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The Basics of Marxist-Leninist Theory



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Introduction

Ideas become a material force if they take possession of the masses. This tenet of Marxism-Leninism is fully applicable to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism itself. This revolutionary teaching, created by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels and developed under new conditions, in the age of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, by the genius of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, has taken possession of the minds and hearts of millions of workers throughout the world to become a mighty force transforming the globe, the banner of the increasingly powerful world communist movement.

In the countries of the world socialist community, Marxism-Leninism informs the creative activity of the masses, who are building a society whose motto is: "Everything for man, everything in the name of man".

In the capitalist countries, Marxism-Leninism is the weapon of the working class and of all working people in their struggle against the dominion of the bourgeoisie, against the exploitation of man by man and social inequality.

For the peoples of the developing countries, the theory of Marxism-Leninism serves as a reliable guide in their efforts to remove the remnants of colonialism, poverty and backwardness, to resist the policy of fiat used by the monopolies of powerful capitalist states and to carry through progressive social changes.

What is the Marxist-Leninist theory of social development? What were its historical and philosophical sources? How was it developed and enriched by experience of the class struggle of the proletariat? How was it put into effect by the International founded by Marx and Engels, by the workers' parties and during the testing times of the 1905 and 1917 revolutions in Russia and the popular-democratic and socialist revolutions in other countries? Finally, how does it find its practical realisation in the life of the Soviet

state, in the world socialist system and in the struggle of the peoples of the world for peace, democracy and socialism? These are the questions examined in the present book, whose authors have attempted to show the birth and development of a new world outlook in connection with the growth and consolidation of the working class movement and in connection with the activity of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

The life of the founders of Marxism-Leninism is a shining example of selfless service to the cause of the working class and the liberation of all working people. Their brilliant theoretical works were not the fruit of abstract speculation but the result of studying and generalising the actual revolutionary experience of the working masses and of exercising direct leadership of the proletarian movement. Revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice supplemented and enriched each other at the various stages in the development of the communist movement.

In a popular work such as this it is, of course, impossible to discuss the full range of complex issues connected with the rise and development of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and their revolutionary-reformative effect upon mankind. The authors have therefore concentrated upon the key, basic questions of revolutionary theory and practice in the hope that this will lead the reader to consider these problems more closely for himself and study the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Lenin is known to have warned against a superficial study of Marxism limited to merely learning its formulas, conclusions and slogans by heart. He called for "a study of communism" enriching one's mind with a knowledge of the entire human heritage and for the daily application of this knowledge in practical activity.

Part one

MARX AND ENGELS—THE FOUNDERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD OUTLOOK OF THE PROLETARIAT

I. Marx and Engels: the Route to Materialism and Communism

Historical Preconditions Leading to the Formation of the Views of Marx and Engels

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the two great champions of the cause of the liberation of the working class, were born at the beginning of the nineteenth century in small towns on the left bank of the river Rhine in the centre of Western Europe. What were the events and ideas that characterised this period of history? The end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century in Europe was marked by unprecedented social upheavals—the birth pangs of a new, bourgeois social system replacing the feudal society. Serfdom was collapsing and the thrones of absolute monarchs were tottering. In France, Italy, Spain, Austria, Poland and Greece millions rose up to oppose oppression and defend their rights, revealing their power to the ruling classes.

The French Revolution marked the starting point. The storming of the Bastille in 1789 by the populace of Paris, the promulgation of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, the formation of a republic and the execution of the king were events that not only shook France itself but that reverberated through every corner of old, feudal Europe. However, the bourgeoisie did not allow the people to enjoy the fruits of their revolutionary gains. They turned them to their own advantage and secured for themselves, economically, legally and politically, the right to free enterprise and exploitation of the workers.

In the developed capitalist countries of the period, therefore, first in England, which already had large-scale industrial production, and then in France, the proletariat began to organise itself to act energetically in defence of its rights. It grew in strength and engaged in revolutionary struggle. The same, though on a lesser scale, happened in Germany.

If the economic and political development of Germany at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries was relatively slow and sluggish, this was certainly not the case as regards its intellectual and cultural development in the fields of philosophy, ideology and literature. The French Revolution was preceded by the flowering of the age of great Enlighteners such as Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, Holbach and Helvetius. Their critique of religion and the feudal system, their ideas on the transformation of society in accord with "the demands of Reason", their theory of man, who is born free only to become the slave of circumstance, all served to prepare public opinion in the country for the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of the feudal monarchy and the struggle to secure the triumph of the ideals of Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood.

However, these ideals were not, and could not be realised under the existing conditions. At the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the French philosophy of Enlightenment seemed to have run its course. It was precisely at this point that the thinkers of neighbouring Germany began to make themselves heard. They responded to the French Revolution by erecting a philosophy that struck at the religious-dogmatic philosophy typical of feudal society. Put forward by Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, this was the philosophy of the rising young bourgeoisie. For all its limitations, its failure to push the arguments to their final conclusion, this philosophy was imbued with a belief in reason, opening up the way for human initiative and scientific enquiry. It offered men the possibility of intellectual and moral self-perfection, though this was understood within the framework of the bourgeois concepts of the duties, rights and allotted position of the individual, of the immutability of private property and the right of one man to exploit another.

The first three decades of the nineteenth century saw an upsurge in the intellectual life of France and the spread

of the ideas of Utopian socialism as formulated by Saint-Simon and Fourier. Certain historians (Thierry, Guizot, Mignet, Thiers), pointing to the class struggle, sought a new understanding of the development of society. The Rhineland was at the confluence of two cultures—German and French. It was this part of Germany that felt the full impact of the revolutionary storms shaking neighbouring France, and across it flowed the current of freedom-loving, enlightening, materialist ideas. Here German classical philosophy collided with French Utopian socialism and the satirical humour and wit of French letters combined with the tendency towards fundamental and detailed analysis typical of the Germans. In addition, industrial production began to develop in the Rhineland earlier than in any other part of Germany. Commerce flourished and the working class was born and grew in strength. All these factors worked together to create favourable conditions for the flowering of the genius of Marx and Engels.

The Development of Marx's Personality and View of the World

Karl Marx was born on 5 May 1818, in the small and ancient town of Triers in the southern Rhineland. His father, Heinrich Marx, was a lawyer whose professional skill, erudition, unquestioned integrity and willingness to help anyone in need had won him the recognition and respect of his fellow citizens. The family was large but well provided for. Heinrich Marx strove to bring up his children in the spirit of the ideas of the Enlightenment, the ideas of Voltaire, Rousseau and Lessing. Karl showed an early interest in reading.

In 1830 Karl Marx entered the Triers gymnasium, where he studied for five years. He studied diligently, although he showed little taste for cramming or for learning religious texts by rote, the main demands made of gymnasium pupils. His intellectual world was formed largely by independent and intensive reading and by his association with his father and a small group of friends.

The young Marx could not remain unaffected by the problems his father encountered as a lawyer: the poverty of

the working people, crying social injustice, the contempt of the powerful for the impoverished, the political trial of those who opposed the authorities. Still young, he began to think of devoting his life to the struggle for a better life for the people, for justice. These thoughts and feelings were reflected in the essay 'Reflections of a Young Man on the Choice of a Profession', an examination paper taken prior to leaving the gymnasium, and were to attain their fullest development when Marx reached maturity. "...We cannot always. . ." he wrote, "attain the position to which we believe we are called; our relations in society have to some extent already begun to be established before we are in a position to determine them. . ." The adolescent is rejecting the philistine ideal of personal success. "If he works only for himself, he may perhaps become a famous man of learning, a great sage, and excellent poet, but he can never be a perfect, truly great man."¹ On the threshold of independent life, Marx formulates a concept that will, in effect, become the motto of his life: "To work for mankind".

As a student at Berlin University, Karl Marx makes the acquaintance of leading literary figures, attends lectures by liberal professors, takes part in student debates and develops his interest in art and literature. His range of interests is wide, including history (in particular antiquity) and drama, aesthetics and poetry, philosophy. In 1837 Marx ceased his literary pursuits, having come to the conclusion that he can make no progress in any branch of science, for example jurisprudence, without first studying philosophy. Indeed, as Engels was to write later, if one wishes to develop and perfect the capacity for theoretical thought, 'there is as yet no other means than the study of previous philosophy'.²

Marx attempted a critical interpretation of the philosophy of Hegel, who then had a large following at Berlin University. Marx was both attracted and repelled by Hegel. He was deeply impressed by Hegel's dialectic, by his attempt to grasp the world in its development, in motion, in the

struggle of opposites. He recognised in Hegel a gigantic philosopher who had dared to draw into one philosophical system the entire development of the universe, the whole of science and art. However, this system was idealistic in that, for Hegel, the creator of the natural world was the "world spirit", thus making the idea prime over matter. Marx began to doubt whether Hegel was right, and in order to resolve these doubts he turned to the source of philosophy, to the philosophers of Ancient Greece.

From among the numerous philosophical trends of antiquity, Marx chooses to examine the ideas of Democritus and Epicurus. Both were materialists and moreover, developed the theory that matter is composed of basic, indivisible particles—atoms. The fact that Marx selected the philosophies of the major Greek atomists and materialists reveals the direction in which he was moving in his search for a new world view. The Hegelian system could not be superceded within the framework of idealism. No idealist philosophy could be of any help in this regard. Only the age-old materialist tradition could offer a solution.

Marx chose the philosophy of Democritus and Epicurus as the theme of his doctor's thesis, which he successfully completed in 1841. This thesis reveals that, while Marx has not yet adopted a fully materialist outlook, he is already dissatisfied with idealism. This work, together with the preparatory manuscripts, contains a profound criticism of Hegel and his reactionary followers, the so-called right-Hegelians. Marx also sharply criticises the theoretical basis of religion, in particular the principles used to prove the existence of God and the immortality of the soul.

In the last three years as a student, Marx moves from a struggle against religious hypocrisy and religious morality to a decisive rejection of religion. At that time, criticism of religion was one of the forms of protest against the feudal-monarchical system in Prussia, which had the blessing of the official church. Marx's friends from the left-wing, more progressive followers of Hegel (the so-called Young Hegelians) became enthusiastic critics of religion and theology.

Purely theoretical speculation did not satisfy the young doctor of philosophy. He wished to combine philosophy with reality, that is, to take an active part in politics. The writ-

¹ K. Marx, "Reflections of a Young Man on the Choice of a Profession" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, pp. 4, 8.

² F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, p. 400.

ing of articles and pamphlets offered just such an opportunity and in 1842 Marx joined the staff of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, and later became its editor-in-chief. The newspaper became the platform from which he launched his passionate attacks against the Prussian system, against the rule of feudal lords and state bureaucracy, against social privilege and press censorship, and from which he spoke in defence of the labouring and oppressed masses. He came into direct contact with the destitution of the masses and considered it his "political duty" to speak out publicly in the pages of the newspaper "in the popular language of need which the conditions of life in our native land make it impossible to forget". In this way the young Marx declares himself for the first time as a convinced revolutionary democrat.

Marx's brilliant articles in the *Rheinische Zeitung*, well-written, profound and politically biting, could not but draw public attention. They also could not fail to excite the wrath of the Prussian authorities. At the beginning of 1843 the newspaper was banned.

Following the closure of the newspaper, Marx decided to leave Germany. He set out upon this new period of his life with Jenny von Westphalen, to whom he had been engaged for more than seven years and who had selflessly waited for him all that time. In Jenny Marx found a loyal partner for life. In the words of Engels, she "not only shared in the fate, the labour and the struggles of her husband but herself took part in them with the greatest understanding and burning passion".¹

The young couple travelled to Paris, then the centre of European culture and science and the focal point of the revolutionary movement. Political exiles arrived here from various countries and nowhere was dissatisfaction with the bourgeois system, which had replaced the high ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood with the selfish pursuit of wealth, so acute. Paris was the birthplace of the first workers' organisations. It was here that socialist thought first appeared and matured. The great Utopian philosophers, Saint-Simon and Fourier, were succeeded by a galaxy of followers. The capital of France offered the clearest picture of

the development of class contradictions and collisions; of bitter political struggle, and thus it was here in Paris that Marx finally adopted a scientific, communist world outlook.

In order to create a revolutionary theory and formulatè a genuine slogan of struggle it was necessary to sum up the experience of class struggles both past and present. Marx had already begun his study of this experience in Germany, but in France the conditions for such a study were incomparably better. This study of past and present experience naturally caused Marx to ponder on the following questions: if the whole of history is the history of the struggle of the classes, which class is at present the carrier of revolutionary energy? To which class does the future belong, and what is that future?

Still determined to link theoretical speculation with real life, Marx established contacts with revolutionary groups of German craftsmen and French workers. In their reports the police noted that Marx attended meetings of revolutionary workers at one of the Paris gates. As he became directly acquainted with the life of the workers, Marx was more and more impressed with the moral energy, the unquenchable thirst for knowledge and the noble humanity of the worker-revolutionaries.

Marx began a critical study of Utopian socialism and communism, which took its origins directly from French materialism. The French Utopian socialists Saint-Simon and Fourier, after a detailed criticism of bourgeois society as one that went against the principles of humanism, had turned their attention to the proletariat; however, they saw it only as an oppressed and suffering section of society worthy only of pity and charity from those in power.

Contrary to the Utopians, Marx concludes that the proletariat is far from being merely the object of sentimental outpourings, but is a force capable of revolutionary action. *The proletariat—that is the connecting link between theory and practice, between philosophy and life!* In other words, the proletariat is called to realise in practice the ideas of a society free from exploitation. Marx formulated this discovery in his article "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Introduction", which was published in the *Deutsche-Französische Jahrbücher* first issued at the beginning of 1844.

¹ F. Engels, "Jenny Marx, geb. v. Westphalen" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 19, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1962, S. 291.

The emancipation of **man**, affirms Marx in this article, cannot be achieved without the elimination of "every kind of bondage", and the proletariat is precisely the class which has the fewest rights and is the most oppressed. The proletariat cannot liberate itself without liberating all sections of society.

What would the new society be like? Answering this question in *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Marx describes communism as a society of genuine and complete humanism that offers all its members the possibility of all-round development.

Marx has thus taken a decisive step forward; he has found both a genuine slogan of struggle (the struggle for the ideals of communism) and also the material force that is capable of realising these ideals (the working class).

In this way the twenty-six-year-old Marx arrived at a new, genuinely scientific view of the world and the life of society, which was possible only after enormous creative work. He assimilated and critically reworked the entire European heritage in philosophy and other spheres of social thought. However, and most importantly, Marx consciously adopted the position of the oppressed masses, and in particular the proletariat, the most revolutionary class of all time.

Marxism arose not only as the summation and interpretation of the intellectual achievements of mankind but also (and in the final analysis this factor was decisive) as the reflection of specific economic and socio-political tendencies in the development of bourgeois society—a historically transient society doomed to defeat.

Vladimir Lenin considered that Marx's transition to communism "was finally made" in 1844.¹ It is then that a scientific communist world outlook emerges. However, many years of research and principled struggle lay ahead in order to develop this world view in all its directions: *in philosophy, in political economy and in scientific socialism*. This work Marx was to carry through together with Engels.

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 80.

The Formation of the Personality and World View of Frederick Engels

Frederick Engels was born on 28 November, 1820 in the town of Barmen, in the north of the Rhine Province of Germany. His father, also Frederick Engels, was a textile manufacturer and a man of conservative political and religious convictions, who tried to bring up his children accordingly. Young Frederick differed sharply from his brothers and sisters—cheerful and with a lively imagination. He soon revealed a wide range of abilities in languages, history, literature, music and drawing. He was equally at home in the natural sciences, the humanities, mathematics and poetry.

In 1837, Engels, on the insistence of his father, took up the study of commerce, first in his home town of Barmen, and then in the city port of Bremen. However, he revealed little interest in business and devoted as much time as he could to self-education, to the study of literature, history, languages and music. He developed a growing interest in the political and ideological movements then current in society and soon dropped religious belief to become a convinced atheist. He was an eager reader of forbidden literature exposing the Prussian political system. At the age of nineteen, he published "Letters from Wuppertal" in which he pointed to the poverty of industrial workers and exposed the heartlessness and cynicism of manufacturers whose merciless exploitation included even children. He realised that his political convictions required theoretical foundation and turned to a study of Hegel, from which he drew revolutionary conclusions. He was attracted by the sense of history in Hegel's thinking and by Hegel's recognition of the inevitable collapse of all that became irrational.

In 1841, Engels set out for Berlin to perform his military service. Here he combined service in the artillery brigade with attending lectures at Berlin University and active participation in literary and philosophical circles. He spent only one year in Berlin, but in that short time he shifted considerably towards a new world view. Plunged into the very heart of the ideological battle and closely following the development of the ideas of Utopian socialism, he came to the conclusion that communism alone could provide a full answer to mounting social problems. However, the ways

and means of establishing the classless society still had to be determined.

Further changes affected the course of Engels' life in these years. His father sent him to England on business on behalf of the firm in which he was a co-partner. On his way to England, Engels stopped in Cologne. Here, in the office of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, he had his first meeting with Marx, of whom he had already heard not a little. However, the meeting was purely official and did not lead at this point to personal friendship. Marx asked Engels to send in articles for the newspaper.

In the autumn of 1842 Engels arrived in London, and from there he went to Manchester, a major industrial centre, where he took up residence and where he was to spend two very busy years.

England was then the leading industrial country of the world, and here the workers' movement was also the most developed. The English proletariat had already realised its power and its demonstrations were assuming an organised, mass nature that merged into the Chartist movement. The Chartists were attempting to give the workers' struggle a political character; they conducted a campaign for a general political strike and for the adoption by Parliament of a People's Charter containing demands for universal suffrage and equal representation in Parliament of all sections of society. The English proletariat lived in poverty. The working day lasted 12 hours and longer and female and children's labour was brutally exploited.

Engels studied the political life of the country and the position of the working class. He visited workers' districts, talked with the workers, witnessed the dreadful conditions in which they worked and lived, made the acquaintance of leaders of the workers' movement, prominent Chartists, and studied statistical and documentary material on the work and life of the workers.

Engels soon dispatched several articles to the *Rheinische Zeitung* on the condition of the working class, and Marx published them without delay. One article was entitled "The Condition of the Working Class in England". In these articles Engels for the first time speaks of the proletariat as a special class and draws the bold conclusion that "only a forcible abolition of the existing unnatural condi-

tions, a radical overthrow of the nobility and industrial aristocracy, can improve the material position of the proletarians".¹ Here Engels is, in essence, formulating the thesis of *the necessity and inevitability of the proletarian revolution*, which will sweep away not only the feudal aristocracy but also the big bourgeoisie.

As Marx, in Paris, is preparing the *Deutsche-Französische Jahrbücher* for publication, Engels sends him a series of articles which includes "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy". He decides to investigate the economic relations of bourgeois society as the basis from which flow all its contradictions and vices including even the rise in crime. Within the relations of private capitalist property he discovers a concealed mechanism underlying the development of the whole of society and permitting the disclosure of the opposing interests of the manufacturers and the workers, the inevitability and implacable nature of their conflict and the heartless inhumanity of the bourgeois world in which everything is based on competition.

Marx read and re-read this work by Engels, took notes, analysed it and saw both its strong and its weak points. Later, in his mature economic works, he frequently referred to this article, which he described as "a brilliant essay on the critique of economic categories".²

Marx's estimation of the book *The Condition of the Working Class in England* was even higher. In this work Engels presented the conclusions he had drawn from direct observation of the life of the English industrial proletariat and also reviewed existing statistical data and documents. It represented a fundamental research into the position and role of that class which was destined to fulfil the world-historic mission of burying the system of oppression and exploitation and creating a new society. It was also a passionate indictment of the bourgeoisie. Engels writes: "I accuse the English bourgeoisie before the entire world of murder, robbery and other crimes on a massive scale. . . It need hardly be said that my blows, though aimed at the panners, are meant for the donkey, namely the German bourgeoisie, to

¹ F. Engels, "The Internal Crises" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 374

² K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, p. 22.

whom I make it plain enough that they are as bad as their English counterparts, except that their sweat-shop methods are not as bold, thorough and ingenious." ¹

The book is rich in new conclusions and ideas, and in it Engels already reveals a clear understanding of the leading role played by economic factors in the life of society. He was the first to give a scientific analysis of the industrial revolution, in which manual and craft labour is replaced by machine labour. The social result of the development of bourgeois production, as Engels showed, is the concentration of large masses of workers at one pole of society and large-scale capital at the other.

This work produced a deep impression upon contemporary society, was translated in many countries and served for many progressive people as the stimulus to a study of scientific socialism and to active participation in the revolutionary proletarian movement. Also instrumental in its success was the clear, impassioned and graphic style typical of Engels' writings.

Vladimir Lenin highly valued this work by Engels. He remarked that "neither before 1845 nor after has there appeared so striking and truthful a picture of the misery of the working class". ²

In concluding it should be emphasised that the new world outlook, the world outlook of the working class, which Marx and Engels arrived at independently, did not arise by chance. Its appearance was historically inevitable. *It was essential to the proletariat, which had emerged onto the historical arena and was preparing for its first serious battles with the world of capital; it was essential as a compass, as a programme of action for the impending straggle.*

¹ "Engels to Marx in Paris" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1982, pp. 10, 11.

² V. I. Lenin, "Frederick Engels", *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1963, p. 23.

II. The "Manifesto of the Communist Party"— the First Policy Document of Marxism

The Beginning of Collaboration
Between Marx and Engels.

The Organisation of the Communist League

In August 1844, Engels returned from England to Germany, stopping in Paris to meet with Marx. Marx, full of admiration for the articles Engels had sent him, was eager to meet him and a friendship was formed immediately. The two young men were inseparable during the 10 days that Engels spent in Paris, and engaged in frank discussions of the issues attracting their interest. Their agreement was total. By this time both had come by their different routes to the conclusion that a socialist revolution was inevitable and that the proletariat would be its driving force. The two friends started their joint work fired with enthusiasm, regularly exchanging ideas in their correspondence. The first result of this collaboration was the book *The Holy Family*, published in 1845. In this sharply polemical work, aimed at exposing petty-bourgeois ideology, Marx and Engels provided the philosophical validation of their revolutionary views.

A year later they completed the next fundamental work—*The German Ideology*, in which they put forward a materialist concept of history in the form of a well-articulated scientific theory. This book contains the basic philosophical conclusions maintained by Marx and Engels throughout their lives and which they were to develop and elaborate in their later works.

The German Ideology was not published during the lifetime of its authors. By the time it was completed Marx and Engels had totally immersed themselves in the political

movement and were occupied with the propagation of their revolutionary views. The main item on the agenda was the creation of a proletarian party, to which end Marx and Engels had long been conducting organisational and propaganda work.

In the beginning of 1845, Marx moved to Brussels, where he was soon joined by Engels. Here the situation was more favourable to political activity. This was the period that saw the rise of the bourgeois-democratic movement in Western Europe, a movement in which the proletariat was taking an increasingly active part. Various workers' organisations, secret societies and sectarian groupings arose that had no clearly defined programme of action and were under the influence of the ideas of Utopian and petty-bourgeois socialists. One of the largest of such organisations, with branches in a number of countries, was the League of the Just. Its motto was "All Men are Brothers" and its members called for the establishment of "the Kingdom of God on earth", based on the ideals of "love of one's neighbour", equality and justice.

At the beginning of 1847, Marx and Engels joined the League of the Just and took part in its reorganisation. The first congress of this league took place in London and confirmed the renaming of the league the Communist League. The former motto "All Men are Brothers" was replaced by the slogan of proletarian internationalism "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" This slogan, which had first appeared in the draft rules of the Communist League, became the militant slogan of the international workers' movement.

The foundation of the Communist League—the first international workers' organisation which proclaimed scientific communism to be its militant banner—marked the beginning of the union of Marxism and the workers' movement. Ahead lay the enormous task of implementing the decisions adopted at the congress, of strengthening the League both ideologically and organisationally and of increasing its links with worker and democratic organisations.

On 29 October, 1847, the second congress of the Communist League took place again in London, and was attended by representatives from Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, England, Poland and other countries. It was the first international congress of the proletariat to record in its

decisions the ideas of scientific communism. The Rules of the Communist League, adopted at the congress, declare the aim of the League to be: the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the destruction of the old bourgeois society based on class antagonism and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property.

Marx and Engels were asked to draw up a *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in order to set clearly and openly before the world the programme of the Communists. This, the major document of the age, was written in two months, from December 1847 to January 1848. Reading the *Manifesto* gives enormous intellectual satisfaction. Each should discover this for himself, pondering over each sentence of this famous revolutionary document. Therefore we shall look only at the basic ideas and structure of this Marxist classic.

The Great Ideas of the *Manifesto*

The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* opens with the now famous metaphor: "A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of communism". In the classics of Marxism the images are always unusual, significant and profound. Why is communism a spectre? Because, as is made clear in the ensuing text, communism was still an intangible, blurred and undefined concept. Therefore, the time had come to make clear what the reality of communism, and not the spectre or imagined communism, was, communism not merely as a theory but also as a specific political movement.

The *Manifesto* was also intended to define that ideological-political trend which, from the scientific point of view, had the right to call itself communist, and differentiate it from all other forms of unscientific (utopian, Christian, feudal, petty-bourgeois) communism and socialism. Therefore the *Communist Manifesto* was the first policy document of Marxism, of scientific communism.

The *Manifesto* is characterised by concise lucidity. It is divided into four sections: I. Bourgeois and Proletarians; II. Proletarians and Communists; III. Socialist and Communist Literature (this section shows the attitude of Communists to non-scientific communism); IV. Position of the

Com-munists in Relation to the Various Existing Opposition Parties.

The scientific-materialist concept of the development of society, discovered by Marx and Engels, permeated the entire content of the *Manifesto*. The history of society appears before the reader as the history of class conflict; the slave-owner and the slave in antiquity, the feudal lord and the serf in the age of feudalism, constituted antagonistic classes who were mortal enemies and who waged an unending struggle that led to the revolutionary transformation of society: the slave-owning society gave way to feudalism, feudalism gave way to the bourgeois society with its two basic and opposing classes—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Why and how did these classes emerge? Marx and Engels give a clear and precise answer to this question, devoting particular attention to an analysis of the classes in bourgeois society. The bourgeoisie of the time of Marx and Engels was the product of a long historical process. The spread of trade and the expanding market developing in the heart of feudal society had stimulated the activity of craftsmen and merchants. The first manufacturing enterprises appeared, based on manual labour and uniting together small-scale craftsmen. With the appearance of machines, large-scale industry was born, together with the class of bourgeois-dealers, entrepreneurs, manufacturers and bankers. In the course of revolutionary upheavals, this class drove back the feudal aristocracy and seized power, winning political supremacy.

The bourgeoisie entered onto the historical scene as a revolutionary class. Its progressive struggle against feudalism for the abolition of serfdom, social privilege and feudal division of land was of major revolutionary significance. They broke down the obstacles to the rapid advance of industry. An international market was created, and as a result production lost its national and isolated character. The material and intellectual activity of each country was woven into a single fabric of international links and relations.

In a very short space of time the bourgeoisie had created productive forces more powerful than those of all the preceding generations taken together: large-scale machine production, shipping, railways, the telegraph, etc. However, Marx and Engels also show the other side of the picture. The

bourgeoisie did, indeed, destroy feudal, patriarchal relations and shatter the bonds of serfdom, but, at the same time, it left no other link between man and man than naked interest, the callous cash payment. "It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom—Free Trade."¹

The bourgeoisie did indeed make the fruit of the intellectual and cultural activity of individual nations accessible to all, but at the same time it turned the doctor, the lawyer, the poet and the scientist into its hired labourers. It did indeed revolutionise the productive forces, that is, it created large-scale industry, powerful means of production and exchange, but it is growing more and more to resemble a magician that cannot control the "underground" forces his incantations have called forth.

Just as feudal relations had once become fetters restricting the development of industry and trade, so also, in the period of bourgeois development, signs were appearing that indicated that the productive forces had become "too powerful" for bourgeois relations, which were now impeding the development of these forces. Foremost among these menacing signs were crises, epidemics of over-production. The authors of the *Manifesto* thus defined the basic contradiction of capitalist society as the conflict between the productive forces and the relations of production.

In the productive forces, the bourgeoisie has, therefore, "forged the weapons that bring death to itself. . ." However, it forged them using the hands of others, the hands of the workers. In so doing it generated the very class that will turn against it the weapon of death—the class of proletarians.

Clear and impressive are the pages of the *Manifesto* devoted to the position of the working class. The workers are compelled to sell themselves as a commodity. Driven together in the factories, they are organised like soldiers. They find themselves under a many-faced despotism—the bourgeois state, the manufacturer, the superintendent, even the machines, of which they are but the adjuncts. "No sooner

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 487.

is the exploitation of the labourer by the manufacturer, so far, at an end, and he receives his wages in cash, than he is set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc.'¹

Marx and Engels do not stop at this representation of the proletariat as "the suffering class". Analysis leads them to the conclusion that the proletariat is a fighting class and the most consistently revolutionary social force. It is with this class that the future lies. What are the factors substantiating such a conclusion?

Firstly, insofar as the proletariat grows in numbers and is concentrated together in factories, its power and organisation is also increasing. Workers are united in professional unions, and are organised as a class, as a political force opposing the bourgeoisie. Secondly, the bourgeoisie itself, in its political struggle against feudalism, is frequently compelled to turn to the working class, to draw it into the struggle for its interests, and thus draw it into the political movement. The working class takes its first lesson in political development from the bourgeoisie, and it learns the lesson well. The bourgeoisie is obliged to give the workers an elementary education. Bankruptcy forces some sections of the ruling classes, including intellectuals, into the ranks of the proletariat, which also increases the role of the proletariat as an independent political force. Thirdly, the proletariat is a genuinely revolutionary class because it is the product of newly-formed social conditions; it is a young class growing in strength from year to year. "The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product."² Fourthly, "All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority."³

At the time when the *Manifesto* was being written, petty-bourgeois revolutionaries and Utopian socialists frequently

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 491.

² *Ibid.*, p. 494.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 495.

exposed capitalism and the bourgeoisie from the moral point of view. They produced stern warnings about the inhumanity of bourgeois relations, about the cynicism and mercenary nature of the bourgeoisie, about the domination of profit and naked self-interest. On this basis it was concluded that bourgeois society went counter to human nature and calls were made for love, brotherhood and justice.

The *Communist Manifesto* expressed a radically new position. It also contains pages exposing the bourgeoisie. It is indeed true that the bourgeoisie is the embodiment of crying social injustice, and it will suffer inevitable defeat in the struggle with the proletariat, but this will not happen as a result of moral sermons. Those who are zealous for the happiness of men may reproach and censure the bourgeoisie as much as they will for its inhuman exploitation of the workers; it will nonetheless continue to devise ever more effective ways of continuing the exploitation. However, as the wealth of the bourgeoisie grows, so does the army of those producing the wealth. "The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination. . . 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, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable."¹

If the march of history is itself drawing capitalism to its death, does it not follow that the working class and the organisations it generates should merely wait for the inevitable outcome? Certainly not! Marx and Engels argued the necessity of the struggle of the working class and the leading role of Communists, whose advantage over other proletarians is "the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement".²

The triple aim of communist activity is clearly defined: "formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 496.

² *Ibid.*, p. 497.

bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat".¹

The authors of the *Manifesto* put forward the positive programme that Communists intend to carry through and those principles and ideas that they defend. These principles are not the product of abstract reasoning, not something invented and brought into the workers' movement from outside. "They merely express, in general terms actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes."²

The most important point in the programme of the Communists is *the abolition of bourgeois private property*. The authors of the *Manifesto* are careful to emphasise that this does not mean personal property, property earned by one's own labour. As for bourgeois property, it is a social and not a personal force. Capital standing over against labour "is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion".³

This proposition is of fundamental importance. If capital is a social force, but belongs to private individuals, then its transformation into collective, social property is an act that is historically natural and just. In developing this idea, Marx and Engels enter into direct polemics with bourgeois ideologists defending large-scale private ownership of the instruments and means of production. Faced with the prospect of the abolition of private property, these ideologues pictured the worst imaginable: the suppression of all individuality and originality, of all freedom and independence, universal indolence and—final horror!—the abolition of family and native land.

The *Manifesto* exposes such inventions, thought up to frighten the average man and fill him with fear at the thought of the approaching proletarian revolution.

Of what personal individuality and independence is one talking in bourgeois society? Here only capital has independence and individuality, while the worker is deprived

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 498.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 499.

of independence and rendered faceless. What is the freedom preached by bourgeois ideology? The freedom to trade, to purchase and to sell, the freedom to exploit and enslave the labour of others. This is the "freedom" the Communists wish to abolish. They are opposed to the bourgeois system of education, which turns the worker into an accessory of the machine. The products of intellectual labour, as material products, should be accessible to the whole of society. This is the "communist method of appropriation".

In the torrent of slander launched against the Communists, the most frequent accusation was that they allegedly wished to abolish marriage and introduce the holding of wives in common. Marx and Engels turned this accusation against the bourgeois themselves. The bourgeois sees his wife simply as a tool of production—the production of children. Thus, insofar as the Communists wish to socialise the means of production, women—so they argue—will meet the same fate. Nothing could be more comical, note the authors of the *Manifesto*, than this "virtuous indignation of the bourgeois". The communality of wives, official and unofficial prostitution, has always existed in bourgeois society. The aim is precisely the abolition of a situation in which the woman is simply a means of production, the abolition of the bourgeois form of the family, based on financial considerations, the ending of the exploitation of child labour and the introduction of free education of children.

Finally, Marx and Engels show the invalidity of the accusations made against communism from the religious, philosophical and generally ideological points of view. Without discussing these in detail, the authors develop the concept that all spheres of intellectual development—philosophy, politics, law, morality and religion—always transform themselves with the transformation of material production. The communist revolution will generate the most radical break with all forms of social awareness inherited from the past.

The *Manifesto* clearly formulates the idea of the conquest of power by the working class and the establishment of their rule, that is, in fact, *the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat*. "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the

State, *i.e.*, of the proletariat organised as the ruling class, and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible." ¹

The proletariat interferes in bourgeois relations by means of a number of economic measures, eliminates the old relations and finally destroys the conditions for the existence of classes completely, thus also destroying its own domination as a class.

Marx and Engels formulated the supreme humanist principle and aim of all these transformations: the creation of a society in which "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all". ²

In the concluding chapter of the *Manifesto* the authors define the attitude of Communists to other opposition parties in bourgeois society. Of permanent significance here is the definition of the strategic objectives of Communists—Communists are fighting in the name of the immediate aims **and** interests of the working class, but also **defending** the future of the movement in the present. Communists support any revolutionary movement anywhere that is directed against the existing social and political system. They give priority to the question of property as the fundamental question. They strive to achieve unity and agreement among democratic parties in all countries.

These are the principles that have governed the communist movement from that day to this. Its banners carry the fiery words of the *Manifesto*: "Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

"WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!" ³

The World-Historic Significance of the *Manifesto*

The *Manifesto* was first published in a small edition in German at the beginning of 1848, the year of revolutions. Shortly thereafter it was translated into a number of languages—English, French, Polish, Italian, Danish, Flemish

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 504.

² *Ibid.*, p. 506.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 519.

and Swedish. The first Russian translation appeared in 1869 in Geneva. The *Manifesto* is now one of the most popular political publications in the world.

In the *Manifesto*, Marxism appeared for the first time as a well-articulated programme for transforming the world. "With the clarity and brilliance of genius," declared Vladimir Lenin, "this work outlines a new world-conception, consistent materialism, which also embraces the realm of social life; dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development; the theory of the class struggle and of the world-historic revolutionary role of the proletariat—the creator of a new, communist society." ¹

The whole course of the development of the world communist movement spanning the more than 130 years that have passed since the appearance of this work, has proved the truth and scientific validity of the ideas contained in the *Manifesto*. The revolution foreseen by Marx and Engels has now become an accomplished fact in a number of countries. The scientific prognosis of the inevitability of the abolition of private property, exploitation and inequality is a living reality in the countries of the socialist community.

Bourgeois ideologists, together with revisionists, slander the great ideas of the *Manifesto* and represent them as being now outdated. The conclusion made by Marx and Engels concerning the proletariat as the main revolutionary force and the grave-digger of capitalism is subjected to savage attacks. However, history repeatedly exposes these bourgeois "theoreticians", revealing the growing power of the workers' movement throughout the world and the leading role played in this movement by communist and workers' parties. When the *Manifesto* was written, the Communist League had only 400 members. By the time of the October Revolution, there were already 400 thousand Communists. Today more than 70 million Communists are living and fighting under the banner of the *Manifesto* and around 100 communist parties are active throughout the world.

How, precisely, are the ideas of the *Manifesto* being realised today?

The ideas of the *Manifesto* are being realised first and

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 48.

foremost in the building of a new society in the socialist countries, the perfection of all the aspects of this society, and the consistent and unswerving application of the principle "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all".

They are being realised in the comprehensive strengthening and successful development of the world socialist community and each fraternal socialist country.

They are being realised in opposition to exploitation and oppression, in a selfless struggle against imperialism and war and for peace among peoples.

They are being realised in the struggle to achieve the basic class aims of the proletariat in the non-socialist area of the world and to defend their vital interests.

They are being realised in the struggle for national liberation and for the strengthening and development of the revolutionary gains won by people who have freed themselves from the yoke of colonialism.

They are being realised in unswerving loyalty to proletarian internationalism and a ceaseless struggle for unity among Communists and for solidarity among all the anti-imperialist forces of the modern world.

They are being realised in the absolute rejection of any manifestation of ideologies hostile to socialism—bourgeois and nationalist, reformist and revisionist. It consists in a struggle to defend the purity of Marxism-Leninism, for its creative application and development.

The *Manifesto* was and remains the guide-book of every conscious worker, every Communist. Its whole significance is summed up in the expressive words of Lenin: "This little booklet is worth whole volumes: to this day its spirit inspires and guides the entire organised and fighting proletariat of the civilised world."¹

Marx and Engels in the Revolution of 1848-1849

The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* could not have been published at a more appropriate time. In February 1848, a revolution took place in France; the people over-

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Frederick Engels", *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 24.

threw the "king of the bankers", Louis Philippe, and proclaimed a Republic. In March revolution spread to Austria, Italy and Germany. A liberal bourgeois government came to power in Prussia.

The revolutionary upsurge found Marx and Engels in Brussels. The time had come to move from theoretical work to practical leadership of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

The revolutions of 1848 were bourgeois in nature, but they revealed the proletariat, particularly in France, as the leading revolutionary force. The French proletariat gave the bourgeoisie total power and "now, however", as Engels commented perceptively in an article written in response to the February revolution, "it is no longer one section of the bourgeoisie confronting another, now the proletariat confronts the bourgeoisie".¹

In Brussels Marx and Engels undertook intense organisational and propaganda activity, becoming the official leaders of the Communist League Central Committee. However, the police were also not wasting time. Marx's flat was searched, and he and his wife arrested and then expelled from the country. They left for Paris, where they were joined by Engels. Together they established contacts with revolutionary organisations and their leaders, elaborating questions relating to the strategy and tactics of German Communists during the revolution.

In April 1848, Marx, Engels and a group of their closest comrades returned to Germany and decided to publish in Cologne a newspaper that would be the organ of revolutionary democracy. In order to emphasise continuity with the newspaper that Marx had published in Cologne in 1842, it was decided to call the new paper the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

From the very start the pages of the new newspaper were infused with the spirit of the class struggle. In numerous articles, Marx and Engels analysed current events, indicated the line to be followed by the revolutionary forces, subjected to merciless criticism the cowardice and half-heartedness of the bourgeois opposition and mocked its leaders for their vacillation, indecision and lack of principle.

¹ F. Engels, "Revolution in Paris" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 558.

Marx and Engels campaigned for the democratic unification of Germany and the proclamation of a republic. They therefore called for the unity of all democratic forces. However, reaction soon moved everywhere into the counter-attack. The uprising by the Parisian proletariat in June 1848 was ruthlessly suppressed by the bourgeois government. In Prague, the military put down revolt at the point of a sword. In Prussia opposition parties were persecuted and their publications closed down. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* "was the only one that held aloft the banner of the crushed proletariat when the bourgeoisie and petty philistines in every country were pouring vicious slander upon the defeated".¹

Despite intensified persecutions on the part of the authorities, the newspaper continued to be printed, calling for energetic opposition to reaction, branding as shameful the bloody carnage caused by counter-revolution in Paris and Vienna, and supporting the national liberation struggle in Hungary and Italy and the popular uprisings in various provinces in Germany.

The last issue of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was published on 19 May, 1849. In this last edition Marx noted that the newspaper, the revolutionary organ of the proletariat, was also the courageous and consistent defender of the genuine national interests of the German people. "We," he wrote with pride, "have saved the revolutionary honour of our country."² The editorial addressed to the Cologne workers read: "In bidding you farewell the editors of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* thank you for the sympathy you have shown them. Their last word everywhere and always will be: **emancipation of the working class!**"³

Popular unrest was still continuing in certain regions in the south-west of Germany; armed workers were striving to maintain their demands, insurgent detachments were

formed and barricades erected. Unfortunately, the insurgents were divided and acted in isolation. Marx and Engels did all they could to unite them, to work out a common plan of action against counter-revolution and spread the revolt to the whole of Germany.

During one of their trips, Marx and Engels were arrested as insurgents and sent to Frankfurt, where, however, they were fortunately able to obtain release. The two friends had to part. Marx went to Paris, while Engels remained in Germany where, in the Palatinate he joined the insurgent detachment led by Willich, a member of the Communist League. The detachment waged a bold fight against government troops. Engels developed the operational plans and himself took part in four large-scale battles, displaying heroism and daring.

The revolution of 1848 and 1849 was defeated. This was explained by the nature of the age, when, to quote the words of Lenin, "the revolutionary character of the bourgeois democrats was *already* passing away (in Europe), while the revolutionary character of the socialist proletariat had *not yet* matured".¹

Participation in this revolution permitted Marx and Engels to test their theory in practice and to build a revolutionary strategy and tactics upon a strictly scientific basis. The entire course of events validated their thesis that the European bourgeoisie had already exhausted its revolutionary character and that now it was the proletariat that was stepping out into the arena of history as the leading revolutionary force.

¹ V. I. Lenin, "In Memory of Herzen", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 26.

¹ F. Engels, "Marx und die *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, 1848-1849" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 21, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1962, S. 22.

² K. Marx and F. Engels, "Articles from the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, *March 6-May 19, 1849*" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 454.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 467.

III. A Revolution in the Views of the Development of Society

Marxism and Its Component Parts

In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* and in some of their other works, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels set forth the basic principles of a new, proletarian, genuinely scientific world view, which were then developed by them throughout the rest of their lives.

Marxism is a well-articulated and integrated teaching consisting of three organically inter-related parts: philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism (communism). In each of these fields Marx and Engels brought about a revolution, studying and critically assessing everything of value previously produced by human thought and elaborating, on the basis of a summation of the experience of class struggle, a radically new theory of social development.

We will first describe the revolutionary change brought about by Marx and Engels in the field of philosophy, and mainly in the field of philosophical views of the development of society, and then turn to political economy and scientific socialism.

The Discovery of a Materialist Concept of History

The philosophy of Marxism—dialectical and historical materialism—was the first to provide a strictly scientific concept of the general laws governing the development of the natural world, society and thought. Marx and Engels attached great importance to a philosophical substantiation

of the scientific world view, and this is natural. The success of the struggle for a revolutionary transformation of society requires the knowledge of how, in accord with what laws, this society develops, what is its structure and how the various parts of this complex social organism act upon each other.

Society arose and develops as part of the material world and represents the highest form of its development. This means that, in order to understand it, it is necessary to understand how the material world develops and how mankind emerged from the animal kingdom and became the author of the miracles of technology, science and art. The philosophy of Marxism answers all these questions.

In what consists the radically new contribution made by Marx and Engels to philosophy?

Philosophy, as we know, arose in antiquity, when men began to reflect upon how the surrounding world had come into existence and how it was organised, and on the place of men within the universe. The whole history of philosophy is the history of a struggle between two opposing trends—materialism and idealism. *The basic question of philosophy is the question of the relation between thinking and being*, that is, the question as to which is prime, mind or matter. On the basis of their answer to this question, thinkers were divided into *materialists* and *idealists*.

The idealists affirmed that mind (intellect, soul, etc.) existed before matter and is its creator. This concept served and still serves as the philosophical basis for religious concepts of the creation of the world by God and the immortality of the soul. The materialists considered that the world was not created by any god and was not the product of any intelligence or mind. In contrast to the idealists, the materialists based themselves upon the actual fact that human awareness reflects objects existing independently of this awareness.

The idealists, on the basis of the supposition that mind generates matter, creates it, concluded that the highest form of activity is intellectual activity, and no practical activity. Thus people's attention was diverted from the real processes of life to intellectual processes, to phenomena in the sphere of consciousness, and with these phenomena completely divorced from and put in opposition to the aware-

ness of reality (for example, in religion)—to "another" world. Materialists, on the other hand, recognising the primacy of matter, the real world, set the task of correctly, faithfully reflecting reality, which is the essential condition of practical activity.

However, pre-Marxist materialism was unable to understand the material world in its continuous historical development and change. That matter was in a state of constant change was always recognised, but this change was seen as purely mechanical, as the endless repetition of the same leading always to the same result.

Using the achievements attained in the natural sciences, and primarily in mechanics, the materialists attempted to construct their philosophical system in accord with its laws. Man was seen by some of these materialists as being a "machine with a soul". The French materialists of the eighteenth century developed the theory that man is created by circumstances, that the surrounding world acts upon the formation of his thoughts and opinions. This was a progressive conclusion. However, they were unable to appreciate another aspect of the inter-relationship between man and the surrounding world—that of the active, transforming, material, practical activity of man during which the surrounding world is changed, and man is also changed. Marx and Engels therefore characterised previous materialism as mechanical or metaphysical, i.e., non-dialectic.

Within the framework of idealist philosophy, however, and particularly in the philosophy of Kant and Hegel, *dialectics* was developed, that is, the theory that everything is in constant change and development, and that the latter is achieved via contradiction, by the conversion of phenomena into their opposites. Naturally, this was seen as related only to the world of ideas, of thoughts, and not to the material world. Idealistic dialectics reached its peak in the system erected by Hegel. He understood the world as an endless process of perfecting, of development from the lower to the higher and ever-more complex forms, but represented this development as the working out of the "world spirit".

Materialist philosopher Feuerbach was the first to spot this flaw in idealist philosophy. He strove to "reverse" the Hegelian system by removing its idealist presuppositions,

that is, by proceeding on the basis that mind is the highest product of matter and not vice versa. With his criticism of official religion and the idealistic flaws in the philosophy of Hegel, Feuerbach played an enormous role in forming the world outlook of Marx and Engels. However, they very quickly saw the limitations of Feuerbach's philosophy also. He was not able to understand the "rational kernel" of Hegelian philosophy, its dialectics, and was therefore unable to overcome the passivity, the purely contemplative nature of contemporary materialism.

This problem was solved by Marx and Engels. They showed that the dialectics is not limited to the intellect, as the idealists thought, but underlies the whole material world. Our intellect, the highest product of the development of matter, is dialectic, active, capable of comprehending contradictions, because these are the processes present in purely material reality. Our intellect is secondary to that material reality, is the product of highly organised matter (brain) and is therefore capable of accurately reflecting and understanding material processes.

In saying this, Marx and Engels were basing themselves on conclusions drawn in the natural sciences, according to which our surrounding world is the result of a long historical process, that the solar system emerged as the result of natural processes, that life on our planet also emerged under the influence of natural factors and that its forms perfected themselves, leading eventually to the emergence of man and human society.

There was, however, one essential feature that united all idealists and materialists prior to Marx: both were idealist in their interpretation of social phenomena. They both firmly believed that the development of society was based on ideas, on aspirations, on the human will. The deeds of great individuals, generals and monarchs, their caprices, interests and intents, were represented as the driving force of history and social change.

The French materialists, for example, placed all their hopes upon the enlightenment of the masses, on the belief that the rulers and their people had only to assimilate the rational ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood, and the world would be transformed accordingly. Only Marx and Engels succeeded in consistently extending materialism

to the history of human society, or, in other words, in formulating a *materialist concept of history*. What is the essence of this discovery?

Marx and Engels reasoned as follows: men must first eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before they are in a position to engage in politics, science and art. Therefore they must first produce the necessary material goods; they must labour. Therefore it is precisely the level of the economic development of society, its material-productive base, that explains its political structure and its various ideological views, etc.

Such a fact seems self-evident. However, it took the genius of Marx and Engels to appreciate it and to use it as the basic concept in understanding the entire history of human society. *It is not intellectual activity as such, thinking for the sake of thinking but the creative material-productive activity of men that is the mainspring of the development of human society*. In the process of his activity, man changes both the material world and himself, changes the conditions in which he lives. This means that *it is not individuals, heroes, rulers and generals who create history, as had been asserted by pre-Marxian thinkers, but primarily whole peoples, the broad masses of working people who created the material values that are the basis of civilisation and culture*.

However, Marx and Engels did not stop at merely stating this fact. They went further. It was important that history be understood as an **integrated**, articulated process, evolving according to its own dialectic laws. This was achieved by the theory of socio-economic formation.

Socio-Economic Formation

In the course of the process of production, men engage in two kinds of relationship. Firstly they interact with nature. It is natural material with which men are mainly dealing in the production process: metals, wood, chemical products, etc. They are subjected to the appropriate changes and thus serve to satisfy human needs. From this natural material, men fashion specific tools, instruments, in order to increase their productive possibilities.

Man, the tools of labour he has created, the objects of

labour, in other words all that is involved in the production of material goods, is referred to as the *productive forces*, of which the most important is man himself, possessed of knowledge and skills, labour qualifications. Without man the most highly perfected, highly developed technology is dead and can produce nothing. Even modern automated systems work in accordance with the programme fed in by men and under their close control and guidance.

Men cannot produce as isolated individuals, but only communally. Of determining significance in this is the form of ownership of the *means of production—technology, industrial premises, transport, raw materials—all that is necessary for production*. If all of this is under collective ownership, then the relations between men are relations of equality and freedom from exploitation. If, however, the means of production belong to only one group (class) of the population, and the other is deprived of ownership, the resultant relations are such that one class has the possibility of enslaving the other, of living and growing rich at the cost of the other. From this spring specific forms of distributing the material goods and specific forms of organising society, when the class of owners, with the help of the state (the law, the army, the police, prisons, etc.) also oppresses the workers politically. Thus the form of ownership of the means of production lies at the heart of the relations that develop between men in the production process—the *production relations*.

The productive forces and the production relations together form the *mode of production*. Slave-owning, feudal and bourgeois forms of ownership are terms describing the corresponding exploiter modes of production and the relations between the basic classes—slaves and slave-owners, serfs and feudal lords, proletarians and bourgeois.

If we have understood the nature of the production relations dominant in any given society, and even more importantly, the property relations, then it is relatively easy to recognise the nature of all the other social institutions—political, juridical, ideological and religious. They rise above the production relations as the *superstructure* above its foundation, its *base*, are determined by this base and, in turn, act upon it.

It must be emphasised at this point that these views of

society advanced by Marx and Engels are consistently materialist. The productive forces are, naturally, material. The production relations are also material, as they exist independently of the awareness of men, that is, objectively. The mode of production, which unites the productive forces and the production relations, is also material. It determines the ideological, political and other life of society. Marx writes: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness."¹

The mode of production, speaking figuratively, constitutes the skeleton of society, skeleton that is given flesh and blood by all the other social phenomena, relations and institutions. All of this constitutes a living whole, a particular social system, a *particular socio-economic formation*.

There are five such formations in history—primitive communal society, slave-owning, feudal, bourgeois (capitalist) and finally the communist social formation, the first phase of which—socialism—was first established in the USSR and then in a number of other countries.

How does the transition from one socio-economic formation to another occur? What are the inner causes?

Marx gave clear and precise answers to these questions. The main cause of the development of society from one formation to another is the inter-relations between the productive forces and the production relations. At a certain point in their development, the productive forces start to come into conflict with the production relations to which they previously corresponded but which they have now superseded. The old forms of ownership, on which are based specific classes and their particular interests, begin to act as a brake on the further growth of production. "Then," writes Marx, "begins an era of social revolution."² The revolution snaps the chains of the previous relations and establishes a new form of ownership, together with a new socio-economic formation.

This is what happened, for example, with feudal relations in a number of countries in Western Europe in the

¹ K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, p. 21.

² *Ibid.*

eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The feudal order was holding back the development of industry and it was swept away in the course of popular revolutionary movements and social changes. This is what happened in Russia when, as a result of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the land was given to the peasants, and the factories to the workers and the economy developed at an unprecedented rate.

Social revolution, having established new production relations—bourgeois, for example, replacing feudal—creates the need for a corresponding restructuring of the political, ideological and other institutions. It must be noted, however, that the ideology of that class which will become the ruling class in the new society, rises and develops within the framework of the old society, takes active part in the criticism of the outdated order and prepares public opinion for the necessity of revolutionary changes.

On the basis of these and other factors, the founders of Marxism always emphasised not only the conditioning of the superstructure by the base, but also the effect of the superstructure, in its turn, upon the base. "Political, legal, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, and other development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic basis. One must not think that the economic situation is *cause*, and *solely active*, whereas everything else is only passive effect. On the contrary, interaction takes place on the basis of economic necessity, which *ultimately* always asserts itself."¹

A characteristic feature of bourgeois ideologists, then as now, was overemphasis on one or other single factor in social development to the detriment of another: either ideas and ideals, or technology and the organisation of production, or the level of national income and the production of material goods. In contrast to these one-sided and therefore unscientific theories, Marxism-Leninism bases itself upon an analysis of the inter-relationship of all aspects of social life while singling out in this inter-relationship one main,

¹ "Engels to W. Borgius in Breslau, London, January 25, 1894" in: Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, pp. 441-42.

determining and leading force—the mode of the production of material goods.

Marxism-Leninism always sees behind the economic, social, political processes living people, classes with their interests, requirements, and the aims they set themselves, with their level of culture and education. People are the creators of their own history. In the process of their activity they transform nature, society and themselves. The fact that society does not develop chaotically, arbitrarily, but in accord with immutable laws, does not lessen but, on the contrary, vividly demonstrates the role of the popular masses as the creators of history. They create history in two ways: they create and multiply all the material, intellectual and cultural values and, by their revolutionary struggle, overthrow outdated social relationships and establish new, more progressive ones.

Types of Socio-Economic Formation

As Marx and Engels noted, men are distinguished from humanoid apes—their nearest relatives in the animal kingdom—by the ability to work and to fashion tools. It took our remote ancestors millions of years to learn how to fashion and use the first simple tools from fragments of stone, animal and fish bones. With the appearance of these first work implements, the hand of man perfected itself in the process of carrying out various work processes, which in turn allowed these processes to be improved and developed. Work also stimulated the intellectual capacity of man: the repetition of work processes fixed them gradually into human awareness, making it possible for them to be deliberately reproduced. Man first mentally performs an operation he will then perform in practice and visualises in advance the result of the process. The ability to formulate thought—language—developed simultaneously and was essential both for the development of men's intellectual abilities and for their joint labour.

In *primitive society*, labour had from the very beginning a collective character. People lived in tribes and worked together to build their dwellings, fashion clothing and tools, and to hunt. With the passage of time men, in addi-

tion to gathering and hunting, also began to engage in tilling the land and breeding animals. However, for many centuries their implements remained at a primitive level.

It was only by uniting together in large collectives—communities—that men could withstand natural calamity and predators, and could ensure their own security and sustenance. The produce obtained was divided equally, but was barely adequate for survival. Private property did not exist—indeed there was little to own, for there was no surplus of produce. They hunted and worked, old and young, to the utmost of their strength, and therefore there was no room for the exploitation of man by man. The possibility of exploitation arose when work in the community had become more productive as the result of the improvement of their implements and the accumulation of work experience, knowledge and skill. The transition to metal implements represented an enormous leap in the development of the means of production. A surplus of produce is generated, which accumulates in the hands of individuals. Private property appears and the community starts to differentiate out into rich and poor, and to break up.

With the rise of private property are formed the first opposing classes—slaves and slave-owners. Mankind enters the *slave-owning socio-economic formation*.

Within this formation handicrafts, trade and shipping develop apace. The first cities are built and various states with different forms of government are established to preserve and defend the rights of the slave-owners and suppress slave revolts. The army comes into being.

The slave was owned completely by his lord, who had full rights over his life and labour, giving the slave just sufficient out of the produce to enable him to live and work. The slave-owning system reached its highest development in ancient Rome, but the passage of time revealed its limitations. The slave had no interest in the results of his labour and often rose up against his enslaver. Slave revolts flared up in first one and then another part of the huge Roman Empire, which accelerated the collapse of the economically exhausted slave-owning system.

The slave-owning socio-economic formation was replaced by the *feudal* formation. Here the ruling class was the feudal lords, the owners of huge landed estates, castles and

peasant serfs. The religious hierarchy, who owned large tracts of fertile land, were also feudal lords. Supreme power was wielded by sovereign rulers, the kings.

The peasants belonged completely to their masters. However, they had more independence than slaves, possessing certain property (dwelling, draft animals, implements). The greater part of the time they worked for the feudal lord, and the lesser part of the time for themselves. Such an order, in comparison with the slave-owning mode of production, created better opportunities for the development of the productive forces. The peasants had a greater interest in increasing labour productivity and in improving work implements. However, the lion's share of the revenue went to the landowner, the church and the king.

Under feudalism the development of the productive forces continued: new tools were invented, craftsmanship was perfected and trade grew. The latter was given a powerful stimulus following the great geographical discoveries of the 15th-16th centuries (the discovery of America, and the sea route to India). An international market began to form and the demand for handicraft products increased. Large-scale manufacture made its appearance, with craftsmen joining together in large collectives and engaged in ever-more specialised work. The craftsman gradually became a worker and the owners of the workshops became the bourgeois.

The growth of industry increased the demand for manpower. Feudal relations became a brake on the further development of the productive forces and they were destroyed by bourgeois revolutions. This created the conditions for the establishment of the *capitalist socio-economic formation*, in which the private ownership by the capitalists of factories, plants, railways, banks, etc., predominates.

This period saw the entry into the historical arena of two main opposing classes—the bourgeois and the proletarian. The working class grows, gathers strength, rallies and organises itself for its struggle against the bourgeoisie, for the revolutionary overthrow of a world of exploitation and injustice and the building of a new, communist society.

Thus we see that *the replacement of one socio-economic formation by another on the basis of the development of material production and the class struggle of the exploited against the exploiters is the law governing the whole of*

history up to this point. The transition from one social formation to another is usually accomplished by revolution. Just as the slave-owning society inevitably gave way to the feudal society, and feudal society gave way to capitalist society, so capitalism as a socio-economic formation, is compelled to give way to communism.

The materialist concept of history developed by Marx and Engels, which produced a revolution in the view of society and is its only scientific explanation, serves as the reliable guide of the working class in its struggle for liberation, helps it to concentrate all its forces in order to accelerate the march of history and hasten on the inevitable establishment of a society of free and equal workers who collectively own and control the means of production.

The communist formation foreseen by Marx and Engels will differ from all other formations in that men will then, for the first time, become the conscious rather than the blind creators of their own history. The conflict of various antagonistic forces, interests and aspirations will be replaced by the unity of basic aims, by human understanding of the laws of social development and, on the basis of these laws, the planned and conscious management of society.

Naturally, this will not put an end to contradictions between the productive forces and the production relations, but, as there will be no classes with a vested interest in the preservation of the old order, such contradictions will be resolved by the conscious activity of a society, which will not allow situations of sharp conflict. Economic relations, the managerial-organisational activity of society will be able to improve together with the development of the productive forces.

For Marx and Engels, all previous socio-economic formations represented the pre-history of human society. Its true history begins with *the first phase of the communist formation—with socialism.*

In his writings, Lenin provided a profound evaluation of the revolution brought about by Marx and Engels in views of society. In particular he emphasised that the classics of Marxism based themselves on preceding philosophical materialism, which they reworked and developed, enriching it with the discoveries made by German classical philosophy, and especially dialectics, that is, the theory of develop-

ment, in its fullest, most profound and comprehensive form.

In developing philosophical materialism Marx, as Lenin noted, took it to its ultimate conclusion and extended it to the concept of human society. The creation of historical materialism was a major achievement in scientific thought. The chaos and arbitrariness that had previously dominated in views of history was replaced by a consistent and integrated scientific theory revealing how one form of social life develops into another, more advanced form thanks to the growth of the productive forces.

"Marx's philosophy", wrote Lenin, "is a consummate philosophical materialism which has provided mankind, and especially the working class, with powerful instruments of knowledge."¹

¹ V. I. Lenin, "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 25.

IV. *Capital* —the Most Fearful Missile Hurlled at the Head of the Bourgeoisie

Life in England.

The Study by Marx of Economic Problems and His Work on *Capital*

Following the suppression of the revolutions of 1848 and 1849 in France and Germany, Marx and Engels were obliged to emigrate to England. Here, where capitalism had acquired its most developed and mature form, Marx elaborated his scientific politico-economic theory and wrote his classic work—*Capital*.

For the emigre revolutionaries from the continent, England was a political refuge, but it imprisoned them in poverty. Engels was obliged to take work as a clerk at a modest salary in the firm of his father and his partner in Manchester in order to help support Marx and his family. This "commercial servitude" lasted 12 years. Marx, who had put all his money in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* found himself penniless in London. Constant deprivation, bad living conditions, the lack of money to pay for medical treatment and medicines, led to the death of four of his children in early childhood. Only three daughters survived—Jenny, Laura and Eleanor. Their poverty was so extreme that when one child died in 1852 the family did not even have the means to pay for the burial.

Marx was compelled to set aside his scientific studies and earn a living. For many years he worked from morning till night on articles for the American newspaper *New York Daily Tribune* (two articles every week!). However, even this modest income was irregular. Marx was therefore fully justified in complaining that his newspaper work paid him worse than any junior reporter.

It was at this time that Marx decided to engage upon a comprehensive study of the laws governing the formation

and development of capitalist society. However, he could only devote snatches of time to this work, and the possibility of devoting himself to it entirely even for a few months, appeared an impossible dream.

Years passed, but poverty continued to haunt Marx and his family. In 1861 Marx lost his job with the newspaper, his main source of income. Sometimes he did not leave his room for weeks as his clothing had been pawned. Putting aside his economic calculations for *Capital* he calculated an unending list of debts to the baker, the butcher and the landlord. A gentle and loving father, Marx was particularly concerned about the **tragic** effects of poverty upon his daughters; there were times when they had no clothing in which to go to school.

However, it would be wrong to paint a wholly black picture of Marx's life in London. Marx was not only able to bear the misfortunes of life with stoic fortitude but was also able to rejoice whenever the slightest occasion presented itself. In particular the family was cheered by any news of revolutionary events, of workers' victories and upheavals in the capitalist system. At moments such as these Marx worked with redoubled **energy**—during the day to earn a living and at night to complete his work on political economy.

With his knowledge and talent, Marx could have easily provided his family with that comfortable life enjoyed by those scholars who served the bourgeoisie. However, Marx believed that to turn science into a means of earning money was as disreputable as the deliberate distortion of scientific truths.

Despite all these difficulties, Marx managed to do a great deal of fruitful work. He spent whole days in the British Museum Library. His interests were extraordinarily wide-ranging—a generalisation of the revolutionary battles of the past, a study of the achievements of the natural sciences, the development of Eastern civilisations, the economy and history of the Slavs, aesthetics, literature. However, his main interest remained a comprehensive analysis of the economic basis of bourgeois society, its mechanism, the laws governing its development and the contradictions taking it inevitably to its death. He saw London, the capital of the most developed country of the capitalist world, as

"a convenient vantage point for the observation of bourgeois society",¹ and strove to avail himself of the opportunity, studying the wealth of information on economics, finance, banking, colonial operations, etc., that poured into the city. Here he was also able to acquaint himself with the latest technical developments and the technology involved in the industrial production process.

Marx subjected the works of any political economist of any note to a thorough critical analysis, and in particular the works of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, representatives of English bourgeois political economy. Here he found much of value, but also revealed the limitations of their views, which were still based on the concept of the eternity and immutability of capitalist social relations.

In 1857 Marx returned to the economic research that he had started immediately upon arriving in London, and in six months completed a large manuscript of one thousand pages. The first version already contained the basic ideas of *Capital*, but he decided to publish only a small portion of the manuscript, which came out in 1859 under the title "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy".

In preparing the continuation of this work for print, Marx felt the need to revise much of what he had written. Between 1861 and 1863 he wrote a manuscript four times larger than the original, yet did not publish one line. This indefatigable labourer discovered gaps in his knowledge and immersed himself once more in research in the British Museum. Between 1863 and 1865 yet another preparatory and unpublished version of *Capital* was written.

At last, on 16 August, 1867, at two o'clock at night, Marx finished "licking into shape" the first volume of *Capital*, and putting aside the last page of the proof, immediately wrote to Engels:

"Dear Fred,

"... So *this volume is finished*. It was thanks to *you* alone that this became possible. Without your self-sacrifice for me I could never possibly have done the enormous work for the three volumes. I embrace you, full of **thanks!**"²

¹ K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, p. 22.

² "Marx to Engels in Manchester (London), August 16, 1867, 2 o'clock at night" in: Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 180.

Nor was this an exaggeration. Without the constant material and moral support of Engels, the vast work of Marx would never have been completed. For many years they lived in different cities—London and Manchester—but this did not prevent their close association. They corresponded constantly. Marx was full of admiration for the genius of Engels, his wide-ranging knowledge and the clarity and boldness of his thought. He discussed with Engels all the difficult questions that arose during his work on *Capital*, asked his assistance in clarifying those problems in which he did not feel sufficiently competent, and received detailed explanations.

Marx also had another indefatigable assistant in his wife Jenny. Despite all the problems they faced, particularly during their stay in London, they were a happy and harmonious couple. The burden of family concerns did not prevent Jenny from sharing in the scientific and political work of her husband. For many years she was his irreplaceable secretary, copying out his writings and even acting as his "courier" in party matters.

Jenny also made her own contribution to *Capital*. She could truly say: "...Never has a book been written in such difficult conditions, and I could write a confidential history of its composition that would reveal innumerable secret cares, anxieties and sufferings."¹

The creation of *Capital* represented a truly scientific and human exploit on the part of Marx. In his own words, "It is certainly the most fearful missile that has so far been hurled at the head of the bourgeoisie (the landowners included)."

The Secret of Capitalist Exploitation and the Way of Removing It

The significance of *Capital* as the ideological weapon of the working class in its struggle for liberation resides mainly in the fact that in this work Marx revealed by means of scientific analysis the hidden mechanism of surplus value

¹ "Jenny Marx an Ludwig Kugelmann in Hannover, London, 24 Dezember 1867" in: K. Marx, F. Engels. *Werke*, Bd. 31, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1965, S. 596,

and capitalist exploitation, tearing aside the veil that concealed the source of capitalist wealth. The relationship between worker and manufacturer appeared to be eminently rational. The worker sold his labour, the manufacturer paid him. It was on his—the manufacturer's—skill, labour and means of production that the success of the enterprise and its merited reward, increased profit, apparently depended. Everything seemed to be done "for the common good and in the common interest". The capitalist and the worker appeared as equal owners and exchanged labour for pay.

Marx showed that this appearance hid a very different reality. In bourgeois society material and spiritual goods compose wealth as *commodities* which, apart from their ability to satisfy certain needs (*use-value*) have *exchange-value*, that is, the social labour expended in their production.

The means of production—the tools, machines, mechanisms, etc.—cannot themselves produce an increase in value. They constitute materialised labour, that is, value, and the worker merely transfers this value onto the product in the course of his productive activity. Thus, working at the lathe, the worker produces new items. The value of those items includes the value of the raw materials used, and the value of the tools used, i.e. the lathe (distributed over the period of its use). By his work, the lathe operator simply transfers this value onto the finished product. Therefore, if it is not the means of production that generate a new value, the owner of these means—the capitalist, the entrepreneur—has no right to appropriate it.

Together with this, Marx showed that the worker was not, in fact, selling his labour, but his *labour-power*, that is his *capacity for work*. In bourgeois society, this capacity for work is a commodity that has an exchange-value, which is expressed in his wages, and also a use-value, which is the ability to create a greater value than its own, that is, to create surplus value. In other words, the proletarian works only part of his working day (half or less) to cover the cost of his basic needs—food, clothing, housing, etc. For this part of the day, for this necessary labour, he is paid his wages. The remaining part of the working day he works for the capitalist gratis. This surplus labour creates surplus value.

Marx depicts the full irony of the situation. This is the equitable agreement between the worker and the manufacturer. "He, who before was the money-owner, now strides in front as the capitalist; the possessor of labour-power follows as his labourer. The one with an air of importance, smirking, intent on business; the other, timid and holding back, like one who is bringing his own hide to market and has nothing to expect but—a hiding."¹

It follows that the consuming interest of the capitalist is to change the relation between necessary labour and surplus labour to his own advantage. How can this be done? There are two ways: either by extending the working day and raising the intensity of labour, or by technological improvement. In the first stages of capitalist production the first method predominates: the working day was extended to 12, or even 16 hours. However, there are limits to the possible extension of the working day. Moreover, a long working day causes a fall in labour productivity, and the workers themselves fight to have the working day reduced. The transition to the second method follows inevitably: the technology is perfected, labour organisation improved and other methods of more intensive exploitation of the workers are devised. The labour of the worker becomes more productive, and in 8 hours he creates more surplus value than he created previously in 12 hours.

Machines, as Marx showed, in no way ease the labour of the worker under the capitalist system. On the contrary, they are used to intensify the oppression of the working class. The worker is not only economically dependent on the manufacturer, but in the very process of production is compelled to subordinate himself to the rhythm, speed and nature of the operation as dictated by the machine. Marx labelled this technological bondage. The introduction of machines and their improvement forces some of the workers into unemployment, into the constantly growing reserve army of labour.

In Volume I of *Capital*, Marx exposes one more current bourgeois myth serving to conceal the source of capital. According to this myth, the capitalist is the benefactor of

the working class and the whole of society, for, by his labour, thrift and prudence (or that of his forebears), he accumulated the original capital, and now—so runs the myth—he "feeds" the workers, giving them the possibility to work, to earn a living.

Marx revealed the true nature of the primitive accumulation of capital on the basis of the history of England. He showed that it had been a crude and violent process of deliberately bankrupting the small and medium peasants and driving the farmers from their land. The accumulation of wealth had also been achieved by the pillage of colonies.

"... Capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt."¹ Therefore the class of capitalists can produce no moral justification in this respect. On the contrary, the further development of capitalism leads inevitably to the expropriation of the capitalist himself.

At the end of Volume I of *Capital*, Marx sums up his analysis of the laws governing the development of capitalist production and shows the inevitability of the collapse of the bourgeois exploiter system.

As capitalism develops, capital is increasingly concentrated, that is, increasing wealth accumulates in the hands of a small number of millionaires. At the other end of the scale there is a growing army of disinherited and exploited, and members of other social strata are increasingly drawn into the pool of hired labourers. Thus "... 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."²

The development of large-scale production prepares the material base for the new society, for it is a process of the socialisation of production via the concentration and corporatisation of production, the drawing of all the peoples of the world into a world market system, a process of the internationalisation of economic relations and the development of science and communications.

Production acquires an increasingly *social character*, but *the method of appropriation* remains the same—*private-*

¹ K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 172.

¹ K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 712.

² *Ibid.*, p. 715.

capitalist. This is the main contradiction of capitalist society, and one that is continually aggravated. Therefore, Marx concludes, "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."¹ The subsequent development of capitalism fully confirmed this brilliant scientific prognosis advanced by Marx.

Capital contains not only a description of the economic laws governing the development of society, but also a further substantiation of the materialist concept of history.

Marx, as we have seen, consistently applied the concept of materialism to the historical development of society. Since the writing of *Capital*, the materialist concept of history had, in the words of Lenin, become a proven scientific theory.

Why did *Capital* play such an important role in confirming the materialist concept of history, that is, historical materialism?

In *Capital*, Marx, on the basis of a detailed study of immense factual data, provided an exhaustive analysis of the laws governing the functioning and development of one of the socio-economic formations—capitalism. He showed the development of the commodity organisation of the economy and how it becomes capitalist, creating the antagonistic classes of bourgeois and proletarians, how the capitalist economy raises the productivity of social labour and thus introduces that element which is in irreconcilable contradiction with the basis of the capitalist organisation itself. Marx was able to perceive the development of society as a natural-historical process, giving a comprehensive analysis of the laws of its development with the accuracy of a natural scientist. "Just as Darwin put an end to the view of animal and plant species being unconnected, fortuitous, 'created by God' and immutable, and was the first to put biology on an absolutely scientific basis by establishing the mutability and the succession of species," Lenin wrote, "so Marx put an end to the view of society being a mechanical aggregation of individuals which allows of all sorts of

modification at the will of the authorities (or, if you like, at the will of society and the government) and which emerges and changes casually, and was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis by establishing the concept of the economic formation of society as the sum-total of given production relations, by establishing the fact that the development of such formations is a process of natural history."¹

Thus in the process of a scrupulous economic analysis of capitalist production, the materialist concept of history developed by Marx finds its completion.

Marx's investigation into the bourgeois mode of production is carried out in *Capital* on the basis of dialectical materialism, the core of Marxist philosophy. Marx himself never describes this method. It is shown in action, in its practical application, in the analysis of the economic system of bourgeois society. In reading *Capital* we are able to see how Marx applies this method. The careful reader is simultaneously learning the art of applying the dialectical materialist method in studying society and in analysing one or other social phenomenon.

Unlike Hegel, Marx does not refer to reality as "dialectic diagrams", but examines the economic processes themselves, their formation, operation, and various trends, bringing out the inner logic of the movement of the economic organism, which occurs through the development of contradictions and their conversion into their opposites, that is, bringing out the dialectic of the object of research.

In the theoretical reconstruction of the object of investigation, Marx provides a materialist reformulation of the dialectical method, which therefore in its essence "is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite!"²

The bourgeois intellectual world greeted the publication of Volume I of *Capital* with grave-like silence. "A conspiracy of silence" seemed to them the best method of attack against this genial work. However, it proved impossible to remain silent for long, and all the more so as the size of

¹ V. I. Lenin, "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1960, p. 142.

² K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, p. 29.

¹ K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 715,

its editions was growing and it was appearing in translation in a number of countries.

After the publication of Volume I, Marx continued work on the succeeding volumes, which had already been written in manuscript form. However, he never completed this work. Much of his time was devoted to leading the First International, and his health deteriorated sharply. The second and third volumes of *Capital* were prepared for print and published by Engels after the death of Marx. Putting aside his own manuscript, *Dialectics of Nature*, which was never to be completed, Engels worked on his friend's manuscripts, completing this enormous task only a few months before his own death—a feat achieved in the name of friendship, science, in the interests of the international workers' movement. *Capital* is the fruit of the labour of two brilliant minds.

Russian revolutionaries became familiar with *Capital*, thus helping the spread of Marxist ideas in Russia and the formation of the first Marxist circles. The League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, founded by Lenin, gave much attention to studying this work. In his main economic works, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* and *Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin was giving direct continuation to *Capital*.

Lenin waged a resolute struggle against the falsification of the ideas contained in *Capital* by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois scholars, who, after first ignoring the book, had soon moved to malicious attacks upon it. The brunt of these attacks fell upon Marx's conclusions concerning the relentless aggravation of the contradictions of capitalist society, the inevitability of its collapse, the increase in the exploitation of the proletariat and its growing revolutionary role in contemporary society.

To oppose Marxism, there appeared, and still appear, concepts of a peaceful "transformation" of capitalism into socialism, the elimination of class contradictions between labour and capital and the "bourgeoisification" of the working class, etc. Marx's *Capital* is declared to be indeed a significant piece of scientific research, but valid only in its day and hopelessly out of date in the twentieth century.

History, however, has proved these critics wrong, for it was their theories and doctrines that proved outdated and

were invalidated. In the twentieth century the revolutionary movement has grown, gathered strength and developed in strict accord with Marxist theory. The economic law of modern society discovered by Marx revealed the movement of the whole of human civilisation towards a new epoch—the transition from capitalism to socialism and communism. The great ideas of Marx were turned into a reality by the establishment of the socialist system. This is the best memorial and tribute to the author of *Capital*.

Mankind had never known a book of such spiritual force that had such a powerful influence upon its future destiny.

V. The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science

The Precursors of Scientific Socialism

We have now examined the fundamental transformation in philosophy and political economy brought about by Marx and Engels. Let us now turn to socialism.

Scientific socialism (or, which means the same, scientific communism) has its direct theoretical origin in the theories of three great Utopian socialists of the nineteenth century: Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen. The founders of Marxism always paid due tribute to the Utopian socialists, but also revealed the historical and class limitations of their theories.

The first Utopian philosophies emerged as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century. "Utopia" was the name given by Thomas More to the promised land described in his book published in England in 1516. Literally, the word "utopia" means a place that does not exist, a fantasy, an invention, a dream. In his book, Thomas More gave expression to popular dreams of a just social order free from private property and exploitation.

Not long thereafter, in Italy, the Dominican monk Tommaso Campanella, thrown into prison by the inquisition, created his version of the ideal society in his book *City of the Sun*, in which the main idea is also the beneficent nature of social property.

The next representatives of Utopian socialism, Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen, elaborated their theories when the proletariat had already emerged onto the historical scene and when bourgeois society was already beginning to reveal its contradictions and antagonisms. In their philosophy Utopian socialism reaches its highest development. Let us briefly examine their work.

Claude Henri Saint-Simon (1760-1825) lived during an exceptionally eventful period in French history. He witnessed the Great French Revolution, the empire of Napoleon and the subsequent restoration of the Bourbons. The bourgeois revolution had occurred in France, but society had failed to attain the promised brotherhood, equality and happiness. The beginning of the nineteenth century brought the workers new forms of exploitation, social oppression and misery. The growing disillusionment in bourgeois reality, the still vague dreams of the working people about a different, a just future, led Saint-Simon to his Utopian philosophy. A descendant of Charlemagne and one of the richest men in the period of the Directory, Saint-Simon was, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, an impoverished clerk in a pawnshop and for a time even lived under the protection of a former servant. A life full of reverses had not broken the spirit of this great man, who dedicated all his strength to the search for a new theory which would serve as the guide for a social transformation of society to the benefit of mankind.

Not one of the essays written by Saint-Simon constitutes a whole, and even all taken together they do not constitute anything resembling a consistent theory. For the most part his writings are rough drafts of various socio-political projects, notes, letters, extracts and individual pamphlets, sometimes even contradicting each other. However, all his writings are imbued with the idea of restructuring society, of building a social order such that it would ensure an improvement in the fate of that class which has no other means of existence except its own hands.

Saint-Simon believed that there was a regular succession of stages in the development of society, each of which initially played a progressive role, but which then became obsolete. Within it developed the new stage, which finally replaced the previous, now outdated and reactionary stage.

Criticising his contemporary world, Saint-Simon sought a way out in the creation of a new, more just social order. He believed that in the new society associations of manufacturers would regulate economic life according to a unified plan and thus eliminate industrial anarchy. Each capitalist would engage in perfecting production and extending his enterprises, which would, Saint-Simon believed, in-

crease the volume of work and abolish unemployment, ensuring the well-being of the workers. Thus, according to Saint-Simon, the interests of the entrepreneurs and the workers coincide and this will stimulate the development of the economy and of science and improve the level of moral practice.

Such concepts as the coincidence of the interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, their unification into one class, and hopes that the exploiters will show concern for the exploited are, of course, illusions explained by the conditions in which Saint-Simon lived and worked. The antagonism between labour and capital had not yet manifested itself. The bourgeoisie was still, on the whole, playing a progressive role in the struggle against the vestiges of feudalism and in the organisation of production, and the proletariat had not yet displayed any political activity and independence—this it would do later.

The philosophy of Charles Fourier (1772-1837) is marked mainly by a sharp and profound criticism of the bourgeois system and a penetrating portrayal of its flaws. Fourier mercilessly exposed the entire material and moral poverty of the bourgeois world, revealing what, in fact, had resulted from the bourgeois ideologists' theories of the capitalist society as "the rule of reason". He mocked the petty trading spirit which reigned in bourgeois France and dominated all aspects of life, even relations between the sexes. He was the author of the concept that in any society the degree of female emancipation is the natural measure of all freedom.

The greatness of Fourier was most clearly revealed in his sense of history and the dialectic of his thought. Like Saint-Simon, he believed that society developed within history and passed through specific periods (savagery, barbarism, patriarchy, civilisation). Each stage had a rise and a fall, its apogee and its nadir. The higher stage contains certain elements of the preceding stages. Social phenomena are pregnant with contradictions and, for example, in the civilised stage (i.e., in bourgeois society) "poverty is born of abundance". Engels noted the dialectic of Fourier's thinking.

Fourier therefore came to the conclusion that bourgeois society is also transient, as were the preceding stages, and will be compelled to give way to a future harmonious so-

ciety. He conceived of this future society as composed of cells, associations or phalanxes. A phalanx is a production-consumer association comprising 1,600-2,000 members. In this association, labour is engaged in according to the natural bent of the individual and the individual interests of each member of the phalanx fuse with the interests of society. Fourier also tries to draw the capitalist into the phalanx, together with his capital. Within the phalanx, each member finds his happiness according to his feelings and inclinations. Class enmity, Fourier proposes, dies away in an atmosphere of universal harmony. The entire social income of the phalanx is divided into three parts: capital—4/12, talent—from 2/12 to 3/12, labour—from 5/12 to 6/12. Great attention is also paid to the upbringing of children.

Thus the ideal society of Fourier is a long way from genuine socialism, for it retains private property and inequality.

Fourier had a large number of followers and some of them attempted to set up phalanx communities on the basis of Fourier's ideas. However, these attempts proved unsuccessful.

Robert Owen (1771-1858) was one of those Utopian socialists who were concerned mainly with the practical implementation of the theory. He saw the purpose of his life and activity not in the elaboration of the ideals of the future but rather in practical activity directed at improving the position of the workers and their conditions of work and life. Owen himself was a manufacturer, the owner of a factory in New Lanark (Scotland). He decided to attempt an unprecedented experiment—introducing more humane conditions for the workers, reducing the working day, setting up nurseries for the children and raising wages. At first the experiment was successful and labour productivity rose at the factory. Drunkenness, poverty and crime disappeared from the community.

Imbued with socialist ideas on the corrupting influence of private property and its enslaving power, and believing that the workers should own the fruits of their own labour, Owen drew up a plan for a communist colony, elaborated it in detail and attempted to organise such colonies in America, sinking all he possessed into them. However, the projects failed and Owen died in poverty. It was, indeed,

naive to believe that a bourgeois society would permit socialist cells to live within its own body.

Nonetheless, Owen's socialism played a positive role in the enlightenment and organisation of the English working class, stimulating the development of the trade-union and co-operative movement.

The Russian revolutionary democrats Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov occupy a special place in the development of the ideas of Utopian socialism. They proceeded from the conviction that unless tsardom was overthrown and serfdom abolished it was pointless to think of socialism, and they sought to enlighten the people so as to prepare them for revolution.

The first to attempt to give a detailed theoretical answer to the question of the future prospects of socialism in Russia was Herzen. He based himself on the belief that Russia could achieve the transition from a feudal-monarchical to a socialist system directly, avoiding capitalism, placing his hopes on the peasant commune, which he saw as a ready-made socialist cell. Communal ownership of land and a communal way of life had, in Herzen's opinion, all but prepared the Russian peasant to be a member of a socialist society. This, of course, was an illusion, but a perfectly comprehensible one in the conditions existing in Russia in the 1860s. The revolutionary mood of the peasants had intensified both before and during the unjust land reform carried through by the tsarist government. Herzen's views also contained certain liberal tendencies.

In contrast to Herzen Chernyshevsky was a more consistent and decisive revolutionary. Describing his views, Lenin wrote: "...Chernyshevsky, who, after Herzen, developed the Narodnik views, made a great stride forward as compared with Herzen. Chernyshevsky was a far more consistent and militant democrat, his writings breathing the spirit of the class struggle... He was a remarkably profound critic of capitalism despite his Utopian socialism."¹

Chernyshevsky also placed his hopes on the peasant commune, which in his view, would ease the path to socialism. In addition, he developed a number of accurate propositions

¹ V. I. Lenin, "From the History of the Workers' Press in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 246.

concerning the structure of the future socialist society and showed the economic inevitability of a transition to socialism.

The revolutionary democrats greatly influenced the revolutionary Narodniks, and the young Lenin read their works. However they, like all the Utopian socialists, failed to perceive the world-historic role of the proletariat as a force that would revolutionise the world.

Depicting the contradictions in the initial period of the capitalist system, the Utopian socialists expressed the mood and aspirations of the oppressed masses. In the main, pre-Marxian socialists called for the exploitation of man by man to be replaced by co-operation, social antagonism and class struggle by communal life and collective creativity, and private property by collective property. The representatives of nineteenth-century utopian socialism (from Saint-Simon to Herzen and Chernyshevsky) subjected capitalism to devastating criticism as a system that did not correspond to human needs, as a system that had only one purpose—profit for the capitalist—which doomed the overwhelming majority of mankind to oppression and misery.

In their writings the utopian socialists depicted communism, the society of the future, with enormous enthusiasm and artistic power. They showed the members of communist society as possessed of great creative ability, and with a wide range of talents and gifts. The utopian socialists were themselves men of great education and humanism.

The main weakness of utopian socialism lay in the fact that not only was it unable to provide genuine slogans for the struggle and stimulate the workers to revolutionary creativity and revolutionary change, but was also incapable of grasping the essence of the slavery of hired labour, revealing the laws of development of both feudalism and capitalism and indicating the forces within the exploiter society itself that were capable of overthrowing the capitalist system.

The utopian socialists, on the whole, did not believe in the revolutionary nature of the working masses whose liberation they sought. They wished to change society by peaceful means, by reforms, which, according to the majority of Utopian socialists, were to be carried through by the ruling classes themselves.

Marx and Engels noted that "the proletariat, as yet in its infancy, offers to them (utopian socialists—*Tr.*) the spectacle of a class without any historical initiative or any independent political movement".¹ As the utopian socialists cannot find as yet any material conditions for the liberation of the proletariat, they see their main task as propagating their plans for the transformation of society.

While commenting on these and other weaknesses, the classics of Marxism-Leninism always emphasised the historical significance of the utopian socialists and pointed out that Marxism is the lawful inheritor of their ideas. "...German theoretical socialism," wrote Engels, "...rests on the shoulders of Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen—three men ... whose genius anticipated innumerable things the correctness of which is now being scientifically proved by us..."²

A study of the legacy of the utopian socialists is therefore an essential condition of any profound understanding of the formulation of the ideas of scientific socialism.

Scientific Socialism

Utopian socialism criticised capitalist society, condemned it, cursed it, dreamt of its abolition and the establishment of a better system and attempted to convince the rich of the immorality of exploitation.

However, to repeat, utopian socialism could find no solution, was unable to explain the essence of the slavery of hired labour under capitalism or discover the laws of its development, could not identify that social force which was capable of being the creator of a new society. This was achieved by scientific socialism as founded by Marx and Engels and further developed in new historical conditions by Lenin.

In his work *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, Engels described scientific socialism as "the theoretical expression

of the proletarian movement", and saw its task as being to investigate the historical conditions and nature of the proletarian revolution and explain to the proletariat "a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish".¹ In other words, it is the science of class struggle and socialist revolution, of the socio-political laws of the building of socialism and communism and of the world revolutionary process as a whole. Scientific socialism is based on the philosophical and politico-economic aspects of Marxism, to which it is organically linked.

Scientific socialism differs from the preceding socialism as any exact science differs from vague dreams, fantasies and aspirations. The Utopians proceeded from the false belief that one must first think up an ideal society and then convince others of its advantages. Marx and Engels studied the actual reality of the bourgeois world and saw in the working class that force which was called upon to destroy that world and raise on its ruins a new socialist society.

Fundamental to the theory of scientific socialism is the doctrine of class struggle as the driving force behind the development of societies with antagonistic classes. Classes and class struggle were known to scholars before Marx. French historians wrote of it at the beginning of the nineteenth century. All that was positive in the theories of previous thinkers about classes and class struggle was critically evaluated, enriched and developed by Marx within the context of a proletarian world view.

What did this development consist in? Marx himself answered this question as follows: "What I did that was new was to demonstrate: (1) that the *existence of classes* is merely linked to *particular historical phases in the development of production*, (2) that class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, (3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*."²

These few terse lines contain the whole Marxist concept of class struggle.

¹ F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 346.

² "Marx to Joseph Weydemeyer in New York, London, March 5, 1852" in: Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 64

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 515.

² F. Engels, "Preface to *The Peasant War in Germany*" in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 169.

From the first thesis it follows that classes have not always existed but are the product of historical development, arose at specific stages in the social division of labour—the transition from primitive society to slave-owning society. Every antagonistic socio-economic formation has its own particular class structure, its *main* class opponents: slaves and slave-owners, serfs and feudal lords, workers and bourgeois.

Marx examines the history of class struggle against the background of the economic development of society and in connection with the transition from one socio-economic formation to another. The struggle itself, being the expression of specific economic interests, finally becomes mass popular upheavals, revolutions, which sweep away the outdated social institutions and order and become the transition to a new, more progressive socio-economic formation.

Social revolutions play an extremely progressive role in history, accelerating its development and rallying the exploited masses around the revolutionary class, stimulating their creative energy and directing it towards the building of a new social structure.

In the course of the development of society, the role of the masses as the creators of history grows. The more radical the social transformations to be carried through, the more furious is the opposition of the ruling classes and the more dynamic is the conscious revolutionary surge of the masses, the greater their selflessness, heroism and unity.

The numbers of those striving for revolution and opposing the handful of exploiters increase significantly under capitalism, together with their consciousness, organisation and conviction of the necessity and inevitability of revolutionary struggle against the capitalist class.

The proletariat, headed by its revolutionary and conscious vanguard, *the party*, expresses the interests of all the exploited under capitalism. The party unites and consolidates the masses, guides their actions, elaborates the aims and objectives of the struggle at each particular stage of historical development, defines the attitude towards other opposition parties and political groups. Marx and Engels laid down the basis of the teaching on the party of the working class, on its role in the revolutionary struggle, and this serves as the basis of the world communist movement to this

day. Marx and Engels believed that the recognition of the *necessity of establishing the power of the working class, the dictatorship of the proletariat*, was the main demand of the policy programme of the proletarian party.

Certain bourgeois ideologists and reformists attempt to present the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat as an incidental term torn out of the context of Marx's writings and not of the essence. This is, of course, a deliberate distortion of the views of the founders of Marxism. As early as in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels wrote clearly and unambiguously that "the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class", and that the proletariat uses its rule to make "despotic inroads" in bourgeois relations. This *is* the dictatorship of the proletariat in practice.

The dictatorship of the proletariat lay at the heart of the impassioned articles written by Marx and Engels in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. Their analysis of the revolutionary experience of 1848-1849, particularly in France, led them time and again to the same conclusion concerning the necessity of this dictatorship. His investigations into the economic laws of capitalist society also led Marx to the conclusion that the strong political power of the proletariat was essential to achieve the expropriation of the exploiters. This proposition was confirmed by the lessons of the Paris Commune. Finally, in 1875, in *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx declared that in the transitional period from capitalism to communism "the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*".¹

How, indeed, could it be otherwise? How can the working class oppose the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie who do not hesitate before ruthless and bloody action; how can it win and consolidate its rule without organising its own strong and active power? The teaching on the dictatorship of the proletariat follows from the very essence of the Marxist world outlook, from the scientific analysis of the specifics of the class struggle in capitalist society.

¹ K. Marx, "Marginal Notes to the Programme of the German Workers' Party" in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 26.

An integral part of this teaching is the thesis on the need to destroy the bourgeois state machine. "All revolutions perfected this machine instead of breaking it."¹ This thesis was first formulated by Marx in his work *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* published in 1852.

Lenin placed great importance on this Marxist thesis. He wrote: "In this remarkable argument Marxism takes a tremendous step forward compared with the *Communist Manifesto*. In the latter the question of the state is still treated in an extremely abstract manner, in the most general terms and expressions. In the above-quoted passage the question is treated in a concrete manner, and the conclusion is extremely precise, definite, practical and palpable: all previous revolutions perfected the state machine, whereas it must be broken, smashed.

"This conclusion is the chief and fundamental point in the Marxist theory of the state."²

In formulating the main tenets of the theory of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels always recognised the need to take into account the concrete historical situation and the specifics of the revolutionary situation in any country. They allowed, for example, the possibility of a peaceful revolution in those countries where the military-bureaucratic system had not been developed and where the proletariat could use parliamentary struggle to achieve its aims. This was the situation in England at the time.

Marx and Engels used a dialectics approach to the question of the main ally of the proletariat, the peasantry, showing how to recognise its dual nature and to distinguish between its reactionary and revolutionary elements. In their opinion, recognition by the peasants of their basic interests should lead the overwhelming majority to unite with the working class, to unity of action against capital, which offers them nothing but ruin. "Hence the peasants," wrote Marx, "find their natural ally and leader in the *urban proletariat*, whose task is the overthrow of the bourgeois or-

¹ K. Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979, p. 186.

² V. I. Lenin, "The State and Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 411.

der."¹ With the help of the broad masses of the peasants, the proletarian revolution "will obtain that chorus without which its solo becomes a swan song in all peasant countries".²

Marx and Engels clearly foresaw those tendencies which have openly revealed themselves today in modern developed capitalist countries in relation to the intelligentsia. Capital also turns the representatives of the intelligentsia into hired workers and extracts surplus value and profit not only from physical but also from intellectual labour. Capital does not create science but exploits it, and thus science becomes one of the basic driving forces of production. Consequently a process of differentiation takes place within the intelligentsia, dividing it into those who control capitalist production and those who sink to the position of skilled labourers. The leading, progressive section of the intelligentsia can and must join the cause of serving the proletariat and enlightening the working masses, take an active part in revolution and social construction.

In analysing the development of tendencies manifest in actual bourgeois society, the founders of Marxism observed with the accuracy of natural scientists the direction in which these tendencies would develop in the future. Here we find in their works far-seeing propositions concerning the future communist society.

According to Marx and Engels, the dictatorship of the proletariat is a particular form of state organisation which is essential for the suppression of hostile classes and groups and the solution of the creative task of building the new society. These tasks are crucial and will determine its future development, for their solution brings with it the withering away of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The victorious proletariat aims, in the course of social changes, not only to eliminate the exploiter classes, but also to remove class differences between the peasants and the workers, the main differences between the town and village, between physical and intellectual labour. During this long process of transformation, the proletariat, in removing itself as a par-

¹ K. Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 191.

² *Ibid.*, p. 193.

ticular class, frees the whole of society from class-social inequality. With the disappearance of classes, the state will also wither away.

The state, commented Lenin, describing the views of Marx and Engels, is "organised coercion".¹ It arose at a particular stage of social development, when society had split into classes and began to feel the need of a "power", standing seemingly above it and harmonising the various class interests. In fact, the state embodies the power of the ruling class. The ancient state was the apparatus used by the slave-owners to subordinate the slaves; the feudal state was the organ of the aristocracy and the church to subordinate the serfs. The bourgeois state, even in the form of a parliamentary republic, is the instrument used by the capitalists to exploit hired labour.

The main prerequisite of the withering away of the state is the disappearance of classes. In a classless society people gradually become accustomed to observing the rules of communal life and interference by the state in social relations becomes unnecessary. "...The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. The state is not 'abolished'. *It dies out.*"²

The abolition of class division is a complex and lengthy process. It starts in *the first phase of the communist socio-political formation* (the stage known as *socialism*), where, as a result of enormous economic, political and cultural changes the exploiter classes are eliminated and a new socio-class structure is formed. Socialist society is the society of the workers (industrial workers, peasants, and intelligentsia), and is governed according to the principle "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work". In the first phase of the new society the distribution of material and intellectual-cultural goods cannot be carried out in accord with the needs of each individual because of the insufficient level of development of the productive forces.

The second phase of the new society is *communism*, in which the distinction between physical and intellectual labour disappears. Work itself ceases to be merely a means

of livelihood and becomes a vital need. All members of society will be fully developed individuals, that is, developed intellectually, morally, aesthetically and physically. The all-round free development of each individual will become the main aim, the aim in itself, of society.

Communist society is a society of free individuals united together in a self-governing collective or association. This society organises production and consumption on a scientific basis, controls the economy using its knowledge of the economic laws, and plans its purposeful development for the benefit of all.

Communist society is "the humanity's leap from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom".¹ What is meant by "the kingdom of freedom"? It means that, firstly, men will consciously and purposefully develop their production to the benefit of all the members of society and, secondly, it also means that man "for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of nature. . ."²

A highly developed production process will ensure an abundance of material goods. "...Only then can ... society inscribe on its banner: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"³

As "the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement" (Engels), scientific communism develops together with the revolutionary movement, generalises its experience and is a powerful weapon in the hands of the working class, and all the working masses, in their struggle against imperialism and for peace, democracy and socialism.

¹ F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 344.

² *Ibid.*, p. 343.

³ K. Marx, "Marginal Notes to the Programme of the German Workers' Party" in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 19.

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 73.

² F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 341.

VI. At the Head of the International Proletarian Movement

Founders and Leaders of the First International

Marx and Engels were proletarian revolutionaries for whom science was not an end in itself but the intellectual tool of the working class. As we have already seen, scientific study and revolutionary-political activity were indissolubly linked together in their life and activity and constantly enriched each other.

In 1864, when his work on the first volume of *Capital* was drawing to an end, Marx interrupted that work in order to devote all his energies and time to the organisation of the First International, the International Working Men's Association.

The International originated at a meeting of worker and democratic organisations from a number of countries which took place in London on September 28, 1864. It was this meeting that adopted the decision to elaborate a draft General Rules of the International Working Men's Association. Marx considered the policy and institutional documents of the International to be of major importance.

The task of formulating these documents was extremely complex, for the aims and methods of the proletarian movement had to be formulated in such a way as to be accepted by various groups and movements striving for united action. At the same time, it was essential that no concessions be made with regard to the principles of scientific communism and that influential petty-bourgeois elements in the worker movement be prevented from acquiring a foothold in the International.

The situation within the International was also complex. Together with organisations who held to the Marxist posi-

tion, there were also various factions, groups and currents who stood for a petty-bourgeois or immature proletarian ideology. These last were under the influence of such leaders as Proudhon, Mazzini, Bakunin and Lassalle. There was a lack of agreement regarding both the immediate and the long-term aims and objectives of the proletariat. It was necessary to introduce scientific clarity and consistency into the strategy and tactic of the International, subordinate the national interests of factions to international objectives, and neutralise the influence of reformist and anarchist leaders. At the same time, the International had to become a mass organisation, attracting ever more groups of progressive proletarians in England, France, Germany, Italy and Poland. All these difficulties were successfully overcome by Marx.

The organisation and activity of the International were based on the General Rules and Inaugural Address drafted by him. Leadership of the International lay in the hands of a General Council, of which Marx was a member, and of which he soon became the leader. Lenin justly remarked that Marx was the guiding spirit of the association. Without the indefatigable, day-to-day organisational and political activity of Marx, the International would never have acquired that power and influence which it possessed on the international scene.

The authority of the International grew with every year. Its membership came to include certain large English trade unions, and Marxist influence on proletarian activity in France and Germany intensified.

In 1869, the Social-Democratic Workers' Party emerged in Germany, the first proletarian party organised on a national scale and basing itself in the main on scientific communism. This was yet another victory for the teaching of Marx and Engels and a new page in the history of the international workers' movement. This was followed by the organisation of mass parties in other countries.

Marx was obliged to wage a fierce struggle within the International against Bakuninism. Mikhail Bakunin was a Russian revolutionary Narodnik and a man of outstanding personality. He took part in the revolution of 1848-1849, was arrested and twice condemned to death, first by a Saxonian and then by an Austrian military court. The death

penalty was commuted to a life sentence and he was handed back to Russia, where he spent many years in the cells of the Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg. He succeeded in escaping during Siberian exile and arrived in London just as the International was being established.

The opinions and the activity of Bakunin within the International became increasingly hostile to Marxism. Bakunin himself became an advocate of the petty-bourgeois revolutionary beliefs of the extreme left, placing his hopes on revolt by a handful of individuals, on the immediate overthrow of the bourgeois world order by conspiratorial activity.

For Bakunin, the main evil against which the struggle must be directed was not capital and hired labour, but the state, and, moreover, any state. He did not recognise the proletarian state, nor the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In addition, he conducted factional activity within the International, setting up within it his International Alliance of Socialist Democracy and attempting to bring the healthy kernel of the association under its influence.

Marx decisively rebuffed Bakuninism, seeing the threat it presented to the working-class movement. He had to explain time and again the propositions of scientific socialism on the driving forces of the revolution, on the means of preparing the revolution, on the strategy and tactic of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, after it had won political power.

In his struggle against Bakuninism, Marx had the support of the Russian revolutionaries and he paid increasing attention to political and economic life of Russia after 1861 (when serfdom was abolished) and the activity of the Narodnik organisation *Zemlya i Volya* (Land and Freedom). He familiarised himself with the writings and activity of Ghernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov and started a correspondence with their followers.

At the beginning of 1870, a Russian branch of the International was set up in Geneva. It was comprised of revolutionary democrats who based themselves on the ideas of Chernyshevsky and who had separated from Bakunin. The leadership of this branch requested Marx to become their representative in the International. "Russian democratic

youth," ran the letter, "has today, via its exiled brothers, received the opportunity of expressing its deep gratitude to you for the help that you have given our cause with your theoretical and practical propaganda."

Marx willingly agreed, and this agreement was of deep symbolic significance: young revolutionary Russia entered the International Working Men's Association led by Karl Marx. His official title was now Secretary of the General Council for Russia.

The Lessons of the Paris Commune

Marx and Engels had the good fortune to see many of their ideas put into practice in the workers' movement. The European proletariat grew in number and strength and constituted the most revolutionary, vanguard class of society, resolutely opposing the bourgeoisie. A powerful international proletarian organisation was formed, the International, which was putting into practice the rallying call of the *Manifesto*: "Working Men of All Countries, Unite!" They lived to witness the first proletarian revolution and observe the activity of the first proletarian state, the Paris Commune.

At the beginning of the 1870s, the Bonaparte regime that had been stifling France for almost 20 years, had sunk into total decay. All that was needed for the so-called Second Empire, that is, the government of Napoleon III, to finally collapse was a blow from outside. This blow was the Franco-German war. The French army was routed in the battle near Sedan and the emperor himself was captured.

On March 18, 1871, revolution broke out in Paris, and a few days later power passed to the Paris Commune. The first measures adopted by the Commune were directed at smashing the bourgeois state machine and establishing a new type of power. The standing army and the political police were abolished, a national guard was established and the church was separated from the state. A consistent system of democratic elections was introduced, together with a new administrative and judicial system. The principle of the responsibility and replacement of officials was adopted and their pay was that of a worker.

The Commune lasted only 72 days and was unable to spread its power to the whole of France. It found itself isolated in Paris and surrounded by the troops of the bourgeois government of Versailles and the advancing German army. It let slip the moment when it could have marched on Versailles and removed the threat of encirclement. The counter-revolutionary armies broke into Paris and the streets flowed with the blood of the heroic communards.

Nonetheless, however brief was the period of the Paris Commune, it was an event of world-historic significance. It showed that the question of the seizure of power by the proletariat had been put on the agenda by history itself and had become the urgent command of the time. The Commune was the first indication of the society of the future, a bold attempt by the proletariat to break the fetters of capital and "storm heaven".

The Paris Commune marked the end of the ascendancy of the bourgeoisie. Then began, in the words of Lenin, the epoch of "the full domination and decline of the bourgeoisie, one of transition from its progressive character towards reactionary and even ultra-reactionary finance capital".¹

Marx and Engels greeted the news of the Paris Commune with tremendous enthusiasm, assiduously following its every step and attempting through their advice and recommendations to help its leaders avoid fatal errors. After the collapse of the Commune, they carefully analysed this unprecedented historical experience in order to derive as much benefit as possible from this lesson for the workers' movement.

Marx saw the historical significance of the Commune in the visible practical confirmation it provided of *the necessity of smashing the bourgeois state machine and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat*. He saw in the Commune the embryonic state of the future and that political form "under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour".²

The Commune pursued its activity at a time when the class struggle had become particularly bitter and the opposition of the exploiter classes was at its most furious. Thus

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Under a False Flag", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 146.

² K. Marx, "The Civil War in France" in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 223.

Marx concluded that the accession to power of the working class would not put an end to the class struggle, but "affords the rational medium in which that class struggle can run through its different phases in the most rational and humane way".¹ The experience of the Commune clearly manifested the absurdity of the demand of the Bakuninists that the state be immediately abolished. The need for centralised power remains even after the victory of the proletariat, and is essential both for the political suppression of the bourgeoisie and for economic activity, for eliminating anarchy in production, for "their (the social forms of production—*Ed.*) harmonious national and international co-ordination"² and for cultural construction. Marx warned that these transformations could not be achieved at one blow and that no little effort and time would be needed to change both the conditions and people themselves.

In Marx's opinion, one of the main reasons for the defeat of the Commune was that its leaders were not sufficiently resolute in their actions, that it was not headed by a revolutionary proletarian party, the united and tested core of the working class that organises and guides its energy. *The success of a proletarian revolution is impossible without a militant and united vanguard—a proletarian party armed with a knowledge of the laws of social development; this is the main lesson to be learned from, the Paris Commune.*

The need to establish political organisations of workers—proletarian parties—became one of the main issues for discussion at the London Conference of the International in September 1871, and at the Hague Congress a year later. This led to another bitter struggle against the Bakuninists, who attempted to split the organised workers' movement into factions and decentralise its leadership. Marx and Engels emerged victorious from this battle and Bakunin and his supporters, the anarchists, were excluded from the International.

In the meantime, however, the conditions in which the International had to operate had sharply deteriorated. Reaction was everywhere on the counter-offensive against the

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *On the Paris Commune*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 156.

² *Ibid.*, p. 157.

working class. After the defeat of the Paris Commune, political repression began in a number of countries and a vicious slander campaign was conducted in the bourgeois press against the leaders of the International. Further legal activity by the international mass organisation of the proletariat became virtually impossible.

Towards the end of 1873, the International practically ceased to exist, and in 1876 it was officially dissolved. The immediate task of the working-class movement was now the formation of socialist parties in every country.

The Further Development of Marxist Theory

In 1869 Engels was at last able to end his commercial bondage, that is, he managed to free himself from a job he detested in his father's trading company and, moreover, under conditions that enabled him to continue rendering material assistance to Marx and his family. Engels was now able, as he put it, to work at his own discretion and he joined in the hectic activity of the International, working with Marx on an analysis of the events of the Paris Commune and writing for the German social-democratic press.

The workers' movement in Germany was then of particular interest to Marx and Engels. It was here, as was mentioned before, that the first proletarian party had been founded. Its leaders, Bebel and Liebknecht, adopted a Marxist position, but frequently committed serious errors. In 1875 they decided on the unification of the Social-Democratic Party and the so-called General Association of German Workers, set up by the petty-bourgeois revolutionary Lassalle. The unification took place on the basis of a programme which was known as the Gotha Programme, which contained serious concessions to Lassallean philosophy, with its reformist and nationalist phraseology. Marx was obliged to subject the Gotha Programme to serious criticism in defence of the ideological and theoretical purity of the proletarian world outlook and the principles of proletarian internationalism.

The main target of his critical attack was the question of the state. If Bakunin had deviated to an anarchistic negation of any state system, Lassalle and his supporters, on the

contrary, proceeded from an illusory belief that the state was above class and that the bourgeois state could be given a popular character.

In his work *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx exposed the impracticable and dangerous fallacy of such views, revealed the hostility of the bourgeois state towards the proletariat and the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the founding of a new society. "Between capitalist and communist society," he wrote, "lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.*"¹

While emphasising that the establishment of a communist society was the result of long and profound revolutionary changes covering all aspects of life, Marx distinguished two phases in the development of the communist socio-economic formation: the lower, or socialism, and the higher, the actual communist phase, and described the characteristic features of each. In so doing he made an invaluable contribution to the development of the theoretical foundations of the workers' movement.

Marx and Engels noted with alarm that certain circles within German Social-Democracy showed a conciliatory attitude to petty-bourgeois, reformist ideology and a desire, regardless of principle, to unite Marxism and philosophical and economic theories fashionable among the bourgeois intelligentsia.

One such fashionable theoretician was Dühring who, in an extremely pretentious fashion, "refuted" Marxism and in return offered the working class his own theory, which was a potpourri consisting of the most diverse bourgeois and petty-bourgeois concepts. The spread of Dühring's ideas among the Social-Democrats presented a serious threat, and Engels took on the task of exposing them. The result was the publication in 1878 of the fundamental work *Anti-Dühring*.

The polemic with Dühring was, of course, merely an opportunity to provide, in the words of Engels, "an encyclope-

¹ K. Marx, "Marginal Notes to the Programme of the German Workers' Party" in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 26.

dic review of our understanding of philosophical, scientific and historical problems".¹ The chapter on the history of the theory of political economy was written by Marx, who also read and approved the whole manuscript.

Basing himself upon *Capital*, Engels analysed new phenomena in capitalist society that were to become clearly evident in the twentieth century. In particular he showed that the concentration of property in the hands of the bourgeois state in no way alters the essence of the capitalist system. As if exposing the doctrines of modern ideologists who preach the peaceful growing over of capitalism into socialism by developing "state control over ownership", Engels clearly and decisively maintained that the transfer of ownership to the state within the framework of a bourgeois society can solve nothing. On the contrary, the more the modern state "proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers—proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head. But, brought to a head, it topples over. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution."²

The development of state ownership does not save capitalism, on the contrary, it accelerates the development of the material prerequisites for a socialist revolution. This prediction by Engels will be fully substantiated and developed in a new historical age in the Leninist teaching on state-monopoly capitalism, imperialism.

In his *Anti-Dühring*, Engels summarises his own and Marx's views on the development of society and presents them in a clear, journalistic style. This major work became the encyclopedia of Marxism, and millions of workers in every country have learned and are learning from it.

Meanwhile Marx continued his work on the second and third volumes of *Capital* and immersed himself for this purpose in a study of world history and the economics of

¹ "Engels an Laura Lafargue in Paris, London. 18 April 1884" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 36, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1967, p. 136.

² F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 338.

various countries, including Russia. He worked with total dedication, despite his worsening health. In 1881 his wife died, a heavy and irreparable blow. Marx himself did not long survive his wife, dying on March 14, 1883.

Speaking of the death of his friend and colleague, Engels said: "Mankind is shorter by a head, and that the greatest head of our time."¹

Marx was acknowledged as the leader of the international workers' movement, and after his death this role was taken over by Engels, who became the adviser and leader of the European Socialists. He continued the struggle against reformism in defence of the purity of the revolutionary teaching, the correct strategy and tactic of the proletarian parties that had emerged in a number of countries, and developed the scientific world outlook in accordance with new conditions. He took an active part in the foundation of the Second International.

The Prognosis of Revolution in Russia

As early as the 1870s, Marx and Engels had turned their eyes increasingly towards Russia, where the struggle of the revolutionaries against tsarist autocracy was growing by the day. Russia was then the most powerful bulwark of reaction in Europe and, in their opinion, the future course of events in that enormous empire would largely determine the political climate in Europe.

Using original sources, Marx and Engels engaged in a detailed study of economic relations in Russia, particularly those following upon the abolition of serfdom, contacted Russian political emigres and attentively followed the activity of the Russian underground organisation of Narodnaya Volya (People's Will). They were full of praise for the work of Chernyshevsky, whom they considered "the great Russian scholar and critic".² They were acquainted (personally or by correspondence) with such famous figures of the Russian revolutionary movement as Lavrov, Lopatin, Zasulich,

¹ "Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge in Hoboken, London, March 15, 1883, 11.45 p.m." in: Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 340.

² K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 25.

and Tkachev, Plekhanov, the founder of the first Marxist organisation in Russia—the Emancipation of Labour group—often visited Engels during the last years of his life.

This detailed study of the situation in Russia led Marx and Engels to the firm conviction that in this country, which was as yet far from having eliminated feudal relations and which had accumulated a large number of social ills and unresolved problems, the revolutionary explosion could be particularly powerful and would undoubtedly echo through the rest of Europe. They found it possible, in this respect, to compare the imminent revolution in Russia with the Great French Revolution. According to Lopatin, Engels asserted that "Russia is the France of this century. It is the legitimate heir of the revolutionary initiative for a new social transformation."¹ Marx and Engels were certain that the developing revolutionary movement in Russia must lead finally to "an event . . . which, maybe after long and violent struggles, must ultimately and certainly lead to the establishment of a Russian Commune".² The approaching revolution in Russia, in their opinion, would be a turning point in world history.

Engels yet again demonstrated his exceptional gift of clear-sightedness and prophecy when he heard of the accession to the throne of Nicholas II. He then commented that the new tsar was "weak physically and intellectually and promises to be an irresolute ruler who will be merely a puppet in the hands of others with their conflicting intrigues, and this is exactly what is needed for the Russian despotic system to be finally destroyed".³

Marx and Engels hoped that "mother nature" would be kind enough to spare them until the Russian revolution, but this was not to be. However, the revolution was not long in coming. The first rolls of thunder could be heard in 1905, only ten years after the death of Engels.

Marxism spread far and wide while Marx and Engels were still alive. Organisations and parties with a Marxist

platform were set up in a number of countries, and Marxism rapidly won the hearts and minds of millions of people, showing them the right road to follow in their struggle for a better future.

The historical fate of Marxism is without precedent. "Disputed" and "disproved" times out of number by scholars in the service of the bourgeoisie, it was daily confirmed by all the class battles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The truth and accuracy of this teaching, further enriched by Lenin, was strikingly revealed in the October Revolution and the successful building of a new society by the peoples of the socialist community of nations. Now it is the banner and the powerful weapon of the world communist movement.

Lenin declared that the teaching of Marx was all-powerful because it was true, because it exactly reflected the vital interests of working people, because Marx answered the questions that progressive human thought had already posed, because it rested on the sure foundation of human knowledge and the cultural achievements of human history.

Let us recall here the penetrating words of Lenin: "I am still 'in love' with Marx and Engels, and cannot calmly stand any abuse of them. No, these were real people! We must learn from them. We must not leave that basis."¹

Questions on Part One

- (1) What were the historical conditions in which the world outlook of Marx and Engels was formed?
- (2) Describe the beginning of the revolutionary activity of Marx and Engels and their critical re-evaluation of the intellectual legacy of the past.
- (3) Give a description of the Communist League organised by Marx and Engels and of its policy objectives.
- (4) What were the basic ideas contained in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*?

¹ V. I. Lenin, "To Inessa Armand", *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 281.

¹ "Aus einem Brief G. A. Lopatins an M. N. Oschanina" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 21, S. 488.

² K. Marx and P. Engels, *On the Paris Commune*, p. 271.

³ "Engels an Laura Lafargue in Le Perreux, London, 12, Nov. 94" in: K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 39, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1968, S. 313.

- (5) What is the world-historic mission of the proletariat?
- (6) What are the basic inadequacies of pre-Marxist philosophy?
- (7) What is the essence of the materialist concept of history?
- (8) Why is the mode of production the determining factor in the development of human society?
- (9) What is the source of the increasing wealth of the capitalists? Why is the expropriation of the exploiters the just demand of the working class?
- (10) Describe Lenin's appraisal of *Capital*.
- (11) What is the fundamental advantage of scientific socialism over Utopian socialism?
- (12) What is the role of the party in the struggle of the proletariat for its emancipation?
- (13) What was the role played by Marx and Engels in the founding of the International?
- (14) What revolutionary future did Marx and Engels predict for Russia?

Part two

LENIN—THE HEIR TO THE TEACHING AND CAUSE OF MARX AND ENGELS AND THE LEADER OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

VII. The Formation and Development of the Revolutionary Views of Lenin

The Centre of the World Revolutionary Process Moves to Russia

The teaching of Marx and Engels was continued and developed in the writings and revolutionary activity of Lenin. Russia became the birthplace of Leninism. Nor was this a historical accident. As the founders of Marxism had foreseen, the centre of the world revolutionary movement shifted at the end of the nineteenth century from Western Europe to Russia, where social contradictions had reached their most extreme form. The struggle against the capitalists was waged by the rapidly growing working class, the peasants opposed the landowners and the peoples at the periphery opposed the oppressive tsarist autocracy. The worker, peasant and national liberation movements complemented and reinforced each other, and the Russian bourgeois, landowning system was approaching collapse. As a result, Russia had become the weakest link in the chain of world capitalism. In no other country in the world was there such a complex variety of social conflicts, and nowhere else had the three above-mentioned currents united into one revolutionary process.

In the leading capitalist countries of Europe, bourgeois relations took root, in the main, as the result of a revolution that had virtually destroyed the feudal system. In Russia, however, serfdom was abolished in 1861 by the reform from above carried through by the tsarist government and the landed serf-owners.

The abolition of serfdom, which tsarism presented as evidence of its concern for the well-being of the people, was in fact dictated by the requirements of Russian economic development. Russia was increasingly falling behind the bourgeois countries of the West. This was clearly revealed by Russia's defeat in the Crimean War against Britain, France and Turkey (1855-1856). The peasant serf had little interest in the results of his labour and, therefore, in increasing productivity; bound by law to the landowner, he did not have the right to leave for the town of his own free will, to work in the factories. Industry suffered from a lack of workers and therefore it became essential to do away with serfdom.

The abolition of serfdom was also necessitated by the position of the peasants themselves, condemned to poverty, oppression and lack of any rights. The peasant movement was gaining in strength, and democratic opposition to autocracy was intensifying. Under the pressure of these various factors, tsarism was obliged to abolish serfdom, but the reform, which was implemented by the landed serf-owners was, of course, limited and retained many traces of serfdom. The peasants were given the worst land, the best being reserved for the landowners. The peasant allotments were pathetically small, but the compensation payment to the landowner was high. The tsar's family alone owned seven million dessiatines* of land in the European part of Russia—more than was owned by half a million peasant families. The payment that had to be made by the peasants was the most obvious remnant of serfdom.

The peasants could not be satisfied by such a reform, and the years that followed were ones of continuous struggle by the peasants against the landowners and the autocratic regime.

However, despite the limited nature of the reform, it nonetheless gave the peasants legal freedom and thus made a flow of labour into industry possible. From 1861 onwards, capitalism started to develop rapidly bringing with it the growth of industrial production, the building of railways, etc. From 1866 to 1890 the number of factories doubled. Moreover, by using the latest technology, Russia was able

* dessiatine=approx. 2.7 acres.

to concentrate from the beginning on large-scale enterprises. By 1890 almost half of all the workers in Russia were concentrated at enterprises with 500 workers or more. This led to a high concentration of the working class in industrial centres, stimulating its unity and strength. Accustomed to serf labour and the absence of any legislation protecting the workers, the Russian manufacturers, in the race for profit, compelled the workers to work 12-13 hours a day, and in a number of enterprises up to 15-16 hours a day. The workers began an ever more resolute struggle against their exploiters.

"Capitalist Russia was advancing to replace feudal Russia. The settled, downtrodden serf peasant who stuck firmly to his village, had implicit faith in the priests and stood in awe of the 'authorities' was gradually giving way to a new generation of peasants, peasants who had worked as seasonal labourers in the cities and had learned something from their bitter experience of a life of wandering and wage-labour. The number of workers in the big towns, in the factories, was constantly on the increase. Gradually the workers began to form associations for their common struggle against the capitalists and the government. By waging this struggle, the Russian working class helped the peasant millions to rise, straighten their backs and cast off serf habits."¹

The working class assumed the lead in this struggle, standing at the head of all the oppressed labouring masses in Russia—the Russian peasantry and the populations at the national periphery. The Russian revolutionaries now faced a supremely important task—that of organising and politically educating this massive revolutionary force, helping it to understand its interests, indicating the path the struggle must take and rallying it around the working class.

The revolutionary-democratic ideas developed in the middle of the nineteenth century by Herzen, Belinsky, Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky on the need for a revolutionary transformation of Russian society had a numerous following. They were the basis of the revolutionary Narodnik movement of the 1870s. The movement was so called be-

¹ V. I. Lenin, "The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Fall of Serfdom", *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968, p. 89.

cause its members "went to the people" ("narod" in Russian), to the peasantry, attempting to rouse it to struggle against tsarism. Marx and Engels noted the high level of Russian revolutionary-democratic thought, particularly that of Chernyshevsky. Nonetheless, the socialist ideals of the Russian revolutionary democrats were on the whole utopian. The representatives of Russian revolutionary democracy did not see (sometimes could not see) that the working class possessed that strength which was indeed capable of leading the struggle of all the oppressed in the cause of social transformation.

In the 1870s, working class organisations began to form. The first was the South-Russia Workers' Union which was set up in Odessa in 1876 and which spread within the workers' movement the ideas of political struggle and the establishment of independent proletarian organisations. In 1878, in St. Petersburg, the famous worker-revolutionaries Victor Obnorsky and Stepan Khalturin founded the North-Russia Workers' Union, whose programme clearly announced that the Union's goals were very similar to those of the social-democratic parties of the West. The South-Russia Workers' Union lasted for one year, the North-Russia Workers' Union for about two years before they were closed down by the police. However, it was too late to halt the workers' movement.

The revolutionary-democratic Narodnik ideas of peasant socialism were already unable to satisfy the workers, and conditions were ripening for the acceptance of the ideas of proletarian scientific socialism.

Individual works by the founders of Marxism were known in Russia in the 1840s, but they only began to spread among Russian revolutionary circles in the 1870s. Of major importance was the translation of *Capital*, which was first legally published in Russia in 1872. "... Almost immediately after the appearance of *Capital*" wrote Lenin, "the destiny of capitalism in Russia' became the principal theoretical problem for Russian socialists; the most heated debates raged around this problem, and the most important points of programme were decided in accordance with it."¹

¹ V. I. Lenin, "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 267.

Thus as early as the 1870s the ground was being prepared in Russia for the acceptance of Marxism by the entire process of the development of revolutionary thought and the workers' movement.

The task of spreading Marxism was first undertaken by the Emancipation of Labour group founded by Russian emigres in Geneva in 1883, and headed by Georgy Plekhanov. The group propagated Marxist ideas, translated the works of Marx and Engels and spread them in Russia. However, it was not linked in its practical work with the mass workers' movement even though it was becoming vitally necessary to unite the latter with Marxism. The workers' movement was acquiring a hitherto unprecedented strength. Particularly demonstrative of this fact was the famous strike at the Morozov factory in Orekhovo-Zuyevo in January 1885. In presenting their demands, the workers were organised and showed tenacity and courage. The strike was suppressed by armed force. However, the trial of its organisers revealed such a horrific picture of abuse and contempt for the workers that even the jury of the tsarist court brought in the verdict "not guilty" on all 101 points of the indictment. The Morozov strike was evidence of the growing sense of worker solidarity and class identity.

During this period, underground Marxist organisations began to appear not only among emigres but also in Russia itself. The growing struggle of the proletariat and the activity of Marxist organisations prepared the ground for the unification of scientific socialism with the mass workers' movement and for the appearance of a Marxist party in Russia.

The First Steps of a Young Marxist

In 1888, the eighteen-year-old Vladimir Ulyanov sent a letter to Chernyshevsky, but a correspondence did not result; Chernyshevsky, now returned from exile in Siberia, was seriously ill.

In 1895 Lenin went abroad and there tried to meet with Engels. Once more he faced failure: Engels, now seventy-five years old, was incurably sick and not receiving any visitors. Personal contact was never established, but the at-

tempts were revealing in themselves. It was from these people that Lenin would receive his great inheritance, the theory of Marx and Engels, and the ideas and experience of the Russian revolutionary movement. In the winter of 1888 he took detailed notes of *Capital* and started on a profound study of the other works of Marx and Engels.

Marx, Engels and Chernyshevsky were the philosophers and revolutionaries whose influence on the young Lenin was decisive. It must also be noted that the assimilation of these ideas, the formation of Lenin's personality took place in a family atmosphere rare for its intellectual and moral character.

The father of the family, Ilya Ulyanov, was the son of a Russian serf who had gone on to become a teacher, and then an inspector and director of elementary schools in the province of Simbirsk. He was a cultured man of high moral principles and a superb teacher. The eldest son of the family became a revolutionary and joined the Narodnaya Volya Party. On March 1, 1887, he was arrested for the attempted assassination of Tsar Alexander III and was executed in the Schlisselburg prison on May 8, 1887.

The mother of the family, Maria Alexandrovna, spoke several foreign languages and was knowledgeable in literature, painting and music. She brought up her children to share her knowledge and encouraged their all-round development. The seventeen-year-old Vladimir, full of admiration for his brother's courage, and that of the revolutionary Narodniks, reveals his capacity for independent thought: it is not by assassinating individual representatives of state power, nor even the tsar himself, that autocracy and oppression will be destroyed. "No, we won't take that path," he affirms decisively. "That is not the path to take."

By the 1880s the path being followed by the Russian revolutionary Narodniks had led to an impasse. They were unable to rouse the peasantry to revolt, unable to secure an improvement in their living conditions or the democratisation of society. The Narodnik movement was increasingly dominated by Narodnik non-revolutionaries, by *liberals* who dreamt of quiet and peaceful reforms.

The progressive thinkers of the day, the new generation of revolutionaries, faced the task of analysing and understanding the reasons for the collapse of the revolutionary

Narodnik movement and evaluating Narodnik liberalism, of discovering new ways of fighting autocracy and exploitation.

The analysis of these questions posed by the objective course of history was undertaken by Lenin. He began a study of Narodnik literature, of the works of Marx and Engels and those of major economists, philosophers and historians, and also the publications issued by the Emancipation of Labour group. He brought his reflections and conclusions to the student circles of Kazan University, which he had entered in 1887 to study law. Argument, dispute, discussion, further reading, further debate and further discussion of urgent social problems. The demonstration and student meeting at which the students expressed their solidarity with the struggle of the Moscow students against government repression also left a deep impression on Lenin, who was among its leaders. The result was his expulsion from the university and his first exile under police supervision. Maria Alexandrovna began to petition for the re-instatement of her son as a student, but this was refused at every level. The young exile, however, showed no signs of despondency. He used his time in exile to read.

The result of this reading, and one that was crucial to further activity, was the translation by Lenin of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* by Marx and Engels (1889). This did not as yet constitute independent work, but it was also not merely the translation of a foreign book. It was a choice of path, the start of which was the propagation of the great ideas of scientific socialism.

One of the major obstacles facing the spread of these ideas through the Russian revolutionary movement was Narodnik ideology.

The Ideological Struggle of the 1890s. The Defence and Development of Marxism

The Narodniks of the end of the nineteenth century differed significantly from those of the 1870s. They had ceased to be rebels rousing the people to struggle, they had ceased to be revolutionaries. The Narodniks of the nineties loyally turned to the government with a plan for minor and

pitiful reforms. However, their influence on Russian public opinion was still considerable.

Russian Marxists faced the major tasks of explaining Narodnik errors, providing a decisive criticism of Narodnik philosophy, revealing the inevitability of its degeneration into liberalism and petty reformism and exposing its socio-class roots.

The Russian Marxists, and in particular Plekhanov, took up the task. However, the decisive reply was provided by Lenin in his first major work *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats* (1894).

By this time Vladimir Ulyanov was already well known in Marxist revolutionary circles. In 1892-1893 he led the Marxist circle in Samara, and then the Marxist circle in St. Petersburg, carrying out propaganda and organisational work among the Petersburg proletariat.

His handwritten essays criticising the Narodnik ideologists and analysing the social and economic problems facing Russia were also well known and widely circulated among the revolutionary youth. His speeches at illegal meetings were also known to the tsarist secret police.

The book *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats* opens with a critique of the philosophical basis of the Narodnik programme. The central thesis of Narodnik sociology was "the individual makes history". A leading Narodnik theoretician, Mikhailovsky, declared that, having arbitrarily defined something as desirable or undesirable, the sociologist should find the conditions in which the desirable can be achieved or the undesirable removed. As we can see, the decisive factor in the development of society is the existence of a strong desire on the part of a forceful individual able to subordinate the crowd. A philosophical trend denying the existence of objective laws governing history and reducing historical changes to the will and desire of the subject is known as subjectivism.

For the Narodniks, reality was the clay from which one could mould whatever one wished; they intended to take the "best" from capitalism and from the peasant commune and mix them together.

In his polemic with the Narodniks, Lenin showed that

reality is by no means merely a passive substance, a clay capable of taking any form according to the will of "heroes". Reality, he said, develops according to its own inner logic, according to objective laws which are essentially independent of the will and desire of individuals. Lenin then went on to show that society is a living, integrated and developing organism.¹ This Marxist concept of society as an integrated organism governed by objective laws of development is expressed in the teaching on socio-economic formations. "... Marx," wrote Lenin, "put an end to the view of society being a mechanical aggregation of individuals which allows of all sorts of modification at the will of the authorities, . . . was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis by establishing the concept of the economic formation of society as the sum-total of given production relations, by establishing the fact that the development of such formations is a process of natural history."² Rather than attempting "to analyse and explain . . . actual reality", Lenin continued, the Narodniks "presented us with a utopia contrived by senselessly plucking individual elements from various social formations".³

The views of the Narodniks are not simply Utopian, declares Lenin further, but, in the most precise sense of the word, reactionary, as they express the desire to preserve the village commune, which in the conditions of Russian reality would be a means of enslaving the poorest peasants, for it is the poor peasants who, having neither the means of production nor the right to depart from the commune, are obliged to turn for help to the rich head of the commune, paying for this help with the greater part of their harvest or hiring themselves out to the rich as farm labourers.

As against the subjectivism of the Narodniks and their concepts of social development according to the designs of critically-minded individuals, Lenin put forward a teaching that views social development as an objective process independent of the will and desire of individuals and in

¹ See V. I. Lenin. "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 189.

² *Ibid.*, p. 142.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

which the decisive role is played by the *popular masses*, the real makers of history, acting in accord with these objective laws. The individual only becomes a prominent individual if in his theories and activity he reflects the interests of the masses and acts in accord with the objective historical laws.

Thus Lenin marked the boundary between the Narodniks and the Marxists. However, as Lenin pointed out later on, criticism alone was not enough.

The successful struggle waged by the Marxists, and in particular by Lenin and Plekhanov, against the Narodniks gave rise to a number of ideologists who called themselves Marxists, but who interpreted Marxism in their own particular way. They came to be known as "legal Marxists". In criticising the subjectivism of the Narodniks, the legal Marxists (Struve, Tugan-Baranovsky and others) slipped into the opposite extreme. "The objective law is all, man is nothing" was their motto. Man is merely the passive executor of the demands of the inexorable objective laws, he is not the author of history (as the Narodniks claimed), but an actor playing his part according to a script written by forces standing over and above him. From this the legal Marxists drew practical conclusions: insofar as Russia has adopted the path of capitalism, and insofar as capitalism is a historically necessary stage in the development of Russian society, it is pointless to fight it. One must submit to this historical inevitability and promote the development of a capitalist formation that is progressive in comparison with feudalism.

Thus these highly unusual "Marxists" found themselves in the camp of the supporters of capitalism. Lenin also took up the attack against this pseudo-Marxism in his other major work of the 1890s, *The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book* (1894-1895). This work has a subtitle which briefly but with startling precision characterises the essence of the legal Marxist position: "The Reflection of Marxism in Bourgeois Literature".

In Marxist philosophy, the "objectivity of the historical process" means something very different from the bourgeois concept of "objectivism". The historical process is the class struggle as determined by objective social conditions. Such

a concept obliges the sociologist not to limit himself to merely indicating the necessity of one or other historical process but also to investigating which classes are determining the content of that process, how and why. Thus the passive admission of the "necessity of the process" typical of the legal Marxists is replaced by a *revolutionary* call rising out of the objective possibilities and objectives of the class struggle, and openly and clearly formulating the interests and aims of the oppressed class in the social struggle. This means, Lenin sums up by way of conclusion, that the scientific objectivity of Marxism "includes partisanship, so to speak, and enjoins the direct and open adoption of the standpoint of a definite social group in any assessment of events".¹

These principles of the materialist concept of history were applied consistently by Lenin in developing the theory of the development of capitalism in Russia, the theory of the socialist revolution and the teaching on the revolutionary party.

In his work *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899), using a wealth of factual material and statistical data that he had carefully checked, analysed and classified, Lenin showed the dissolution of the village commune and the division of the peasantry into hired workers and village bourgeoisie, the formation of an all-Russia market. He pursued in detail the development of large-scale machine industry in Russia and revealed the capitalist nature of industrial production, clarifying the growing significance, both economic and political, of the Russian proletariat. In so doing he provided comprehensive and convincing proof that "the development of agrarian relations in Russia is proceeding on capitalist lines *both* in landlord *and* in peasant economy, *both* outside *and* within the 'village commune' . . . That this development has already *irrevocably* determined that there will be no other path than the capitalist path, *no* other grouping of classes than the capitalist grouping."²

¹ V. I. Lenin, "The Economic Content of *Narodism* and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 401.

² V. I. Lenin, "Letter to I. I. Skvortsov-Stepanov", *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1967, p. 118.