

Editorial Introduction

The “Manifesto of the Communist Party” was written by Marx and Engels as the Communist League’s programme on the instruction of its Second Congress (London, November 29-December 8, 1847), which signified a victory for the followers of a new proletarian line during the discussion of the programme questions.

When Congress was still in preparation, Marx and Engels arrived at the conclusion that the final programme document should be in the form of a Party manifesto (see Engels’ letter to Marx of November 23-24, 1847). The catechism form usual for the secret societies of the time and retained in the “Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith” and “Principles of Communism,” was not suitable for a full and substantial exposition of the new revolutionary world outlook, for a comprehensive formulation of the proletarian movement’s aims and tasks. See also “Demands of the Communist Party in Germany,” issued by Marx soon after publication of the *Manifesto*, which addressed the immediate demands of the movement.

Marx and Engels began working together on the *Manifesto* while they were still in London immediately after the congress, and continued until about December 13 when Marx returned to Brussels; they resumed their work four days later (December 17) when Engels arrived there. After Engels’ departure for Paris at the end of December and up to his return on January 31, Marx worked on the *Manifesto* alone.

Hurried by the Central Authority of the Communist League which provided him with certain documents (e.g., addresses of the People’s Chamber (*Halle*) of the League of the Just of November 1846 and February 1847, and, apparently, documents of the First Congress of the Communist League pertaining to the discussion of the Party programme), Marx worked intensively on the *Manifesto* through almost the whole of January 1848. At the end of January the manuscript was sent on to London to be printed in the German Workers’ Educational Society’s print shop owned by a German emigrant J. E. Burghard, a member of the Communist League.

The manuscript of the *Manifesto* has not survived. The only extant materials written in Marx’s hand are a draft plan for Section III, showing his efforts to improve the structure of the *Manifesto*, and a page of a rough copy.

The *Manifesto* came off the press at the end of February 1848. On February 29, the Educational Society decided to cover all the printing expenses.

The first edition of the *Manifesto* was a 23-page pamphlet in a dark green cover. In April-May 1848 another edition was put out. The text took up 30 pages, some misprints of the first edition were corrected, and the punctuation improved. Subsequently this text was used by Marx and Engels as a basis for later authorised editions. Between March and July 1848 the *Manifesto* was printed in the *Deutsche Londoner Zeitung*, a democratic newspaper of the German emigrants. Already that same year numerous efforts were made to publish the *Manifesto* in other European languages. A Danish, a Polish (in Paris) and a Swedish (under a different title: “The Voice of Communism. Declaration of the Communist Party”) editions appeared in 1848. The translations into French, Italian and Spanish made at that time remained unpublished. In April 1848, Engels, then in Barmen, was translating the *Manifesto* into English, but he managed to translate only half of it, and the first English translation, made by Helen Macfarlane, was not published until two years later, between June and November 1850, in the Chartist journal *The Red Republican*. Its editor, Julian Harney, named the authors for the first time in the introduction to this publication. All earlier and many subsequent editions of the *Manifesto* were anonymous.

The growing emancipation struggle of the proletariat in the ’60s and ’70s of the 19th century led to new editions of the *Manifesto*. The year 1872 saw a new German edition with minor corrections and a preface by Marx and Engels where they drew some conclusions from the experience of the Paris

Commune of 1871. This and subsequent German editions (1883 and 1890) were entitled the *Communist Manifesto*. In 1872 the *Manifesto* was first published in America in *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*.

The first Russian edition of the *Manifesto*, translated by Mikhail Bakunin with some distortions, appeared in Geneva in 1869. The faults of this edition were removed in the 1882 edition (translation by Georgi Plekhanov), for which Marx and Engels, who attributed great significance to the dissemination of Marxism in Russia, had written a special preface.

After Marx's death, the *Manifesto* ran into several editions. Engels read through them all, wrote prefaces for the 1883 German edition and for the 1888 English edition in Samuel Moore's translation, which he also edited and supplied with notes. This edition served as a basis for many subsequent editions of the *Manifesto* in English – in Britain, the United States and the USSR. In 1890, Engels prepared a further German edition, wrote a new preface to it, and added a number of notes. In 1885, the newspaper *Le Socialiste* published the French translation of the *Manifesto* made by Marx's daughter Laura Lafargue and read by Engels. He also wrote prefaces to the 1892 Polish and 1893 Italian editions.

This edition includes the two earlier versions of the *Manifesto*, namely the draft "Communist Confession of Faith" and "The Principles of Communism," both authored by Engels, as well as the letter from Engels to Marx which poses the idea of publishing a "manifesto," rather than a catechism. The *Manifesto* addressed itself to a mass movement with historical significance, not a political sect.

On the other hand, the "Demands of the Communist Party in Germany" is included to place the publication of the *Manifesto* in the context of the mass movement in Germany at the time, whose immediate demands are reflected by Marx in this pamphlet. Clearly the aims of the *Manifesto* were more far-reaching the movement in Germany at the time, and unlike the "Demands," was intended to outlive the immediate conditions.

The "Third Address to the International Workingmen's Association" is included because in this speech Marx examines the movement of the working class manifested in the Paris Commune, and his observations here mark the only revisions to his social and historical vision made during his lifetime as a result of the development of the working class movement itself, clarifying some points and making others more concrete.
