (I am speaking here for the moment only of civil law.)

The reflection of economic relations as legal principles is necessarily also a topsy-turvy one: it goes on without the person who is acting being conscious of it; the jurist imagines he is operating with *a priori* propositions, whereas they are really only economic reflexes; so everything is upside down. And it seems to me obvious that this inversion, which, so long as it remains unrecognised, forms what we call *ideological outlook,* reacts in its turn upon the economic basis and may, within certain limits, modify it. The basis of the right of inheritance—that the stages reached in the development of the family are the same—is an economic one. Nevertheless, it would be difficult to prove, for instance, that the absolute liberty of the testator in England and the severe restrictions in every detail imposed upon

him in France are due to economic causes alone. Both react back, however, on the economic sphere to a very considerable extent, because they influence the distribution of property.

As to the realms of ideology which soar still higher in the air—religion, philosophy, etc.—these have a prehistoric stock, found already in existence by and taken over in the historical period, of what we should today call bunk. These various false conceptions of nature, of man's own being, of spirits, magic forces, etc., have for the most part only a negative economic element as their basis; the low economic development of the prehistoric period is supplemented and also partially conditioned and even caused by the false conceptions of nature. And even though economic necessity was the main driving force of the progressive knowledge of nature and has become ever more so, it would surely be pedantic to try and find economic causes for this primitive nonsense. The history of science is the history of the gradual clearing away of this nonsense or rather of its replacement by fresh but always less absurd nonsense. The people who attend to this belong in their turn to special spheres in the division of labour and appear to themselves to be working in an independent field. And to the extent that they form an independent group within the social division of labour, their productions, including their errors, react upon the whole development of society, even on its economic development. But all the same they themselves are in turn under the dominating influence of economic development. In philosophy, for instance, this can be most readily proved true for the bourgeois period. Hobbes was the first modern materialist (in the eighteenth century sense) but he was an absolutist in a period when absolute monarchy was at its height throughout Europe and in England entered the lists against the people. Locke, both in religion and politics, was the child of the class compromise of 1688. The English deists and their more consistent continuators, the French materialists, were the true philosophers of the bourgeoisie, the French even of the bourgeois revolution. The German philistine runs through German philosophy from Kant to Hegel, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively. But as a definite sphere in the division of labour, the philosophy of every epoch presupposes certain definite thought material handed down to it by its predecessors, from which it takes its start. And that is why

economically backward countries can still play first fiddle in philosophy: France in the eighteenth century as compared with England, on whose philosophy the French based themselves, and later Germany as compared with both. But in France as well as Germany philosophy and the general blossoming of literature at that time were the result of a rising economic development. I consider the ultimate supremacy of economic development established in these spheres too, but it comes to pass within the limitations imposed by the particular sphere itself: in philosophy, for instance, by the operation of economic influences (which again generally act only under political, etc., disguises) upon the existing philosophic material handed down by predecessors. Here economy creates nothing anew, but it determines the way in which the thought material found in existence is altered and further developed, and that too for the most part indirectly, for it is the political, legal and moral reflexes which exert the greatest direct influence on philosophy.

About religion I have said what was most necessary in the last section on Feuerbach.

If therefore Barth supposes that we deny any and every reaction of the political, etc., reflexes of the economic movement upon the movement itself, he is simply tilting at windmills. He has only got to look at Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* which deals almost exclusively with the *particular* part played by political struggles and events, of course within their *general* dependence upon economic conditions. Or *Capital,* the section on the working day, for instance, where legislation, which is surely a political act, has such a trenchant effect. Or the section on the history of the bourgeoisie. (Chapter XXIV.) Or why do we fight for the political dictatorship of the proletariat if political power is economically impotent? Force (that is, state power) is also an economic power!

But I have no time to criticise the book (the reference is to Barth's *Die Geschichtsphilosophie Hegels und der Hegelianer bis auf Marx und Hartmann (Philosophy of History of Hegel and the Hegelians up to Marx and Hartmann-Ed.)* now. I must first get Volume III out and besides I think that Bernstein, for instance, could deal with it quite effectively.

What these gentlemen all lack is dialectics. They always see

only here cause, there effect. That this is a hollow abstraction, that such metaphysical polar opposites exist in the real world only during crises, while the whole vast process goes on in the form of interaction—though of very unequal forces, the economic movement being by far the strongest, most primordial, most decisive—that here everything is relative and nothing absolute—this they never begin to see. As far as they are concerned Hegel never existed...

(Marx-Engels, *Selected Works,* Moscow 1968, One Volume Edition, pp. 694-99.)

Engels to W. Borgius in Breslau

London, January 25, 1894

Dear Sir,

Here is the answer to your questions:

1. What we understand by the economic relations, which we regard as the determining basis of the history of society, is the manner and method by which men in a given society produce their means of subsistence and exchange the products among themselves (in so far as division of labour exists). Thus the *entire technique* of production and transport is here included. According to our conception this technique also determines the manner and method of exchange and, further, of the distribution of products and with it, after the dissolution of gentile society, also the division into classes, and hence the relations of lordship and servitude and with them the state, politics, law, etc. Further included in economic relations are the *geographical basis* on which they operate and those remnants of earlier stages of economic development which have actually been transmitted and have survived—often only through tradition or by force of inertia; also of course the external environment which surrounds this form of society.

   If, as you say, technique largely depends on the state of science,

science depends far more still on the *state* and the *requirements* of technique. If society has a technical need, that helps science forward more than ten universities. The whole of hydrostatics (Torricelli, etc.) was called forth by the necessity for regulating the mountain streams of Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We have known anything reasonable about electricity only since its technical applicability was discovered. But unfortunately it has become the custom in Germany to write the history of the sciences as if they had fallen from the skies.

2. We regard economic conditions as that which ultimately conditions historical development. Hut race is itself an economic factor. Here, however, two points must not be overlooked:

    1. Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic basis. It is not that the economic situation is *cause, solely active,* while everything else is only passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of economic necessity, which *ultimately* always asserts itself. The state, for instance, exercises an influence by protective tariffs, free trade, good or bad fiscal system; and even the deadly inanition and impotence of the German philistine, arising from the miserable economic condition of Germany from 1648 to 1830 and expressing themselves at first in pietism, then in sentimentality and cringing servility to princes and nobles, were not without economic effect. That was one of the greatest hindrances to recovery and was not shaken until the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars made the chronic misery an acute one. So it is not, as people try here and there conveniently to imagine, that the economic situation produces an automatic effect. No. Men make their history themselves, only they do so in a given environment, which conditions it, and on the basis of actual relations already existing, among which the economic relations, however much they may be influenced by the other—the political and ideological relations, are still ultimately the decisive ones, forming the keynote which runs through them and alone leads to understanding.

2. Men make their history themselves, but not as yet with a collective will according to a collective plan or even in a definite, delimited given society. Their aspirations clash, and for that very reason all such societies are governed by *necessity*, the complement and form of appearance of which is *accident*. The necessity which here asserts itself athwart all accident is again ultimately economic necessity. This is where the so-called great men come in for treatment. That such and such a man and precisely that man arises at a particular time in a particular country is, of course, pure chance. But cut him out and there will be a demand for a substitute, and this substitute will be found, good or bad, but in the long run he will be found. That Napoleon, just that particular Corsican, should have been the military dictator whom the French Republic, exhausted by its own warfare, had rendered necessary, was chance; but that, if a Napoleon had been lacking, another would have filled the place, is proved by the fact that the man was always found as soon as he became necessary: Caesar, Augustus, Cromwell, etc. while Marx discovered the materialist conception of history, Thierry, Mignet, Guizot and all the English historians up to 1850 are evidence that it was being striven for, and the discovery of the same conception by Morgan proves that the time was ripe for it and that it simply *had* to be discovered.

So with all the other accidents, and apparent accidents, of history. The further the particular sphere which we are investigating is removed from the economic sphere and approaches that of pure abstract ideology, the more shall we find it exhibiting accidents in its development, the more will its curve run zigzag. But if you plot the average axis of the curve, you will find that this axis will run more and more nearly parallel to the axis of economic development the longer the period considered and the wider the field dealt with.

In Germany the greatest hindrance to correct understanding is the irresponsible neglect by literature of economic history. It is so hard not only to dis-accustom oneself to the ideas of history drilled into one at school but still more to rake up the necessary material for doing so. Who, for instance, has read at least old G. Von Gulich,

whose dry collection of material nevertheless contains so much stuff for the clarification of innumerable political facts!

For the rest, the fine example which Marx has given in *The Eighteenth Brumaire* should, I think, provide you fairly well with information on your questions, just because it is a practical example. I have also, I believe, already touched on most of the points in *Anti-Duhring* I, chapters 9-11, and II, 2-4, as well as in III, 1, or Introduction, and also in the last section of *Feuerbach.*

Please do not weigh each word in the above too scrupulously, but keep the general connection in mind; I regret that I have not the time to word what I am writing to you as exactly I should be obliged to do for publication...

(Marx-Engels, *Selected Works,* One Volume Edition, Moscow 1968, Pages 704-06)

Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation

What does the primitive accumulation of capital, *i. e.,* its historical genesis, resolve itself into? In so far as it is not immediate transformation of slaves and serfs into wage-labourers, and therefore a mere change of form, it only means the expropriation of the immediate producers, *i. e.,* the dissolution of private property based on the labour of its owner. Private property, as the antithesis to social, collective property, exists only where the means of labour and the external conditions of labour belong to private individuals. But according as these private individuals are labourers or not labourers, private property has a different character. The numberless shades, that it at first sight presents, correspond to the intermediate stages lying between these two extremes. The private property of the labourer in his means of production is the foundation of petty industry, whether agricultural, manufacturing, or both; petty industry, again, is an essential condition for the development of social production and of the free individuality of the labourer himself. Of course, this petty mode of production exists also under slavery, serfdom, and other

states of dependence. But it flourishes, it lets loose its whole energy, it attains its adequate classical form, only where the labourer is the private owner of his own means of labour set in action by himself: the peasant of the land which he cultivates, the artisan of the tool which he handles as a virtuoso. This mode of production presupposes parcelling of the soil, and scattering of the other means of production. As it excludes the concentration of these means of production, so also it excludes cooperation, division of labour within each separate process of production, the control over, and the productive application of the forces of Nature by society, and the free development of the social productive powers. It is compatible only with a system of production, and a society, moving within narrow and more or less primitive bounds. To perpetuate it would be, as Pecqueur rightly says, "to decree universal mediocrity." At a certain stage of development it brings forth the material agencies for its own dissolution. From that moment new forces and new passions spring up in the bosom of society; but the old social organisation fetters them and keeps them down. It must be annihilated; it is annihilated. Its annihilation, the transformation of the individualised and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, of the pigmy property of the many into the huge property of the few, the expropriation of the great mass of the people from the soil, from the means of subsistence, and from the means of labour, this fearful and painful expropriation of the mass of the people forms the prelude to the history of capital. It comprises a series of forcible methods, of which we have passed in review only those that have been epoch-making as methods of the primitive accumulation of capital. The expropriation of the immediate producers was accomplished with merciless Vandalism, and under the stimulus of passions the most infamous, the most sordid, the pettiest, the most meanly odious. Self-earned private property, that is based, so to say, on the fusing together of the isolated, independent labouring individual with the conditions of his labour, is supplanted by capitalistic private property, which rests on exploitation of the nominally free labour of others, *i.e.*, on wage-labour.

As soon as this process of transformation has sufficiently decomposed the old society from top to bottom, as soon as the labourers are turned into proletarians, their means of labour into

capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet, then the further socialisation of labour and further transformation of the land and other means of production into socially exploited and, therefore, common means of production, as well as the further expropriation of private proprietors, takes a new form. That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many labourers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the centralisation of capital. One capitalist always kills many. Hand in hand with this centralisation, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever-extending scale, the cooperative form of the labour process, the conscious technical application of science, the methodical cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labour into instruments of labour only usable in common, the economising of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialised labour, the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world-market, and with this, the international character of the capitalistic regime. Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolise all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralisation of the means of production and socialisation of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated.

The capitalist mode of appropriation, the result of the capitalist mode of production, produces capitalist private property. This is the first negation of individual private property, as founded on the labour of the proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of Nature, its own negation. It is the negation of negation. This does not re-establish private property for the

producer, but gives him individual property based on the acquisitions of the capitalist era: *i. e.,* on cooperation and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production.

The transformation of scattered private property, arising from individual labour, into capitalist private property is, naturally, a process, incomparably more protracted, violent, and difficult, than the transformation of capitalistic private property, already practically resting on socialised production, into socialised property. In the former case, we had the expropriation of the mass of the people by a few usurpers; in the latter, we have the expropriation of a few usurpers by the mass of the people.*

(MARX, *Capital,* Moscow 1965, Vol. I, Pp. 761-64)

The Laws of Dialectics

It is...from the history of nature and human society that the laws of dialectics are abstracted. For they are nothing but the most general laws of these two aspects of historical development, as well as of thought itself. And indeed they can be reduced in the main to three:

The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and *vice versa;*

The law of the interpenetration of opposites;

The law of the negation of the negation.

All three are developed by Hegel in his idealist fashion as mere laws of *thought:* the first, in the first part of his *Logic* in the *Doctrine of Being;* the second fills the whole of the second and by far the most important part of his *Logic,* the *Doctrine of Essence;* finally the third figures as the fundamental law for the construction of the whole system. The mistake lies in the fact that these laws are foisted on nature and history as laws of thought, and not deduced from them. This is the source of the whole forced and often outrageous treatment; the universe, willy-nilly, is made out to be arranged in accordance with a system of thought which itself is only the product of a definite stage of evolution of human thought. If we turn the thing round, then

everything becomes simple, and the dialectical laws that look so extremely mysterious in idealist philosophy at once become simple and clear as noonday.

Moreover, anyone who is even only slightly acquainted with his Hegel will be aware that in hundreds of passages Hegel is capable of giving the most striking individual illustrations from nature and history of the dialectical laws.

We are not concerned here with writing a handbook of dialectics, but only with showing that the dialectical laws are really laws of development of nature, and therefore are valid also for theoretical natural science. Hence, we cannot go into the interconnections of these laws with one another.

ENGELS, *Dialectics of Nature* (1882), pp. 26-27

(For a summary of the essential elements of dialectics, see Lenin, Philosophical Notebooks, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, pp. 221-23)

The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet, the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, are its own gravediggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable...Of all the classes, that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes perish and disappear in the face of Modern Industry, the proletariat is its special and essential product...The lower middle-classes, the small manufacturers, the shopkeepers, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle-class...they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. —Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, "Manifest der Kommnunistischen Partei." [Manifesto of the Communist Party] London, 1848, pp, 9, 11.

The Interaction of Quantity And Quality

A. In The Natural Sciences

The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and *vice versa.* For our purpose, we could express this by saying that in nature, in a manner exactly fixed for each individual case, qualitative changes can only occur by the quantitative addition or subtraction of matter or motion (so-called energy).

All qualitative differences in nature rest on differences of chemical composition or on different quantities or forms of motion (energy) or, as is almost always the case, on both. Hence it is impossible to alter the quality of a body without addition or subtraction of matter or motion, i. e., without quantitative alteration of the body concerned. In this form, therefore, Hegel's mysterious principle appears not only quite rational but even rather obvious.

It is surely hardly necessary to point out that the various allotropic* and aggregational states of bodies, because they depend on various groupings of the molecules, depend on greater or lesser quantities of motion communicated to the bodies.

But what is the position in regard to change of form of motion or so-called energy? If we change heat into mechanical motion or *versa,* is not the quality altered while the quantity remains the same? Quite correct. But it is with change of form of motion as with Heine's vices; anyone can be virtuous by himself, for vices two are always necessary. Change of form of motion is always a process that takes place between at least two bodies, of which one loses a definite quantity of motion of one quality (e. g. heat), while the other gains a corresponding quantity of motion of another quality (mechanical motion, electricity, chemical decomposition). Here, therefore, quantity and quality mutually correspond to each other. So far it has not been found possible to convert motion from one form to another inside a single isolated body.

We are concerned here in the first place with non-living bodies; the same law holds for living bodies, but it operates sunder very

complex conditions and at present quantitative measurement is still often impossible for us.

If we imagine any non-living body cut up into smaller and smaller portions, at first no qualitative change occurs. But this has a limit: If we succeed, as by evaporation, in obtaining the separate molecules in the free state, then it is true that we can usually divide these still further, yet only with a complete change of quality. The molecule is decomposed into its separate atoms, which have quite different properties from those of the molecule. In the case of molecules composed of various chemical elements, atoms or molecules of these elements themselves make their appearance in their place of the compound molecule; in the case of molecules of elements, the free atoms appear, which exert quite distinct qualitative effects: the free atoms of nascent oxygen are easily able to effect what the atoms of atmospheric oxygen, bound together in the molecule, can never achieve.

But the molecule is also qualitatively different from the body to which it belongs. It can carry out movements independently of this mass and while the latter remains apparently at rest, e. g., heat oscillations; by means of a change of position and of connection with neighbouring molecules it can change the body into an allotrope or a different state of aggregation.

Thus we see that the purely quantitative operation of division has a limit at which it becomes transformed into a qualitative difference: the mass consists solely of molecules, but it is something essentially different from the molecule, just as the latter is different from the atom. It is this difference that is the basis for the separation of mechanics, as the science of heavenly and terrestrial masses, from physics, as the mechanics of the molecule, and from chemistry, as the physics of the atom.

In mechanics, no qualities occur; at most states, such as equilibrium, motion, potential energy, which all depend on measurable transference of motion and are themselves capable of quantitative expression. Hence, in so far as qualitative change takes place here, it is determined by a corresponding quantitative change.

In physics, bodies are treated as chemically unalterable or

indifferent; we have to do with changes of their molecular states and with the change of form of the motion which in all cases, at least on one of the two sides, brings the molecule into play. Here every change is a transformation of quantity into quality, a consequence of the quantitative change of the quantity of motion of one form or another that is inherent in the body or communicated to it. "Thus, for instance, the temperature of water is first of all indifferent in relation to its state as a liquid; but by increasing or decreasing the temperature of liquid water, a point is reached at which this state of cohesion alters and the water becomes transformed on the one side into steam and on the other into ice." (Hegel, *Encyclopaedia,* Collected Works, VI, P. 217).

Similarly, a definite minimum current strength is required to cause the platinum wire of an electric incandescent lamp to glow; and every metal has its temperature of incandescence and fusion, every liquid its definite freezing and boiling point at a given pressure—in so far as our means allow us to produce the temperature required; finally also every gas has its critical point at which it can be liquefied by pressure and cooling. In short, the so-called physical constants are for the most part nothing but designations of the nodal points at which quantitative addition or subtraction of motion produces qualitative alteration in the state of the body concerned at which, therefore, quantity is transformed into quality.

The sphere, however, in which the law of nature discovered by Hegel celebrates its most important triumphs is that of chemistry. Chemistry can be termed the science of the qualitative changes of bodies as a result of changed quantitative composition...

In biology, as in the history of human society, the same law holds good at every step, but we prefer to dwell here on examples from the exact sciences, since here the quantities are accurately measurable and traceable.

Probably the same gentlemen who up to now have decried the transformation of quantity into quality as mysticism and incomprehensible transcendentalism will now declare that it is indeed something quite self-evident, trivial and commonplace, which they have long employed, and so they have been taught nothing new. But

to have formulated for the first time in its universally valid form a general law of development of nature, society, and thought, will always remain an act of historic importance. And if these gentlemen have for years caused quantity and quality to be transformed into one another, without knowing what they did, then they will have to console themselves with Moliere's Monsieur Jourdain who had spoken prose all his life without having the slightest inkling of it.

—ENGELS, *Dialectics of Nature* (1882), pp. 27-30, 33

B. In the Social Sciences

"What a comical effect is produced by the reference to the confused, hazy Hegelian notion that quantity changes into quality, and that therefore an advance, when it reaches a certain size, becomes capital by this quantitative increase alone."

In this "expurgated" presentation by Herr Duhring the effect produced is certainly curious enough. Let us see how it looks in the original, in Marx. On page 313 (2nd edition of *Capital), [Capital,* Moscow 1958, Vol. I, Ch. XI. Pp. 307-308 Ed.] Marx, on the basis of the previous examination of constant and variable capital and surplus value, draws the conclusion that "not every sum of money, or of value, is at pleasure transformable into capital. To effect this transformation, in fact, a certain minimum of money or of exchange value must be presupposed in the hands of the individual possessor of money or commodities." He takes as an example the case of a labourer in any branch of industry, who works eight hours for himself—that is, in producing the value of his wages—and the following four hours for the capitalist, in producing surplus-value, which immediately flows into the pocket of the capitalist. In this case, one would have to have at his disposal a sum of values sufficient to enable one to provide two labourers with raw materials, instruments of labour, and wages, in order to pocket enough surplus-value every day to live on as well as one of his labourers. And as the aim of capitalist production is not mere subsistence but the increase of wealth, our man with his two labourers would still not be a capitalist. Now in

order that he may live twice as well as an ordinary labourer, and besides turn half of the surplus value produced again into capital, he would have to be able to employ eight labourers, that is, he would have to possess four times the sum of values assumed above. And it is only after this, and in the course of still further explanations elucidating and substantiating the fact that not every petty sum of values is enough to be transformable into capital, but that in this respect each period of development and each branch of industry has its definite minimum sum, that Marx observes: "Here, as in natural science, is *shown* the correctness of the law discovered by Hegel (in his *Logic),* that merely quantitative differences beyond a certain point pass into qualitative changes." [Ibid, p. 309. Italics by Engels—Ed.]

And now let the reader admire the higher and nobler style, by virtue of which Herr Duhring attributes to Marx the opposite of what he really said. Marx says: The fact that a sum of values can be transformed into capital only when it has reached a certain size, varying according to the circumstances, but in each case definite, minimum size—this fact is a *proof of the correctness* of the Hegelian law. Herr Duhring makes him say: *Because,* according to the Hegelian law, quantity changes into quality, *"therefore"* "an advance, when it reaches a certain size, becomes capital." That is to say, the very opposite.

In connection with Herr Duhring's examination of the Darwin case we have already got to know his habit, "in the interests of complete truth" and because of his "duty to the public which is free from the bonds of the guilds," of quoting incorrectly. It becomes more and more evident that this habit is an inner necessity of the philosophy of reality, and it is certainly a very "summary treatment." Not to mention the fact that Herr Duhring further makes Marx speak of any kind of "advance" whatsoever, whereas Marx only refers to an advance made in the form of raw materials, instruments of labour, and wages; and that in doing this Herr Duhring succeeds in making Marx speak pure nonsense. And then he has the cheek to describe as *comic* the nonsense which he himself has fabricated. Just as he built up a Darwin of his own fantasy in order to try out his strength against him, so here he builds up a fantastic Marx. "Historical depiction in the grand style", indeed!

We have already seen earlier, in regard to world schematism, that in connection with this Hegelian nodal line of measure relations—in which quantitative difference suddenly passes at certain points into qualitative change—Herr Duhring had a little accident: In a weak moment he himself recognized and made use of this line. We gave there one of the best known examples—that of the change of the aggregate states of water, which under normal atmospheric pressure changes at 0^0C from the liquid into the solid state, at 100^0C from the liquid into the gaseous state, so that at both these turning points the merely quantitative change of temperature brings about qualitative change in the condition of the water.

In proof of this law we might have cited hundreds of other similar facts from nature as well as from human society. Thus, for example, the whole of Part IV of Marx's *Capital*—production of relative surplus-value—cooperation, division of labour and manufacture, machinery and modern industry—deals with innumerable cases in which quantitative change alters the quality, and also qualitative change alters the quantity, of the things under consideration; in which therefore, to use the expression so hated by Herr Duhring, quantity is transformed into quality and vice-versa. As for example the fact that the co-operation of a number of people, the fusion of many forces into one single force, creates, to use Marx's phrase, a "new power," which is essentially different from the sum of its separate forces...

In conclusion we shall one more witness for the transformation of quantity into quality, namely—Napoleon. He describes the combat between the French cavalry, who were had riders but disciplined, and the Mamelukes, who were undoubtedly the best horsemen of their time for single combat, but lacked discipline, as follows: "Two Mamelukes were undoubtedly more than a match for three Frenchmen; 100 Mamelukes were equal to 100 Frenchmen; 300 Frenchmen could generally beat 300 Mamelukes, and 1,000 Frenchmen invariable defeated 1,500 Mamelukes."

Jus as with Marx a definite, though varying, minimum sum of exchange-values was necessary to make possible its transformation into capital, so with Napoleon a detachment of cavalry had to be of a definite minimum number in order to make it possible for the force

of discipline, embodied in closed order and planned utilisation, to manifest itself and rise superior even to greater numbers of irregular cavalry, in spite of the latter being better mounted, more dexterous horsemen and fighters, and at least as brave as the former. But what does this prove as against Herr Duhring? Was not Napoleon miserably vanquished in his conflict with Europe? Did he not suffer defeat after defeat? And why? Solely in consequence of having introduced the confused, hazy Hegelian notion into cavalry tactics!

ENGELS, *Anti-Duhring* (1878), Moscow 1959, pp. 171-74, 176-77.

C. In the Labor Process

Just as the offensive power of a squadron of cavalry, or the defensive power of a regiment of infantry, is essentially different from the sum of the offensive or defensive powers of the individual cavalry or infantry soldiers taken separately, so the sum total of the mechanical forces exerted by isolated workmen differs from the social force that is developed, when many hands take part simultaneously in one and the same undivided operation, such as raising a heavy weight, turning a winch, or removing an obstacle. In such cases the effect of the combined labour could either not be produced at all by isolated individual labour or it could only be produced by a great expenditure of time, or on a very dwarfed scale. Not only have we here an increase in the productive power of the individual, by means of cooperation, but the creation of a new power, namely, the collective power of masses.

Apart from the new power that arises from the fusion of many forces into one single force, mere social contact begets in most industries an emulation and a stimulation of the animal spirits that heighten the efficiency of each individual workman. Hence it is that a dozen persons working together will, in their collective working day of 144 hours, produce far more than 12 isolated men each working 12 hours, or than one man who works 12 days in succession. The reason of this is that man is, if not as Aristotle contends, a political, at all events a social animal.

—MARX, *Capital* (1867), Moscow, Vol. 1, pp. 325-26

The Unity And Conflict of Opposites

The splitting of a single whole and the cognition of its contradictory parts...is the *essence* (one of the "essentials," one of the principal, if not the principal, characteristics or features) of dialectics. That is precisely how Hegel, too, puts the matter (Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* continually *grapples* with it and *combats* Heraclitus and Heraclitean ideas).

The correctness of this aspect of the content of dialectics must be tested by the history of science. This aspect of dialectics (e.g., in Plekhanov) usually receives inadequate attention: the identity of opposites is taken as the sum-total of *examples* ("for example, a seed," "for example, primitive communism." The same is true of Engels. But it is "in the interests of popularisation.") and not as a *law of cognition (and* as a law of the objective world).

In mathematics: + and - Differential and integral.

In mechanics: action and reaction.

In physics: positive and negative electricity.

In chemistry: the combination and dissociation of atoms.

In social science: the class struggle.

The identity of opposites (it would be more correct, perhaps, to say their "unity"—although the difference between the terms identity and unity is not particularly important here. In a certain sense both are correct) is the recognition (discovery) of the contradictory, *mutually exclusive,* opposite tendencies in *all* phenomena and processes of nature *(including* mind and society). The condition for the knowledge of all processes of the world in their "*self-movement,*" in their spontaneous development, in their real life, is the knowledge of them as a unity of opposites. Development is the "struggle" of opposites. The two basic (or two possible? or two historically observable?) conceptions of development (evolution) are: development as decrease and increase, as repetition, *and* development as a unity of opposites (the division of a unity into mutually exclusive opposites and their reciprocal relation).

In the first conception of motion, *self*-movement, its *driving*

force, its source, its motive, remains in the shade (or this source is made *external—God,* subject, etc.). In the second conception the chief attention is directed precisely to knowledge of the *source* of *"self"*—movement.

The first conception is lifeless, pale and dry. The second is living. The second *alone* furnishes the key to the "self-movement" of everything existing: it alone furnishes the key to the "leaps," to the "break in continuity," to the "transformation into the opposite," to the destruction of the old and the emergence of the new.

The unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, and relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute.

N.B. The distinction between subjectivism (scepticism, sophistry, etc.) and dialectics, incidentally, is that in (objective) dialectics the difference between the relative and the absolute is itself relative. For objective dialectics there is an absolute *within* the relative. For subjectivism and sophistry the relative is only relative and excludes the absolute.

In his *Capital,* Marx first analyses the simplest, most ordinary and fundamental, most common and everyday *relation* of bourgeois (commodity) society, a relation encountered billions of times, viz., the exchange of commodities. In this very simple phenomenon (in this "cell" of bourgeois society) analysis reveals *all* the contradictions (or the germs of *all* the contradictions) of modern society. The subsequent exposition shows us the development (*both* growth *and* movement) of these contradictions and of this society in the *summation* of its individual parts, from its beginning to its end.

Such must also be the method of exposition (or study) of dialectics in general (for with Marx the dialectics of bourgeois society is only a particular case of dialectics). To begin with what is the simplest, most ordinary, common, etc, with *any proposition:* the leaves of a tree are green; John is a man; Fido is a dog, etc. Here already we have *dialectics* (as Hegel's genius recognised): the *individual is* the *universal* (*Aristotle's Metaphysics, Bk. B,* chapter 4 "for, of course, one cannot hold the opinion that there can be a house (in general)

apart from visible houses.") Consequently, the opposites (the individual is opposed to the universal) are identical: the individual exists only in the connection that leads to the universal. The universal exists only in the individual and through the individual. Every individual is (in one way or another) a universal. Every universal is (a fragment, or an aspect, or the essence of) an individual. Every universal only approximately embraces all the individual objects. Every individual enters incompletely into the universal, etc..

Every individual is connected by thousands of transitions with other KINDS of individuals (things, phenomena, processes), etc. *Here already* we have the elements, the germs, the concepts of *necessity,* of objective connection in nature, etc. here already we have the contingent and the necessary, the phenomenon and the essence; for when we say: John is a man, Fido is a dog, *this is a* leaf of a tree, etc., we *disregard* a number of attributes as *contingent;* we separate the essence from the appearance, and counterpose the one to the other.

Thus in *any* proposition we can (and must) disclose as in a "nucleus" ("cell") the germs of *all* the elements of dialectics, and thereby show that dialectics is a property of all human knowledge in general. And natural science shows us (and here again it must be demonstrated in *any* simple instance) objective nature with the same qualities, the transformation of the individual into the universal, of the contingent into the necessary, transitions, modulations, and the reciprocal connection of opposites. Dialectics *is* the theory of knowledge of (Hegel and) Marxism. This is the "aspect" of the matter (it is not "an aspect" but the *essence* of the matter) to which Plekhanov, not to speak of other Marxists, paid no attention.

LENIN, "On the Question of Dialectics" (1915), Philosophical Notebooks, *Collected Works,* Vol. 33, pp. 359-62.

The Negation of The Negation

...What role does the negation of the negation play in Marx? On page 791 [*Capital,* Vol. I, Ch. II] and the following pages he sets out the conclusions which he draws from the preceding fifty pages of economic and historical investigation into the so-called primitive

accumulation of capital. Before the capitalist era, petty industry existed, at least in England, on the basis of the private property of the labourer in his means of production. The so-called primitive accumulation of capital consisted there in the expropriation of these immediate producers, that is, in the dissolution of private property based on the labour of its owner. This was possible because the petty industry referred to above is compatible only with narrow and primitive bounds of production and society and at a certain stage brings forth the material agencies for its own annihilation. This annihilation, the transformation of the individual and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, forms the pre-history of capital. As soon as the labourers are turned into proletarians, their means of labour into capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet, the further socialisation of labour and further transformation of the land and other means of production, and therefore the further expropriation of private proprietors, takes a new form. "That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many labourers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the concentration of capital. One capitalist always kills many. Hand in hand with this concentration, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever extending scale, the cooperative form of the labour-process, the conscious technical application of science, the methodical cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labour into instruments of labour only usable in common, the economising of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialised labour. Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolise all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. Capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Concentration of the means of production and socialisation of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This

integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated." [*Capital,* Vol I, Moscow, p. 763].

And now I ask the reader: where are the dialectical frills and mazes and conceptual arabesques; where the mixed and misconceived ideas according to which everything is all one and the same thing in the end; where the dialectical miracles for his faithful followers; where the mysterious dialectical rubbish and the maze in accordance with the Hegelian Logos doctrine, without which Marx, according to Herr Duhring, is unable to put his exposition into shape? Marx merely shows from history, and here states in a summarised form, that just as formerly petty industry by its very development necessarily created the conditions of its annihilation, i.e., of the expropriation of the small proprietors, so now the capitalist mode of production has likewise itself created the material conditions from which it must perish. The process is a historical one, and if it is at the same time a dialectical process, this is not Marx's fault, however annoying it may be for Herr Duhring.

It is only at this point, after Marx has completed his proof on the basis of historical and economic facts, that he proceeds: "The capitalist mode of appropriation, the result of the capitalist mode of production, produces capitalist private property. This is the first negation of individual private property, as founded on the labour of the proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of nature, its own negation. It is the negation of the negation"—and so on (as quoted above).

Thus by characterising the process as the negation of the negation, therefore, Marx does not intend to prove that the process was historically necessary. On the contrary only after he has proved from history that in fact the process has partially already occurred, and partially must occur in the future, he in addition characterises it as a process which develops in accordance with a definite dialectical law. That is all. It is therefore once again a pure distortion of the facts by Herr Duhring, when he declares that the negation of the negation has to serve here as the midwife to deliver the future from the womb of the past, or that Marx wants anyone to be convinced of the necessity of the common ownership of land and capital (which is itself a

Duhringian contradiction in corporeal form) on the basis of the negation of the negation...

It is the same in history as well. All civilised peoples begin with the common ownership of the land. With all peoples who have passed a certain primitive stage, this common ownership becomes in the course of the development of agriculture a fetter on production. It is abolished, negated, and after a longer or shorter series of intermediate stages is transformed into private property. But at a higher stage of agricultural development, brought about by private property in land itself, private property conversely becomes a fetter on production, as is the case today both with small and large landownership. The demand that it, too, should be negated, that it should once again be transformed into common property, necessarily arises. But this demand does not mean the restoration of the aboriginal common ownership, but the institution of a far higher and more developed form of possession in common which, far from being a hindrance to production, on the contrary for the first time will free production from all fetters and enable it to make full use of modern chemical discoveries and mechanical inventions...

And so, what is the negation of the negation? An extremely general—and for this reason extremely far-reaching and important—law of development of nature, history and thought, a law which, as we have seen, holds good in the animal and plant kingdoms, in geology, in mathematics, in history and in philosophy—a law which even Herr Duhring, in spite of all his stubborn resistance, has unwittingly and in his own way to follow. It is obvious that I do not say anything concerning the *particular* process of development, of for example, a grain of barley from germination to the death of the fruit-bearing plant, if I say it is a negation of the negation. For, as the integral calculus is also a negation, if I said anything of the sort I should only be making the nonsensical statement that the life-process of a barley plant was integral calculus or for that matter that it was socialism. That, however, is precisely what the metaphysicians are constantly imputing to dialectics. When I say all these processes are a negation of the negation I bring them all together under this one law of motion, and for this very reason I leave out of account the specific peculiarities of each individual process. Dialectics, however,

is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society, and thought.

But someone may object: the negation that has taken place in this case is not a real negation; I negate a grain of barley also when I grind it, an insect when I crush it underfoot, or the positive quantity *a* when I cancel it, and so on. Or I negate the sentence: the rose is a rose, when I say: the rose is not a rose; and what do I get if I then negate this negation and say: but after all the rose is a rose?

These objections are in fact the chief arguments put forward by the metaphysicians against dialectics, and they are wholly worthy of the narrow-mindedness of this mode of thought. Negation in dialectics does not mean simply saying no, or declaring that something does not exist, or destroying it in any way one likes. Long ago Spinoza said: *omnis determinatio est negatio*—every limitation or determination is at the same time a negation. And further: the kind of negation is here determined, firstly, by the general, and secondly by the particular nature of the process. I must not only negate, but also negate the negation. I must therefore so arrange the first negation that the second remains or becomes possible. How? This depends on the particular nature of each individual case. If I grind a grain of barley, or crush an insect, I have carried out the first part of the action, but have made the second part impossible. Every kind of thing therefore has a peculiar way of being negated in such a manner that it gives rise to a development, and it is just the same with every kind of conception or idea. The infinitesimal calculus involves a form of negation which is different from that used in the formation of positive powers from negative roots. This has to be learnt, like everything else. The bare knowledge that the barley plant and the infinitesimal calculus are both governed by negation of negation does not enable me either to grow barley successfully or to differentiate and integrate; just as little is the bare knowledge of the laws of the determination of sound by the dimensions of the strings enables me to play the violin.

But it is clear that from a negation of the negation which consists in the childish pastime of alternately writing and cancelling *a,* or in alternately declaring that a rose is a rose and that it is not a rose, nothing eventuates but the silliness of the person who adopts such a tedious procedure. And yet the metaphysicians try to make us believe

that this is the right way to carry out a negation of the negation, if we ever should want to do such a thing.

Once again, therefore, it is no one but Herr Duhring who is mystifying us when he asserts that the negation of the negation is a stupid analogy invented by Hegel, borrowed from the sphere of religion and based on the story of the fall of man and his redemption. Men thought dialectically long before they knew what dialectics was, just as they spoke prose long before the term prose existed. The law of negation of the negation, which is unconsciously operative in nature and history, and, until it has been recognized, also in our heads, was only first clearly formulated by Hegel. And if Herr Duhring wants to operate with it himself on the quiet and it is only that he cannot stand the name, then let him find a better name. But if his aim is to banish the process itself from thought, we must ask him to be so good as first to banish it from nature and history and to invent a mathematical system in which $-a$ & a is not $+ a^2$ and in which differentiation and integration are prohibited under severe penalties.

ENGELS, *Anti-Durhing,* pp. 182-45, 190, 193-96.

[Lenin makes a distinction between genuine and eclectic negation. See Philosophical Notebooks, *Collected Works,* Vol. 38, p. 226]

Introduction To Class Struggles In France

...There had long been universal suffrage in France, but it had fallen into disrepute through the misuse to which the Bonapartist government had put it. After the Commune there was no workers' party to make use of it. It also existed in Spain since the republic, but in Spain boycott of elections was ever the rule of all serious opposition parties. The experience of the Swiss with universal suffrage was also anything but encouraging for a workers' party. The revolutionary workers of the Latin countries had been wont to regard the suffrage as a snare, as an instrument of government trickery. It was otherwise in Germany. The *Communist Manifesto* had already proclaimed the

winning of universal suffrage, of democracy, as one of the first and most important tasks of the militant proletariat, and Lassalle had again taken up this point. Now, when Bismarck found himself compelled to introduce this franchise[1] as the only means of interesting the mass of the people in his plans, our workers immediately took it in earnest and sent August Bebel to the first, constituent Reichstag. And from that day on, they have used the franchise in a way which has paid them a thousandfold and has served as a model to the workers of all countries. The franchise has been, in the words of the French Marxist programme, *transforme', de moyen de duperie quil a e'te' jusqu'ici, en instrument d' emancipation*—transformed by them from a means of deception, which it was before, into an instrument of emancipation.[2] And if universal suffrage had offered no other advantage than that it allowed us to count our numbers every three years; that by the regularly established, unexpectedly rapid rise in the number of our votes it increased in equal measure the workers' certainty of victory and the dismay of their opponents, and so became our best means of propaganda; that it accurately informed us concerning our own strength and that of all hostile parties, and thereby provided us with a measure of proportion for our actions second to none, safeguarding us from untimely timidity as much as from untimely foolhardiness—if this had been the only advantage we gained from the suffrage, it would still have been much more than enough. But it did more than this by far. In election agitation it provided us with a means, second to none, of getting in touch with the mass of the people where they still stand aloof from us; of forcing all parties to defend their views and actions against our attacks before all the people; and, further, it provided our representatives in the Reichstag with a platform from which they could speak to their opponents in parliament, and to the masses without, with quite other authority and freedom than in the press or at meetings. Of what avail was their Anti-Socialist Law to the government and the bourgeoisie when election campaigning and socialist speeches in the Reichstag continually broke through it?

With this successful utilisation of universal suffrage, however, an entirely new method of proletarian struggle came into operation, and this method quickly developed further. It was found that the state institutions, in which the rule of the bourgeoisie is organised, offer

the working class still further opportunities to fight these very state institutions. The workers took part in elections to particular Diets, to municipal councils and to trades courts; they contested with the bourgeoisie every post in the occupation of which a sufficient part of the proletariat had a say. And so it happened that the bourgeoisie and the government came to be much more afraid of the legal than of the illegal action of the workers' party, of the results of elections than of those of rebellion.

For here, too, the conditions of the struggle had essentially changed. Rebellion in the old style, street fighting with barricades, which decided the issue everywhere up to 1848, was to a considerable extent obsolete.

Let us have no illusions about it: a real victory of an insurrection over the military in street fighting, a victory as between two armies, is one of the rarest exceptions. And the insurgents counted on it just as rarely. For them it was solely a question of making the troops yield to moral influences which, in a fight between the armies of two warring countries, do not come into play at all or do so to a much smaller extent. If they succeed in this, the troops fail to respond, or the commanding officers lose their heads, and the insurrection wins. If they do not succeed in this, then, even where the military are in the minority, the superiority of better equipment and training, of single leadership, of the planned employment of the military forces and of discipline makes itself felt. The most that an insurrection can achieve in the way of actual tactical operations is the proper construction and defence of a single barricade. Mutual support, the disposition and employment of reserves—in short, concerted and coordinated action of the individual detachments, indispensable even for the defence of one section of a town, not to speak of the whole of a large town, will be attainable only to a very limited extent, and most of the time not at all. Concentration of the military forces at a decisive point is, of course, out of question here. Hence passive defence is the prevailing form of fighting; the attack will rise here and there, but only by way of exception, to occasional thrusts and flank assaults; as a rule, however, it will be limited to occupation of positions abandoned by retreating troops. In addition, the military have at their disposal artillery and fully equipped corps of trained engineers, resources of war which, in

nearly every case, the insurgents entirely lack. No wonder, then, that even the barricade fighting conducted with the greatest heroism—Paris, June 1848[3]; Vienna, October 1848[4]; Dresden, May 1849[5]—ended in the defeat of the insurrection as soon as the leaders of the attack, unhampered by political considerations, acted from the purely military standpoint, and their soldiers remained reliable.

The numerous successes of the insurgents up to 1848 were due to a great variety of causes. In Paris, in July 1830 and February 1848, as in most of the Spanish street fighting, a citizens' guard stood between the insurgents and the military. This guard either sided directly with the insurrection, or else by its lukewarm, indecisive attitude caused the troops likewise to vacillate, and supplied the insurrection with arms into the bargain. Where this citizens' guard opposed the insurrection from the outset, as in June 1848 in Paris, the insurrection was vanquished. In Berlin in 1848, the people were victorious partly through a considerable accession of new fighting forces during the night and the morning of (March) the 19th, partly as a result of the exhaustion and bad utilisation of the troops, and, finally, partly as a result of the paralysis that was seizing the command. But in all cases the fight was won because the troops failed to respond, because the commanding officers lost the faculty to decide or because their hands were tied.

Even in the classic time of street fighting, therefore, the barricade produced more of a moral than a material effect. It was a means of shaking the steadfastness of the military. If it held out until this was attained, victory was won; if not, there was defeat. This is the main point, which must be kept in view, likewise, when the chances of possible future street fighting are examined.*

Already in 1849, these chances were pretty poor. Everywhere the bourgeoisie had thrown in its lot with the governments, "culture and property" had hailed and feasted the military moving against insurrection. The spell of the barricade was broken; the soldier no longer saw behind it "the people," but rebels, agitators, plunderers, levellers, the scum of society; the officer had in the course of time become versed in the tactical forms of street fighting, he no longer marched straight ahead and without cover against the improvised breastwork, but went round it through gardens, yards and houses.

And this was now successful, with a little skill, in nine cases out of ten.

But since then there have been very many more changes, and all in favour of the military. If the big towns have become considerably bigger, the armies have become bigger still. Paris and Berlin have, since 1848, grown less than fourfold, but their garrisons have grown more than that. By means of the railways, these garrisons can, in twenty-four hours, be more than doubled, and in forty-eight hours they can be increased to huge armies. The arming of this enormously increased number of troops has become incomparably more effective. In 1848 the smooth-bore, muzzle-loading percussion gun, today the small-calibre, breech-loading magazine rifle, which shoots four times as far, ten times as accurately and ten times as fast as the former. At that time the relatively ineffective round shot and grape-shot of the artillery; today the percussion shells, of which one is sufficient to demolish the best barricade. At that time the pick-axe of the sapper for breaking through fire-walls; today the dynamite cartridge.

On the other hand, all the conditions of the insurgents' side have grown worse. An insurrection with which all sections of the people sympathise will hardly recur; in the class struggle all the middle strata will probably never group themselves round the proletariat so exclusively that in comparison the party of reaction gathered round the bourgeoisie will well-nigh disappear. The "people", therefore, will always appear divided, and thus a most powerful lever, so extraordinarily effective in 1848, is gone. If more soldiers who have seen service came over to the insurrectionists, the arming of them would become so much the more difficult. The hunting and fancy guns of the munitions shops—even if not previously made unusable by removal of part of the lock by order of the police—are far from being a match for the magazine rifle of the soldier, even in close fighting. Up to 1848 it was possible to make the necessary ammunition oneself out of powder and lead; today the cartridges differ for each gun, and are everywhere alike only in one point, namely, that they are a complicated product of big industry, and therefore not to be manufactured *ex tempore,* with the result that most guns are useless as long as one does not possess the ammunition specially suited to them. And finally, since 1848 the newly built quarters of the big

cities have been laid out in long, straight, broad streets, as though made to give full effect to the new cannon and rifles. The revolutionist would have to be mad who himself chose the new working-class districts in the North or East of Berlin for a barricade fight.

Does that mean that in the future street fighting will no longer play any role? Certainly not. It only means that the conditions since 1848 have become far more unfavourable for civilian fighters and far more favourable for the military. In future, street fighting can, therefore, be victorious only if this disadvantageous situation is compensated by other factors. Accordingly, it will occur more seldom in the beginning of a great revolution than in its further progress, and will have to be undertaken with greater forces. These, however, may then well prefer, as in the whole great French Revolution or on September 4[6] and October 31, 1870, in Paris,[7] the open attack to the passive barricade tactics.*

Does the reader now understand why the powers that be positively want to get us to go where the guns shoot and the sabres slash? Why they accuse us today of cowardice, because we do not betake ourselves without more ado into the street, where we are certain of defeat in advance? Why they so earnestly implore us to play for once the part of cannon fodder?

The gentlemen pour out their prayers and their challenges for nothing, for absolutely nothing. We are not so stupid. They might just as well demand from their enemy in the next war that he should accept battle in the line formation of old Fritz,** or in the columns of whole divisions *a' la* Wagram[8] and Waterloo,[9] and with the flint-lock in his hands at that. If conditions have changed in the case of war between nations, this is no less true in the case of the class struggle. The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of unconscious masses, is past. Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organisation, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for, body and soul.*** The history of the last fifty years has taught us that. But in order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long, persistent work is required, and it is just this work that we are now pursuing, and with a success which drives the enemy to despair.

In the Latin countries, also, it is being realised more and more that the old tactics must be revised. Everywhere the German example of utilising the suffrage, of winning all posts accessible to us, has been imitated; everywhere the unprepared launching of an attack has been relegated to the background.* In France, where for more than a hundred years the ground has been undermined by revolution after revolution, where there is not a single party which has not done its share in conspiracies, insurrections and all other revolutionary actions; in France, where, as a result, the government is by no means sure of the army and where, in general, the conditions for an insurrectionary *coup de main* are far more favourable than in Germany—even in France the Socialists are realising more and more that no lasting victory is possible for them, unless they first win the great mass of the people, that is, in this case, the peasants. Slow propaganda work and parliamentary activity are recognised here, too, as the immediate tasks of the party. Successes were not lacking. Not only have a whole series of municipal councils been won; fifty Socialists have seats in the Chambers, and they have already overthrown three ministries and a president of the republic. In Belgium last year the workers forced the adoption of the franchise, and have been victorious in a quarter of the constituencies. In Switzerland, in Italy, in Denmark, yes, even in Bulgaria and Rumania the Socialists are represented in the parliaments. In Austria all parties agree that our admission to the *Reichsrat* can no longer be withheld. We will get in, that is certain; the only question still in dispute is: by which door? And even in Russia, when the famous *Zemsky Sobor* meets—that National Assembly to which young Nicholas offers such vain resistance—even there we can reckon with certainty on being represented in it.

Of course, our foreign comrades do not thereby in the least renounce their right to revolution. The right to revolution is, after all, the only *really* "historical right," the only right on which all modern states without exception rest, Mecklenburg included, whose aristocratic revolution was ended in 1755 by the "hereditary settlement" ("Erbvergleich"), the glorious charter of feudalism still valid today[10]. The right to revolution is so incontestably recognised in the general consciousness that even General Von Boguslawski derives the right to a *coup d'e'tat,* which he vindicates for his Kaiser,

solely from this popular right.

But whatever may happen in other countries, the German Social-Democracy occupies a special position and therewith, at least in the immediate future, has a special task. The two million voters whom it sends to the ballot box, together with the young men and women who stand behind them as non-voters, form the most numerous, most compact mass, the decisive "shock force" of the international proletarian army. This mass already supplies over a fourth of the votes cast; and as the by-elections to the *Reichstag,* the Diet elections in individual states, the municipal council and trades court elections demonstrate, it increases incessantly. Its growth proceeds as spontaneously, as steadily, as irresistibly, and at the same time as tranquilly as a natural process. All government intervention has proved powerless against it. We can count even today on two and a quarter million voters. If it continues in this fashion, by the end of the century we shall conquer the greater part of the middle strata of society, petty bourgeois and small peasants, and grow into the decisive power in the land, before which all other powers will have to bow, whether they like it or not. To keep this growth going without interruption until it of itself gets beyond the control of the prevailing governmental system, not to fritter away this daily increasing shock force in vanguard skirmishes, but to keep it intact until the decisive day,* that is our main task. And there is only one means by which the steady rise of the socialist fighting forces in Germany could be temporarily halted, and even thrown back for some time: a clash on a big scale with the military, a blood-letting like that of 1871 in Paris. In the long run that would also be overcome. To shoot a party which numbers millions out of existence is too much even for all the magazine rifles of Europe and America. But the normal development would be impeded, the shock force would, perhaps, not be available at the critical moment, the decisive combat* would be delayed, protracted and attended by heavier sacrifices.

(ENGELS, Marx-Engels, *Selected Works,*
One-Volume Edition, Moscow, 1968, pp. 659-666)

PART-2

DIALECTICAL AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of Marxism is dialectical materialism, and its application to the study of society is historical materialism.

Dialectical materialism holds that we cannot understand things rightly unless we understand how they are connected together and how they are developing and changing. Or nothing exists unconnected with other things; nor is there anything fixed and changeless, but everything is in continual change and motion.

Dialectical materialism teaches us to pay attention to the opposite, conflicting tendencies which arise throughout nature and society, whose struggle results in change and development. In all development, gradual processes of growth (quantitative changes) lead to the emergence of something news, of a new stage of development (qualitative changes).

Dialectical materialism holds that the cause of all the motion and change in the world does not lie in any "higher" spiritual reality, but in the material world itself. For the world is by its very nature material. Matter is primary and spirit –mind, thought, etc.—is secondary.

Applying these ideas to human society, historical materialism is the discovery that the determining force of all social development is always to be found in the material life of society, i.e. in the mode of production, and that this provides the basis or the development of men's ideas and political institutions. From the development of the mode of production arises the class struggle, and the class struggle is the driving force of history. In this development, all ideas and institutions play either a reactionary or a revolutionary role—either helping to maintain and defend the old system of society, or mobilising people to struggle against the old system.

It has already been pointed out (Part 2, Introduction) that the student of Marxism should begin all his studies with *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific, the Communist Manifesto and The History of the C.P.S.U. (B.)*

In these books the leading ideas of dialectical and historical materialism are already introduced and expounded. The reader who wants

to come to an understanding of the philosophy of Marxism and its application to society should therefore begin within these—and firstly with Socialism, Utopian and Scientific.

Chapter IV of the *History of the C.P.S.U. (B)* contains a summary of the main ideas and principle of both dialectical and historical materialism. This is published separately, under the title *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, by Stalin. This book should serve as the starting-point for a fuller study of the principles of dialectical and historical materialism. But the new reader should not attempt to tackle it unless he has first understood the contents of *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*. And here he will also derive great help from Stalin's Anarchism or Socialism.

The next reading for the student who wishes to gain a fuller mastery of the ideas of dialectical and historical materialism will be Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach*. Then can follow Lenin on Religion and Engel's' *Introduction* to the *Dialectics of Nature*, together with Chapter 9 of the same work, entitled. *The Port Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man* (both published separately in Marx-Engel's Selected Works, Vol. II)

Only after this should be attempt to tackle the longer and more difficult works—*The Origin of the Family, Dialectics of Nature, Materialism and Empiro-Criticism, What the Friends of the People Are,* and the First Part of Anti-Duhring. The last-named work has already been described above, under "Basic Principles."

Other writings to which attention is drawn in this connection are Stalin's *Marxism and Linguistics, the Marx-Engel's Correspondence,* several short articles, etc by Lenin, and the early works of Marx and Engels which they wrote before the *Communist Manifesto.*

Of the latter, The German Ideology *and* Poverty of Philosophy *have both appeared in English translation. They are of very great importance as showing how Marx and Engels first developed and fought for dialectical and historical materialism. But many readers will find them difficult and will gain more from the later writings.*

STALIN: Dialectical and Historical Materialism

Stalin's *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* is extracted from Chapter IV of the *History of the C.P.S.U.(B).* Defining dialectical materialism as "the world outlook of the Marxist-Leninism Party," he explains that it is dialectical in its method, materialist in its theory. Historical materialism is the extension of the principles of dialectical

materialism to the study of social life.

This book contains a brilliant exposition of the principal features of (1) the Marxist dialectical method, (2) Marxist philosophical materialism and (3) the Marxist science of society. In it are summarised the fruits of the whole experience of the application and development of Marxist theory in the course of the working class struggle for socialism.

1. Stalin shows how the Marxist dialectical method studies things always in their inter-connection and in their movement. It studies development as taking place through the transformation of quantitative into qualitative changes and as the disclosure of the contradictions inherent in things. Whatever we may consider, there is always something coming into being and something ceasing to be, something coming into being something ceasing to be, something arising and something dying—and so the struggle between new and old constitutes the motive force of all development.

2. Stalin shows how materialism holds that the world is by its very nature material, that matter is primary and thought secondary, and that the material world and its laws are fully knowable.

3. Stalin shows how society, too, develops according to regular laws, so that the study of history becomes a science. The working class party must be guided by knowledge of the laws of development of society.

The determining force of social development is always to be found in the material life of society, and this provides the basis for the development of men's ideas, theories and political institutions.

This does not imply, however, Stalin explains, that theories and political institutions are of no significance in social life. On the contrary, theories and institutions which arise on the basis of the new developing forces in materials life themselves become an active force in the development.

The chief force in the complex of conditions of material life that determines the development of society is the *mode of production.* Here Stalin distinguishes (1) the *forces of production*, consisting of (a) the instruments of production and (b) people with their production experience and skill, and (2) the *relations of production*, which in their totality constitute the *economic structure of society.*

He shows how the forces of production continually develop. And corresponding to their development there are five principal types of relations of production—primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, socialism.

Three principal features of production are noted.

(a) Production never remains stationary for long, but is always in a state of change and development.

(b) Change and development of the mode of production always begins with change and development of the productive forces. First the productive forces change and develop, and then, depending on these changes and in conformity with them, the relations of production, the economic relations, change.

(c) The rise of new productive forces and new production relations begins within the old system and takes place independent of men's will and intentions.

In the course of development, the existing system of production relations becomes a fetter on further development of the forces of production. Then follows a period of social revolution. New relations of production are established by the revolutionary overthrow of the old relations of production, and this is effected by class struggle, by the overthrow of the old ruling class and rise to power of a new ruling class.

Stalin shows how the capitalist relations of production have become a fetter on further development, and how under socialism the way is free for a great further development of the productive forces.

In conclusion, he quotes the passage from Marx's Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* in which Marx's summed up the essence of historical materialism.

In this passage Marx said:

1. In social production men enter into definite relations of production, which arise independent of their will. The sum total of these constitutes economic structure of society.

2. This economic structure is the real basis on which arises a legal and political superstructure, and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.

3. Therefore the mode of production in material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but, on the contrary, their being determines their consciousness.

4. At a certain stage of their development, the forces of production in society come into conflict with the existing relations of production. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters.

5. Then follows an epoch of social revolution. The economic foundation is changed, and with it the whole superstructure is more or

less rapidly transformed.

6. In considering such transformations we must distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, and the legal, political and ideological forms in which men become conscious of the conflict and fight it out.

7. No social order ever disappears until all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed: and new and higher relations of production never appear until the material conditions of their existence have matured within the old society.

ENGELS: Ludwig Feuerbach

In *Ludwig Feuerbach* (the title is *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy)* Engels shows how the advance was made from Hegelian idealist dialectics to materialist dialectics, and from mechanical to dialectical materialism.

Feuerbach was a German philosopher of the mid-9th Century who turned from Hegelian idealism to materialism, and whose work has a big influence on Marx and Engels. This book by Engels, published in 1888, was originality written as a review article on a book on Feuerbach by C.N. Starke.

The following are its principal contents.

1. Engels explains the basic difference between materialism and idealism. It arises from the question—which prior, spirit or nature? Idealism says that spirit is prior of nature. Materialism says that nature is prior to spirit. Material being a prior to mind and ideas.

Modern idealism has been especially concerned with the question whether we can gain reliable knowledge of material things of external world, and concludes that such knowledge is impossible. Engels refutes this view, and shows that practice demonstrates that our ideas can and do constitute a true reflection of external material reality.1

2. He shows that the materialism of the past was mechanical materialism. Its great limitations were

(a) that it conceived of the motion of matter as exclusively mechanical motion, and could not grasp other forms of motion of matter, such as chemical or living processes;

(b) that it could give no account of development and evolution, either in nature or, still less, in history and human society.

3. He explains the essence of Hegel's philosophy and of the advance from Hegel to dialectical materialism.2 Hegel considered every process of change and development as being a mere reflection of the

self-development of the "Absolute Idea," which "does not only exist, where unknown, from eternity, but is also the actual living soul of the whole existing world." Marxism threw over such "idealist fancies" and "resolved to comprehend the real world, nature and history, just as it presents itself to everyone who approaches it free from preconceived idealist fancies."

Engels shows that dialectical materialism regards the world as a complex of processes, not as a collection of "ready-made things." Dialectics is "the science of the general laws of motion both of the external world and of human thought."

4. He discusses the essential ideas of historical materialism, as the application of dialectical materialism to the sphere of human society. He shows that the driving force of history is the class struggle, and that classes and class struggles are rooted in economic foundations of the development of the state and of law, and then of political and social ideology, of religion, philosophy, etc.

In criticising Feuerbach's "philosophy of religion and ethics," Engels attacks the approach which deals with abstractions such as "humanity," instead of with "real living men as participants of history."

As appendix are added Marx's eleven Theses on Feuerbach, notes by Marx in 1845 in which he summarised his own ideas as opposed to mechanical materialism.

ENGELS: The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State

Engels' *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* shows how the principles of historical materialism are applied in the interpretation of the development of primitive society and of the origins of civilisation.

Published in 1884, at a time when bourgeois ideas were becoming rife in the German Social-Democratic Party, it was aimed at wining the workers away from reformist illusions to a scientific and revolutionary conception of history, past and present.

Engels' work was based on the discoveries of the American anthropologist, Lewis Morgan, whose Ancient Society was published in 1877. Morgan, who had lived amongst and studied the American Indians, discovered in their kinship groups—or gens the key to an understanding of primitive society and its development. The importance of Morgan's discoveries, which led him to conclusions fully in line with the materialist conception of history, was immediately recognised by Marx and Engels.

In *The Origin of the Family* will be found:

1. An account of the development of the social forces of production from the most primitive food-gathering and hunting stage, through primitive agriculture, the domestication of animals, to the upper stages of barbarism, when the smelting of iron ore and the invention of the alphabet led to the beginnings of civilisation.

2. The history of the development of the family, as the most elementary unit of human association, from group-marriage to monogamy. Engels showed how the development of private property led to the transformation of family relations and to the subjugation of women.3 And he deals with the future of the family in socialist society.

3. An account of the kinship organisation—the gens—in primitive society, and of its disruption by the development of private property.

4. A demonstration of how the state arose with the division of society into antagonistic classes.4 Engels traces the history of the rise of state amongst the ancient Greeks, Romans and shows in detail the nature and functions of the state as an instrument of the oppression of one class by another.

5. The last chapter contains a brilliant sketch of the whole development of civilisation. Engels shows how classes and exploitation arose out of the division of labour, and how in consequence every advance in production has been made only at the cost of fresh sufferings of the exploited.

ENGELS: Dialectics of Nature

Engel's *Dialectics of Nature* is an unfinished book. A few chapters were left by him at the time of his death in more or less finished form; but a great part of it consists merely of notes. In this book he intended to demonstrate how the discoveries of natural science confirm that the same dialectical laws which operate in human society operate also in nature, and how the dialectical method constitutes a great theoretical weapon of the natural sciences.

When Engels died in 1895, the manuscripts of the Dialectics of Nature *fell into the hands of Bernstein (the "revisionist"), who did not see fit to publish any part of them. They never saw the light until published by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in the U.S.S.R. in 1927.*

Parts of this book are hard to follow for readers who have not at least some knowledge of the natural sciences—though those who have will find every page a veritable gold mine of ideas.

But the general reader will find little difficulty with the Introduc-

tion (which deals with the history of science, and shows how the old view of the universe as a static system has been replaced by a picture of universal evolution); with Chapter II (which explains the dialectical law of the transformation of quantitative changes); with Chapter IX—"The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man" (which gives a classical exposition of the Marxist view of human nature and its development); and with Chapter X—"Natural Science and the Spirit World" (in which Engels gives his estimate of "Spiritualism.")

The Introduction and The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man *have been published separately in the two-volume* Marx-Engels Selected Works, *and can be studied independently of the rest of the* Dialectics of Nature.

Chapters III, IV and V—on "The Basic Forms of Motion," "The Measure of Motion" and "Heat" contain vitally important material on the dialectical conception of the forms of motion of matter, and give a brilliant account of the dialectics of the science of mechanics.

Two chapters, on "Electricity" and "Tidal Friction" are of mainly historical interest.

The long chapters of "Notes" contains material of the utmost interest and importance relating to the history of science, scientific method, the philosophy of science, the laws of dialectics, the materials of the special science.

LENIN: What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social Democrats

Lenin's What the *"Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social Democrats,* published in 1894, contain a most important defence and explanation of dialectical and historical materialism.

The reader should consult Chapter I, sections 1-4, of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Bolsheviks) before reading this book, in order to understand its background. The self-styled "Friends of the People's are the Russian Narodniks; the Social Democrats are the Marxists. The book belongs to the period of the fight for the establishment of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party on a Marxist basis.

The Narodniks of the 90's had renounced revolutionary struggle against the Tsarist government. They were attacking Marxism by means of crude misrepresentations; were denying the growth of capitalism in Russia; were voicing primarily the interests of the rich farmers (kulaks) and were singing the praises of Kulak farming. In this book Lenin gave

them their answer.

1. Replying to the jibe that Marxist historical materialism was an empty phrase and had never been property expounded by Marx, Lenin answer: "Where does Marx not set forth his materialist conception of history?" He analyses the contents of Marx's Capital and shows how in Capital Marx dealt in a concrete way with the "evolution of the economic formation of society" and demonstrated the way the social superstructure arises on the economic basis. Answering his opponents point by point, Lenin demonstrates the methodology of historical materialism.

2. Lenin completely exposes the misrepresentation of dialectics as an abstract scheme artificially imposed upon a given subject matter. And in this connection he exposes the misrepresentation that the Marxists believed Russia must first become a fully developed capitalist country before it could become a socialist country.

3. Lenin shows in detail how capitalism was developing in Russia and what inroads it was making into Russian peasant economy.5 He shows how his opponents, under cover of all kinds of "benevolent" schemes, were supporting the landlords and capitalists. He deals with the rise of the industrial working class in Russia and shows how this rising class, in alliance with the exploited peasantry, is the force which can overthrow Tsarism and then advance to the socialist revolution.

LENIN: Materialism and Empirio-Criticism

Of this book by Lenin, A. A. Zhdanov wrote that "every sentence is like a piercing sword, annihilating an opponent." It is a devastating attack against modern idealism, a brilliant defence of the materialist standpoint, and a development of the basic ideas of dialectical materialism in the light of scientific discovery.

It was written in 1908, in the period following the defeat of the 1905-7 Revolution in Russia. The reader should consult the History of the C.P.S.U. (B), Chapter IV, Section I, in order to understand the background.

It was a time of great difficulty for the revolutionary working class movement in Russia. Reaction was making savage attacks upon the working class, and with this went an ideological offensive against Marxism, which fashionable writers represented as being exploded and "out of date". This situation affected a group of the party intellectuals. They began to write books and articles claiming to "improve" Marxism and to "bring it up to date" in the light of "modern science," "science," but

in reality attacking its entire theoretical foundations.

Lenin's Materialism and Empirio-Criticism was written against this group. It safeguarded the theoretical of Marxism from the revisionists and renegades. But more than that, it provided a new materialist generalisation of everything important and essential acquired by science, and especially the natural sciences, since Engels' death.

The reader unused to philosophical literature will find an initial difficulty in understanding some of the terms used in this book, and the references to various bourgeois philosophers and scientists. The term "Empirio-Criticism" is used to denote a whole sect of modern idealist. Lenin shows that their theories are copied from those of the Anglo-Irish philosopher. George Berketey (1684-1753), who taught that material things have no real existence and that nothing exists but the sensations in our own minds from the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), who taught that we can have no knowledge of "things-in-themselves," which are mysterious and unknowable, and from the Austrian scientist and philosopher Ernst Mach (1838-1916), who taught that bodies were nothing but "complexes of sensations." Lenin's references to and quotations from these philosophers and their modern followers are, however, sufficiently detailed for the reader who follows the argument attentively to understand what it is all about, even without prior knowledge.

In Materialism and Empirio-Criticism is contained:

1. A devastating exposure of the idealism of the modern "philosophy of science" which pretends that matter existing outside us is an abstraction and that what "really" exists consists of "complexes of sensations."

Ridiculing the "scientific" pretensions of this philosophy, Lenin asks:

"Did Nature exist prior to man?"

"Does Man think with the help of the brain?"

Science answers "Yes" to both questions; and that means that matter objectively exists independent of and prior to human consciousness and sensation.

2. The clear assertion and explanation of the most important features of the materialist conception of nature, in particular—

The practical test of knowledge;

The relationship of relative and absolute truth;

The absolute existence of matter, as the objective reality given to man in this sensation;

The objective validity of causality and causal laws;

The objectivity of space and time, as the forms of all being.

3. The analysis of the crisis in modern physics, which arises from the contradiction between new discoveries and the mechanistic ideas of "classical" physics. Lenin shows how two trends arise in physics, a materialist and an idealist trend. He exposes the sham pretensions of the latter and demonstrates that "modern physics is in travail' it is giving birth to dialectical materialism."

4. The demonstration of the partisan character of all philosophy, of the irreconcilability of the struggle of materialism against idealism. Lenin shows that Marxism is materialism, irreconcilably opposed to every form of idealism and of attempted compromise between materialism and idealism.

Lenin on Religion

The Marxist-Leninist teachings concerning religion and the attitude of the workers's party towards religion6 are summarised in three articles by Lenin—*Socialism and Religions, the Attitude of the Workers' Party towards Religion, The Attitude of Classes and Parties toward, Religion.* In these articles Lenin demonstrates:

1. That all religion is a form of "Spiritual oppression"—the "opium of the people."

2. That the programme of the Marxist Party is based on materialist Philosophy.

3. That the party resolutely demands the separation of church from state, and fights against both militant clerical reaction and "liberal" attempts to fog the minds of the people with religious illusions.

4. That the party does not include the propagation of atheism in its programme, nor does it demand atheism from all its members, but regards the abstract preaching of atheism and the artificial fostering of religious divisions amongst the workers as harmful and as playing into the hands of reaction.

Lenin on Dialectical Materialism: Articles, Letters and Notes

Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks,* published in the Soviet Union, contain very extensive material and comments on the essential ideas of dialectical materialism. Only a small part has been published in English translation, under the title On Dialectics. In these notes Lenin summaries the essential ideas of dialectics, particularly the idea of the unity and struggle of opposites.

In *The Significance of Militant Materialism,* written in 1922, Lenin

sums up the tasks of the fight for materialism and need for Marxists to make common cause with all those who adopt a materialist standpoint against idealism.

In *Two Letters to Marxism Gorky* Lenin expostulates with Gorky for flirting with the "god-seekers."

In Leo Tolstoy as a Mirror of the Russian Revolution, Lenin applied the dialectical materialist method to problems of literature and literary criticism. He showed how Tolstoy reflected the contradictory outlook and moods of the Russian peasants.

Very important explanations of the nature of the dialectical method are contained in Our Step Forward, Two Steps Back, the section headed "Something About Dialectics"; and in *Once More on the Trade Unions,* the section headed "Dialectics and Eclecticism."

Lenin deals with the communist attitude to morality in The Tasks of the Youth Leagues.

STALIN: Concerning Marxism in Linguistics

Stalin's articles on linguistics—the science of language, its origin, nature and laws of development—were written and published in 1950, in reply to questions addressed to him by rank and file Soviet people in connection with current controversies concerning linguistics.

In these articles Stalin exposes the false theory that language is a part of the social superstructure which arises on the economic basis, and that all language has a class character. He shows that language is a means of communication serving society as a whole, and that it changes and develops slowly, without violent revolutions or leaps.

These articles are, moreover, of very great importance as demonstrating (a) how Marxism understands the relations between basis and superstructure in society, (b) how it understands the unity of nation, (c) how it is opposed to dogmatism and demands continual criticism and the testing of all conclusions.

Marx-Engels Correspondence

A number of important letters by Marx and Engels dealing with the principles and methods of historical materialism are contained in Volume II of Marx-Engels Selected Works. These comprise:

(a) Marx to Annenkov, explaining the general principles of historical materialism as against Proudhon, who thought that society was a manifestation of "eternal reason";

(b) Marx to Kugelmann. About the Paris Commune;

(c) And a series of letters by Engels to Schmidt, Bloch, Mehring and Danielson, explaining how to understand and operate the method of historical materialism and exposing vulgar over-simplification of the method.

These letters, especially the series by Engels, are most important reading for an understanding of historical materialism.

A comprehensive selection of the Marx-Engels correspondence edited by Dona Torr has been published in English. These letters range over the whole field of theoretical and practical activity covered by Marx and Engels during the whole course of their lives. They contain material and explanations on many points of principle and of detail of the very greatest value to students of Marxism. The volume is provided with an excellent index, and the student should consult the index in order to find where the topics he is interested in are dealt with in the correspondence.

In an unfinished article on the Marx-Engels Correspondence (included in Marx, Engels, Marxism) Lenin pointed out that "the epoch covered by the correspondence was just the epoch when the working class became demarcated from bourgeois democracy, the epoch of the rise of an independent labour movement, the epoch when the basic principles of proletarian tactics and policy were being determined."

He therefore points out how valuable today is the great wealth of material contained in the correspondence for the fight against opportunist policies in the Labour Movement.

> "If one were to attempt to define in one word the focus of the whole correspondence," Lenin concludes, "that word would be: dialectics. The application of materialist dialectics to the elaboration of all political economy, from its foundations, to history, natural science, philosophy and the policy and tactics of the working class—that is what interested Marx and Engels above all."

Books by Marx and Engels Prior to the Communist Manifesto

In the three years before the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels jointly wrote two books: *The Holy Family, or a Criticism of All Critical Criticism,* and *The German Ideology.* Marx himself wrote *The Poverty of Philosophy* and *Engels The Condition of the Working Class in England* 1844.

They also wrote a number of articles, which appeared in such journals as *The Rhineland Gazette, The German-French Yearbook, Forward.* These include *Marx's Criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of Law and The Jewish Question.7*

In *The Holy Family and The German Ideology,* Marx and Engels registered their break with the "Young Hegelian" school to which they formerly belonged, and their adoption of the standpoint of historical materialism. Both books are polemical in form and style.

The Holy Family has never been translated into English. Of The *German Ideology*, Parts I and III have been translated, but not Part II.

In Part I of The German Ideology Marx and Engels work out, in a preliminary way, the basic conceptions of historical materialism. Carrying on social production, men institute social relations and forms of property. On this basis are produced definite modes of consciousness. In every epoch the ruling ideas are the ideas of the ruling class, and these are challenged by the new revolutionary ideas of the rising revolutionary class.

Part III deals with contemporary writers—Max Stirner and the so-called "True Socialist."

Marx's *Poverty of Philosophy* was written against Proudhon, who had just published his *Philosophy of Poverty.* In this book the ideas of historical materialism and scientific socialism are sharply formulated for the first time. Marx deals with the economic nature of the capitalist exploitation of the worker (he had not yet, however, formulated the distinction between labour and labour-power), shows that economic relations are historically constituted and are not expressions of "eternal economic categories", and formulates the doctrine of the class struggle.

Dealing with the role of the trade union struggle and of the strike movement, Marx shows that scientific socialism must be united with the mass working class movement.

Engels' Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844, deals, on the basis of Engels' own observations, with the exploitation suffered by the British working class in the period of the rise of large-scale modern industry. The conditions of the birth and development of the proletariat as a class are described, the competition between workers and their ever-growing combination, the housing and other social conditions, the conditions in particular industries and in agriculture.

Engels deals with the development of the class struggle in Britain, the growth of an independent working class movement, and concludes that "the union of Socialism with Chartism...will be the next step." And he foretells the inevitability of a proletarian revolution in Britain.

1. See also Introduction to *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific.*
2. See Socialism, *Utopian and Scientific.*
3. A Collection of statements by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin on

women and their position in society is to be found in the volume *Women and Communism.*

4. See Lenin, *The State and Revolution.*
5. See Lenin, The *Development of Capitalism in Russia.*
6. See also Engels, *Anti-Duhring, Ludwig Feuerbach.*

7 A collection of manuscripts by Marx, Belonging to this period, has been published in German under the title Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts. An English translation is being prepared.

NOTES

1. Universal suffrage was introduced by Bismarck in 1866, when elections to the North-German Reichstag were held, and again in 1871, when elections to the Reichstag of the united German Empire were held.—p.52
2. This phrase was taken by Engels from Marx's introduction to the programme of the French Workers' Party. The programme was adopted at the Havre Congress of the party in 1880.—p. 52
3. The reference is to the heroic uprising of the Paris workers of June 23-26, 1848, which was suppressed by the French bourgeoisie with extreme brutality. This insurrection was the first great civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.—p. 54
4. On November 1, 1848, after a week of fierce fighting the Austrian Emperor's troops crushed the people's insurrection in Vienna and seized the city.

   In November and December 1848 a reactionary coup d'etat took place in Prussia; on November 1 an openly counter-revolutionary government came to power. On November 9, the sessions of the Prussian National Assembly were transferred from Berlin to the town of Brandenburg; the majority of the National Assembly who continued to hold their sittings in Berlin were dispersed by troops on November 15. The coup d'etat ended with the dissolution of the National Assembly on December 5, and the proclamation of a reactionary constitution.—p. 54
5. This refers to the people's uprisings in Germany in May-July 1849 in support of the imperial Constitution (adopted by the Frankfurt parliament on March 28, 1849, but rejected by a number of German states). These uprisings were spontaneous and disunited, and were therefore crushed in mid-July 1849.—p. 54

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6. The mass revolutionary insurrection of September 4, 1870 brought about the downfall of the Second Empire; the republic was proclaimed and a provisional government, the so-called Government of National Defence, was formed, which included both moderate Republicans and monarchists. This government headed by Trochu, Government-General of Paris, and actually inspired by Theirs was set on betraying national interests and concluding treacherous agreements with the enemy.-p. 57
7. On October 31, 1870, upon the receipt of the news that the Government of National Defence had decided to start negotiations with the Prussians, the Paris workers and the revolutionary sections of the National Guard rose up in revolt. They seized the Town Hall and set up their revolutionary government—the Committee of Public Safety, headed by Blanqui. Under pressure from the workers the Government of National Defence had to promise to resign and schedule elections to the Commune for November 1. The Paris revolutionary forces, however, were not sufficiently well organised and there were disagreements among the leaders of the uprising—the followers of Blanqui and the petty-bourgeois Jacobin democrats. The government took advantage of the situation and, with the aid of some loyal battalions of the National Guard, seized the Town Hall and re-established its power.—p. 57
8. The battle of Wagram took place on July 5-6, 1809, during the Austro-French war of 1809. The French troops led by Napoleon Bonaparte defeated the Austrian army of Archduke Charles.—p. 57
9. Waterloo—a place near Brussels where Napoleon was finally defeated on June 18, 1815 by the Anglo-Dutch armies led by Wellington and the Prussian army led by Blucher.—p. 57
10. Engels refers here to the long struggle that was waged between the Dukes and nobility in Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz and which culminated in the signing of a Constitutional Treaty in Rostock in 1755. The Treaty confirmed the nobility's freedoms, hereditary rights and privileges and secured their leading role in the Landtags, which were organised on the social estate principle. It also exempted half of their land from taxes, fixed taxes on trade and handicrafts, and determined their contribution to state expenditure.—p. 59

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