The Communist Manifesto

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

Edited and with an Introduction by JEFFREY C. ISAAC

Contributors

Steven Lukes

Stephen Eric Bronner

Vladimir Tismaneanu

Saskia Sassen

RETHINKING THE WESTERN TRADITION
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“Isaac’s brilliant introduction and the insightful interpretations by contemporary political thinkers make a convincing case for the continued relevance of the *Manifesto* for our age of globalization. Two thumbs up!”–**Manfred B. Steger**, author of *The Rise of the Global Imaginary*

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For Ray and Peter, who first kindled my interested in Marx,
and for Margot, who rekindled it, and much else

What has happened has happened. The water
You once poured into the wine cannot be
Drained off again, but
Everything changes. You can make
A fresh start with your final breath.

—BERTOLT BRECHT, “Everything Changes”

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Acknowledgments

This volume has been a long time coming. It was conceived years ago during a casual conversation with Keith Condon, who was then editing the Rethinking series for Yale University Press. Keith asked me if I might be interested in editing a volume in the series. Seriously overcommitted— I was then serving as department chair, directing a university initiative, and also serving as book review editor of *Perspectives on Politics*—I responded by asking, "How about the *Communist Manifesto?*"—thinking that for sure this volume had already been commissioned and I could be on my way. I was wrong. Thus began this book, which has experienced two editors, numerous reviews and revisions, and a substantial time lag separating conception and completion—all of which, I think, have contributed to the quality of the product.

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Introduction
Rethinking the *Communist Manifesto*

JEFFREY C. ISAAC

The *Communist Manifesto* is perhaps the most extensively published and widely read text in the history of political thought. An obscure pamphlet penned by and for marginal German émigré radicals in 1847–48, in its 160-plus years it has been translated into scores of languages and published in hundreds of editions. According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, it is the second best-selling book of all time.[1] Of course, much of its circulation is due to its long-standing status as a veritable "bible" of the Soviet and Chinese Communist party-states—who made its study mandatory—and of the world Communist movement more generally, for much of the twentieth century. But the text's reach and influence has truly been global and has extended far beyond what used to be called "the Communist world." It has influenced national liberation struggles throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America; inspired working-class organizers wherever there have been worker and peasant movements; and served as a touchstone for much of the social, economic, and political thought of the twentieth century.

In recognition if not appreciation of this influence, in 2005 the *Manifesto* was named number one among "the most harmful books of the 19th and 20th centuries" by the American conservative journal *Human Events*, outpacing *Mein Kampf* (number two), *Quotations from Chairman Mao* (number three), and even the dreaded *Kinsey Report* (number four). That same year Karl Marx, the *Manifesto's* principal author, was named Greatest Philosopher of All Time in a BBC Radio 4 listener's poll (beating out both David Hume and Ludwig Wittgenstein, who, while lacking the name recognition of a Hitler or a Mao, are pretty formidable individuals among those British men and women likely to care about philosophy. In 1999 a BBC poll had voted Marx the Greatest Thinker of the Millennium).[2]

To say that the *Manifesto* is well known would be a gross understatement. Indeed, in the English-speaking world, and even beyond it, some of the phrases of the standard 1888 Samuel Moore English translation have become iconic. "A

spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of communism." "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." "All that is solid melts into air." "Working men of all countries, unite!" It is hard to think of any other text of its kind whose words have so entered the lexicon of politics. The *Manifesto* is so widely known—in a specific and in a vague and casual sense—and has been so widely studied and discussed, embraced, and reviled, that the need for yet another edition is less than fully evident. If ever a text has been thought and rethought, it is the *Manifesto*. In recent years the Moore translation has been published in a number of useful and accessible English editions (virtually every single English edition in use, including the edition you are now reading, uses the standard Moore translation, in part because it was authorized by Engels). In 1988 Frederic Bender produced an excellent Norton Critical Edition (whose annotation is unsurpassed and likely unsurpassable). In 1992 Penguin came out with a new edition featuring an extended (almost book-length) critical essay by the prominent British historian (and former Marxist) Gareth Stedman Jones (an earlier, and much shorter, Penguin edition featured an introduction by the distinguished British historian A. J. P. Taylor). In 1998, sesquicentennial editions were published by Signet (introduced by the prominent historian and critic of Russian communism, Martin Malia), Verso (introduced by the prominent British Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm), and Monthly Review Press (with essays by Paul Sweezy and Ellen Meiksins Wood). That year also saw the publication of an entirely new English translation, by the political theorist Terrell Carver.[3] And in 1998 there was also the publication of major symposia on "the *Manifesto* after 150 years" in such journals as *Constellations*, *New Politics*, *Socialist Register*, and *Socialism and Democracy*, along with a spate of articles and essays on the pamphlet's anniversary. And as recently as 2005, Haymarket Books put out a handy paperback critical edition—subtitled "A Road Map"—edited by Phil Glasper and designed for mass circulation.[4]

Why, then, the need for yet another edition of the *Manifesto?* The question is a good one, and it would be hard to argue in this age of genocide, global warming, and economic dislocation that the publication of a new university press edition of this or indeed any old book represents a pressing historical or moral imperative. Yet at the same time, perpetual "rethinking" is what university-based scholarly and intellectual communities at their best foster. And it can hardly be claimed that contemporary citizens spend too *much* time thinking, especially about questions of politics and justice. So a number of reasons for another edition—especially an edition centered on rethinking—present themselves. One is the very recent resurgence of interest in Marx occasioned by the current world

financial crisis. It has been widely reported that the crisis has caused a spike in sales of Marx's texts in Europe. Neither the apparent marketability nor the relevance of Marx has been lost on journals of opinion. Thus the April 2009 issue of the *Atlantic* featured a piece by the journalist Christopher Hitchens entitled "The Revenge of Karl Marx." And the cover of the May/June 2009 issue of *Foreign Policy* was graced by a full-page collage of Marx's face, accompanied by the caption "Marx, Really? Why He Matters Now" (on the inside page the editors set their readers' minds to rest: "Marx? Really? No, we don't actually think that communism is poised for a real-world comeback anytime soon. But Marx's powerful, prescient critique of the perils of boom-and-bust capitalism currently deserves a hearing at this time of global capitalist crisis"). Much of this journalistic commentary on Marx is trendy chatter rather than serious political discussion. But the very fact that Marx has come to be considered even symbolically resonant in this post-post-historical world of ours is significant.[5]

On the left too there has been something of a Marx revival. One sign is the continued popularity and even more widespread circulation and discussion of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's 2000 book *Empire* (and its sequel *Multitude*), hailed by the Slovenian psychoanalyst-philosopher-cum-celebrity Slavoj Zizek as "the *Communist Manifesto* for the twenty-first century."[6] Zizek himself declared in 1998 that "the spectre is still roaming around!"[7] And as recently as January 2008, the French Marxist philosopher Alain Badiou called for a revival of "the communist hypothesis," explaining: "What is the communist hypothesis? In its generic sense, given in its canonic *Manifesto*, 'communist' means, first, that the logic of class—the fundamental subordination of labour to a dominant class, the arrangement that has persisted since Antiquity—is not inevitable; it can be overcome. The communist hypothesis is that a different collective organization is practicable, one that will eliminate the inequality of wealth and even the division of labour."[8] This resurgence of Marxism on the intellectual left is largely an academic phenomenon, no doubt related in part to the extraordinary flourishing of what Francois Cusset has called "French theory," especially on this side of the Atlantic.[9] But it is not *merely* academic, and is clearly related to the glaring failures of neoliberalism to make good on its post-1989 promises; to the rise of worldwide movements contesting globalization, signified by Seattle 1999, Porte Allegre, and the World Social Forum; and to the emergence of a new populism in Latin America that is not loath to articulate the language of Marxism in its critique of the United States and of capitalist globalization more generally.

Marx is apparently still with us in some fashion, the efforts of post-historical ghost busters and exorcists notwithstanding.

Jacques Derrida's 1994 essay "Spectres of Marx" is a brilliant and indeed prescient account of some of the reasons for Marx's felt presence, and while it is hardly the only important discussion of this theme, its careful *literary* treatment of Marx makes it a particularly useful touchstone for this discussion about the *Communist Manifesto*. Expanding on the theme of "spectres" with which Marx and Engels famously began the *Manifesto*, Derrida underscores the centrality of Marxism for his political generation (which came of age in the sixties in Europe), and indeed for the twentieth century more generally, as a horizon of left-wing thought but also as the Other against which the thought of the right and the center largely defined itself. Writing in the immediate wake of "the fall" of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Derrida notes that a new "dominating discourse" has emerged, proclaiming the triumph of liberalism and the "end of history." "This dominating discourse," he writes, "often has the manic, jubilatory, and incantatory form that Freud assigned to the so-called triumphant phase of mourning work. The incantation repeats and ritualizes itself, it holds forth and holds to formulas, like any animistic magic. To the rhythm of a cadenced march, it proclaims: Marx is dead, communism is dead, very dead, and along with it its hopes, its discourse, its theories, and its practices. It says: long live capitalism, long live the market, here's to the survival of economic and political liberalism!"[10] And yet, Derrida continues, underneath this mania lies anxiety and indeed foreboding, for the triumph of liberalism manifestly does not represent the riddle of history solved.

And so, Derrida maintains (with characteristic flourish), the ghost of Marxism and of Marx haunts contemporary capitalism. The abovementioned cover of *Foreign Policy* magazine only attests to Derrida's prescience (if that evidence is insufficient, then I present as exhibit number two the March 31, 2008, issue of *Business Week*, whose cover is graced by a profile of U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke that bears an unmistakable and deliberate resemblance to not Marx but *Lenin*, under the caption "Reluctant Revolutionary: Where is Bernanke Taking Us?").

In the face of this felt (if absent) presence of Marx, Derrida goes on, the *Communist Manifesto* virtually screams out for attention. There are "few texts in the philosophical tradition, perhaps none," he writes, "whose lesson seemed [*sic*] more urgent today provided that one take into account what Marx and Engels themselves say . . . about their intrinsically irreducible historicity." "No text in

the tradition," he continues, "seems as lucid concerning the way in which the political is becoming worldwide." Derrida insists that it is a philosophical and political responsibility for us to reread and discuss Marx and, further, to take seriously both his analysis and his message. The "we" in question are principally those for whom Marxism can and should be regarded as "an inheritance." Derrida describes this inheritance as "a task" and not something "given." And he maintains that it "must be affirmed by transforming it as radically as will be necessary."[11]

Derrida's is a frankly political reading, addressed primarily to those on the intellectual left and especially to those on the "postmodern" left who fail to see as clearly as they might that "deconstruction has never had any sense or interest, in my view at least, except as a radicalization, which is to say also *in the tradition* of a certain Marxism, in a certain *spirit of Marxism*."[12] At the same time, there is a sense in which what Derrida writes can be taken more broadly, as a kind of general political-intellectual injunction to refuse the easy comforts of a post-historical amnesia. We are all heirs to and participants in what Jürgen Habermas—one of Derrida's final collaborators in a plea for a new universalism—has called "the philosophical discourse of modernity" and, as such, we are all responsible for taking seriously the contributions of Marx and of Marxism to that discourse.

In this sense rethinking Marx remains an unavoidable and unending responsibility, linked to the broader task of rethinking political modernity and refashioning a suitable modern politics commensurate with contemporary challenges. This is partly a function of an adequate reckoning with the past, in the formerly "Communist bloc" and in those countries—China, North Korea, Vietnam, Cuba—still subject to some form or legacy, however perverse, of Communist ideology, but also in the so-called West, where the story of democracy cannot be told without the story of socialism, and the story of socialism cannot be told without the story of Marxism. And it is partly a function of the residues of Marx's thought in so many of the important frameworks and theories that we draw upon to understand what C. Wright Mills—the maverick American radical and self-styled "plain Marxist"—called "the present as history and the future as responsibility."

The *Manifesto* no doubt speaks for itself (or at least purports to, a feature of its rhetorical structure to which I will return below). A powerful piece of political rhetoric and a classic of world literature, its words, images, and arguments continue to resonate. At the same time, it is always possible to bring

fresh insight to any text. And, in a way, the very evocative character and widespread resonance of the text itself allows commentators a certain flexibility that might be less appropriate with other, less familiar texts. In the same way that the most simple, frequently heard, and extensively worked standard tunes can be the basis of the most extraordinary jazz improvisations, a text such as the *Manifesto* affords a wealth of opportunities for creative appropriation. This volume offers a selection of such creative commentaries. In each case, an important and widely read contemporary social and political theorist has been asked to riff on the *Manifesto*, to use it, comment on it, and expand upon it in a way that also expands upon the commentator's own intellectual work. At the same time, each of these essayists addresses a theme—the democratic legacies of 1848 (Stephen Eric Bronner), Communism (Vladimir Tismaneanu), morality (Steven Lukes), contemporary globalization (Saskia Sassen)—of real contemporary relevance. Each of the essays is a creative reading of a particular text— the *Manifesto*—and also a creative expansion of previously worked theoretical categories. But each is also a constructive engagement with a real problem. The *Manifesto* is thus treated as an explicit theme, and as a discursive occasion; but it is also treated as a lens—whether transparent or distorting—through which to understand the problems of our time.

In what follows in this Introduction I would like to help set the stage for the dramatis persona that is the *Manifesto* itself, and for the scholarly commentaries that follow it below. As I indicated earlier, this is well-trodden territory, and it is not my intention to offer the kind of exhaustive background introduction that so many others—including such fine editors as Frederic Bender and Gareth Stedman Jones—have already provided. Nor does it seem appropriate here to develop a full-blown political critique of Marx or of contemporary Marxism.

Instead, I'd like to highlight some of the most important contexts for reading the *Manifesto* that bear on its continued vitality as a contribution to modern political thought—the contexts of modernity, democracy, and the politics of representation. In doing so, I would like simultaneously to underscore both the text's alienation from us (as early twenty-first-century readers confronting a mid-nineteenth-century artifact) and its continuing relevance and resonance. My point, then, is to explore some of the themes that make a rereading and rethinking of the *Manifesto* a compelling prospect, in the hope that such an exploration will help set the stage for each individual reader's own rereading and rethinking.

The *Manifesto* and Political Modernity

The *Manifesto* has come to be regarded as a watershed text, inaugurating a new intellectual tradition and ideological-political movement ("Marxism" in its many variants), heralding a particular interpretation of the democratic revolutions sweeping Europe in 1848 (viewing them as class struggles enacting the radicalization/completion/transcendence of the [bourgeois] French Revolution), and perhaps helping to establish as well a new genre of modern political rhetoric —the revolutionary manifesto. The *Manifesto* is an urtext of modern revolution, and it helped to establish the terms of ideological contestation for most of the twentieth century.

At the same time, when viewed prospectively—in terms of the unfolding of political discourse in mid-nineteenth-century Europe—rather than retrospectively, the *Manifesto* can be seen as but one tributary in the broader currents of political radicalism unleashed by the European Enlightenment. To read the *Manifesto* in this way is to diminish its claims to "world historical" importance and, in a sense, its uniqueness as a founding text of the ideology—Marxism, or, more accurately, Marxism-Leninism—that came in the course of the twentieth century to be defined as the antithesis of the freedoms of the West. At the same time, it is also to render the text—and the discourse it proclaimed—more intelligible as a contribution to Habermas's "philosophical discourse of modernity" and what is more colloquially considered "Western political thought." It is a commonplace of intellectual history that in post-Renaissance Europe there reemerged a distinctive and complex discourse of political theory, rooted in the classical traditions of Greece and Rome, that emphasized the importance of universal rights and rational political agreement. Far from representing an Other of these modern, universalist, and ultimately liberal ideas, the *Manifesto* was—and was understood by its authors and their critics to be—an immanent critique of those very ideas. The *Manifesto* was a text of the radical Enlightenment, and a contribution to the radicalization of the public sphere whose contemporary understanding has been pioneered by Habermas's *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. In that classic work of intellectual history and political theory, now almost a half-century old, Habermas argued that the European Enlightenment generated a new conception of a public sphere governed by values of inclusivity, publicity, and the importance of critical public reason.[13] He interpreted the German philosopher Immanuel Kant as the theorist par excellence of this new public sphere, and he argued that the theory and the practice of this public sphere was integrally linked

to the rise of bourgeois civil society and to the post-1789 European bourgeois revolutions (a set of epochal transformations, in the British North American colonies, in England, in France, and throughout the European continent, that the great historian R. R. Palmer called "the age of democratic revolutions"). The signal contribution of Habermas—whose argument quite self-consciously drew from Marx—was to offer a sociology of knowledge, a new conception of public discourse linked to new forms of discursivity, sites of discursive practice such as coffee-houses and salons and libraries and broadsheets and manifestos and newspapers. Habermas underscored the bourgeois and rationalist character of this mode of communication. Building on this framework, theorists such as Nancy Fraser and Janet Lyon developed a notion of *alternative* public spheres, including a "plebeian" public sphere in some tension with a "bourgeois" public sphere in terms of its content (it was more radical) and form (it was more rhetorical, mobilizational, and "passionate," and correspondingly less "rationalist").[14] In her *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern*, Lyon traces the genre of the political manifesto to the Levellers in seventeenth-century revolutionary England, arguing that the manifesto is a uniquely modern form of political communication that both articulates reasons and enacts outrage, indignation, and the urgent desire to fight injustice, and also documenting the influence of the manifesto and the *Manifesto* in particular on the women's movements of the twentieth century.

In this regard the *Communist Manifesto* is of a piece with a broader tendency toward radical political discourse that came into its own in the wake of the French Revolution. While this radical discourse had many powerful spokespersons, in many ways it was this discourse's conservative critics, such as Edmund Burke and Joseph de Maistre, who most clearly discerned its distinctive transformational and liberatory power. A famous passage from Burke's 1795 "Letters on a Regicide Peace" makes the point in more ways than one:

> Deprived of the old Government, deprived in a manner of all Government, France, fallen as a Monarchy, to common speculators might have appeared more likely to be an object of pity or insult, according to the disposition of the circumjacent powers, than to be the scourge and terror of them all. But *out of the tomb of the murdered Monarchy in France, has arisen a vast, tremendous, unformed spectre, in a far more terrific guise than any which ever yet have overpowered the imagination and subdued the fortitude of man. Going straight forward to its end, unappalled by peril, unchecked by remorse, despising all common maxims and all common means, that hideous*

> *phantom overpowered those* who could not believe it was possible she could at all exist. . . . The poison of other States is the food of the new Republick.[15]

As in his earlier *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Burke here associates the tumult and violence of the French Revolution with the disrespect of the Enlighteners and their Enlightenment, ripping away the "decent drapery" that had long sustained order and authority. From the vantage point of his uniquely penetrating conservatism, he saw perhaps better than anyone else that behind these political revolutions was a novel form of communication, a public sphere centered on freedom of speech and press, the growth of a reading public, and the vulnerability of all social institutions to questioning. Just as interesting is the metaphor with which Burke treats this *bourgeois* movement, which conjoins critique and commerce: a vast, terrifying "spectre," a "hideous phantom" that hurtles forth, despising all common maxims, leaving no stone unturned, and no form of authority uncontested. For Burke a spectre is haunting Europe, the spectre of unchecked and uncontrollable *bourgeois* revolution. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned. . . . Burke was not alone in this prognosis, articulated also by his contemporary G. W. F. Hegel, and a half-century later by two of the greatest liberals of the nineteenth century, Alexis de Tocqueville (in *Democracy in America*) and John Stuart Mill (in "The Spirit of the Age"). For these writers, and for so many of their followers, modernity had unleashed a powerful force of intellectual and political liberation that had assumed a life of its own. It was as if History were running roughshod over customs, peoples, and authorities.[16]

In the *Manifesto* Marx and Engels both celebrate and take to a higher level this "ruthless criticism of everything existing" (Marx) that defined the "spirit of the age" (Mill). This is clear in its Introduction: "It is high time the Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the Spectre of Communism with a manifesto of the party itself" (73; all page references are to the present edition). Marx and Engels thus announce that they will use words, openly, in public, to rebut the slanders and dogmas—"nursery tales" fit perhaps for immature children but not for rational and autonomous adults—of their adversaries. The *Manifesto* thus makes *manifest* the truth, the "historical movement going on under our very eyes." It enters the field of public discourse and wages discursive battle for the future. The *Manifesto* does not simply extol Enlightenment. It *is* Enlightenment.

This is obvious in part II, "Proletarians and Communists," which explains

and defends “the theoretical conclusions of the Communists” (85), justifying the abolition of bourgeois private property, the bourgeois family, and the nation-state. It is here that Marx and Engels *argue* with the critics of Communism and with their criticisms, subjecting these criticisms to critique (though, as Steven Lukes insists in his essay below, these arguments are highly attenuated and often self-undermining). But it is even more obvious in part I, “Bourgeois and Proletarians,” which extols the revolutionary character and accomplishments of the bourgeoisie, in transforming society and politics and labor and industry, in awakening social labor from its “slumber” (a reference to Kant’s comment about David Hume), in “battering down Chinese walls” (77), and in creating “a world after its own image” (78). Like Burke, Marx and Engels see the bourgeoisie as a *revolutionary* class. Yet whereas Burke disparages this revolutionism, Marx and Engels embrace its idealistic spirit and its material consequences. Indeed, in emphasizing the revolutionary character of the bourgeoisie, they seek to exempt Communists from the charge that it is *they* who seek to revolutionize property and family. For it is indeed the bourgeoisie itself, and not the Communists, who render profane all that is holy. At the same time, insofar as Communists *do* promote revolution—purportedly speaking of course on behalf of the proletariat and not of themselves!—their radicalism springs not from “principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer” but from the “actual relations” called into existence by the bourgeoisie and its capitalist system (85). In this way, the *Manifesto* presents itself as the *Aufhebung*—the transcendence through *fulfillment*—of the intellectual, political, and technological forces unleashed by the modernism of the bourgeoisie. But this also represents fulfillment through *transcendence*. For if the bourgeoisie had in its lucidity succeeded in harnessing technical and political forces previously unimagined, constructing factories and markets and nation-states, it had also become intoxicated and overwhelmed by its own powers, “like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells” (78). For the bourgeoisie has called into existence forces of production that it cannot control, engendering economic crises, and forms of collective agency it cannot control, engendering a revolutionary proletariat that is destined to dig the graves of capitalism with the tools furnished by capitalism. The bourgeoisie has thus accomplished great and unprecedented things, but only by half. It thus falls to the revolutionary proletariat, informed by Communism, to incorporate, integrate, and coordinate the forces unleashed by bourgeois modernity. Only through a process of collective identification and will formation, political mobilization and organization, and economic socialization and regulation—a social transformation of Promethean proportions—can the

emancipatory promise of modernity be redeemed—by Communism.

The *Manifesto* and Democracy

The path that connects such a heroic vision of historical transcendence to the Communist dictatorships of the twentieth century is no doubt complicated, contingent, and more often than not tragic.[17] And this path is most certainly *not* the only trajectory of Marx's vision, as the history of European social democracy attests. At the same time, the arrogance latent in this vision of historical mastery ("the riddle of history solved") is a well-worn theme of twentieth-century political theory, from Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* to Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* to Jürgen Habermas's *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (it was also a central theme of antiCommunist dissidence in Eastern Europe, perhaps developed most powerfully in the writings of the Polish philosopher Leszek Kolakowski; on this theme, see Vladimir Tismaneanu's essay below).[18]

Equally important, however, is the historical fact that the *Manifesto's* revolutionary Prometheanism was advanced unambiguously in the name of *democracy*. In a well-known passage, the *Manifesto* declares that "the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class to win the battle of democracy" (91). It is also well known that the complexities of this formulation—"first step" as opposed to final step; the proletariat as "ruling class" as opposed to democracy as the transcendence of class rule—were later incorporated by Lenin into a theory of "revolutionary proletarian dictatorship" and/or "dictatorship of the proletariat." A formidable secondary literature has made clear that neither in the *Manifesto* nor elsewhere did Marx put forward a theory of a "dictatorship of the proletariat" (as a matter of fact, the term appeared only rarely in Marx's writings). Such a theory was left to his successors—though, as both Steven Lukes and Vladimir Tismaneanu make clear, in performing this task these successors no doubt drew on powerful elements of the Marx and Engels corpus (including aspects of its rhetoric of "democracy," for Lenin's prescribed dictatorship was a "*democratic* dictatorship of the proletariat").[19]

Marx and Engels were unambiguously behind "democracy" as this was widely understood in 1848. They opposed the privileging of any political or economic elite. And they supported maximal political inclusion and the "sovereignty" of the people over a wide range of topics hitherto considered to be

"beyond politics." That their understanding of "democracy" lacked a sufficient theory of law and rights; that it dismissed "bourgeois" understandings of civil society and the separation of public and private; and that it echoed dictatorial aspects of the French revolutionary experience brilliantly analyzed in J. L. Talmon's *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*—these points are now telling and well beyond dispute. But equally beyond dispute is that the *Manifesto* was drafted and then originally circulated on the eve of the "democratic revolutions" of 1848, long before "liberal democracy" existed in either practice or theory. The "democratic" bona fides of Marx and Engels are authentic and sincere, however wanting their understanding of democracy may seem—and rightly so—from our own post-totalitarian perspective (indeed, even from our own perspective it is well appreciated that the very concept of democracy is profoundly and "essentially contested").[20]

Here it is worth recalling that for the most important liberal political theorists of the nineteenth century—Benjamin Constant, François Guizot, Alexis de Tocqueville, and even John Stuart Mill—"democracy" was considered a force at once powerful, ineluctable, and profoundly *dangerous*. It was something to be addressed and incorporated, to be sure. But so that it could be "tamed" and regulated, and *not* so that it could be embraced. The writings of these liberals were marked by a powerful aversion to the egalitarian leveling that had been unleashed by the French Revolution, especially in its latter, more radical, Jacobin phases. For these writers the spirit of equality must be tempered by the "spirit of liberty," by an appreciation of the importance of private individual freedoms and the protection of "civil society" as a domain independent of the state and, indeed, of all forms of public coercive power.

These writers accepted the inevitability of representative government based on a more inclusive citizenry, and some, most especially Mill, lauded the advantages that such a government could in time bring, to both public welfare and public enlightenment. Further, as Habermas points out, many of these liberals defended a robust conception of a public sphere in which vigorous debate and argument about politics could take place. But while they welcomed the abolition of feudalism and monarchy and the institutionalization of representative government and freedom of expression, they were also frightened by the prospect of an untrammeled political equality and by the "irrationality" of an untutored and potentially "tyrannical" majority. They thus emphatically insisted on the inviolability of a private sphere beyond politics; and they just as emphatically supported restrictions upon universal suffrage and only a very gradual easing of these restrictions. These liberals were *not* "democrats" in the

parlance of their time (nor were they democrats in the parlance of our time). They did not claim to be democrats, and they were not considered to be democrats.[21]

On the other hand, when Marx and Engels speak about "winning the battle of democracy," they *mean* it, though not in the sense of liberal democracy that we in "the democratic" world now take (perhaps too much) for granted. For Marx and Engels, as for Tocqueville and Mill, "democracy" signified a universalizing and infectious egalitarianism that challenged all forms of authority and that pointed toward a more "emancipated" society. This is precisely why Marx and Engels *embrace* it. Communism thus fights "the battle of democracy" in the following senses: (1) the factory system engendered by capitalism turns workers into "privates of the industrial army [where] they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants" (80); (2) the conditions of factory life and urban residence concentrate workers and result in "the ever expanding union of the workers" (81), who experience the authoritarianism of industrial capitalism and struggle against it by organizing themselves; (3) in the course of this struggle they are forced to challenge the prerogatives of capitalist private property, compelling them to seek political power, requiring a level of access to the state that is typically denied them, and leading them to fight for expanded suffrage and political empowerment through the exercise of state power. In a political context marked by political disenfranchisement backed by state-enforced violence, this struggle is not necessarily peaceful. Furthermore, as Marx and Engels envision the struggle, it requires "despotic inroads on the rights of property," whereby political power is used to "wrest" power and privilege from the bourgeoisie (91). But it is nonetheless "democratic" in the sense that it seeks political inclusion as a political end and as a political means of greater social equality. Marx and Engels describe this movement as "the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority" (83). By empowering new constituencies and by politicizing "private" matters long insulated from political contestation, the proletarian movement is an inherently democratizing movement, and the Communists, who seek to empower this movement, are an inherently democratic political formation.

Victory in this "battle for democracy" is only a "first step" because, while it enfranchises workers (raising them "to the position of ruling class"), it does not thus guarantee the "sway" of this class, which would require not simply suffrage expansion but the successful and sustained *exercise* of political power by working-class political organizations acting in the interests of the working class. As Marx writes in a famous passage from *The Class Struggles in France*, fully

realized “bourgeois democracy” indeed suffers from a “comprehensive contradiction” which consists in the fact that

> the classes whose social slavery the constitution is to perpetuate . . . it puts in possession of political power through universal suffrage. And from the class whose old social power it sanctions, the bourgeoisie, it withdraws the political guarantees of this power. It forces the political rule of the bourgeoisie into democratic conditions, which at every moment help the hostile classes to victory and jeopardize the very foundations of bourgeois society. From the ones it demands that they should not go forward from political to social emancipation; from the others that they should not go back from social to political restoration.[22]

It was above all in this sense that Marx and Engels understood the socialist working-class movements with which they identified as being in the forefront of democracy, and why they subtitled their *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* the “Organ of Democracy.” Marx and Engels consistently linked the struggle for democracy with the struggle for socialism, believing that the expansion of the suffrage and the inclusion of the working classes would make possible—though not inevitable—the rule of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority. Political democracy and *social* democracy were thus part of a single historical process linked by the movement of the industrial proletariat to empower itself. In the same way, Marx and Engels consistently argued that the bourgeoisie would be torn between the principles of political emancipation that they had endorsed as a means of their own empowerment, on the one hand, and their fear of the working classes, on the other. Which is why it was up to the proletariat to “win the battle of democracy.” For only the proletariat had an interest in the full realization of democracy, that is, both its political codification through universal adult suffrage and the social extension of the principle of democratic equality through the socialization of property.

These themes are clearly developed in a two-part newspaper article published by Engels in late 1847, at exactly the moment at which Marx was revising the *Manifesto* for publication. “The Communists and Karl Heinzen” is a polemic against Karl Heinzen, a German democrat who chastised Communism for distracting and dividing the democratic movement with its radical property demands. Engels underscores that while the Communist platform most certainly does contain radical property demands, only once democracy has been achieved does it make any sense to press this agenda through the use of the very means of

political empowerment that democracy affords. The "task of the German democratic press," Engels argues, is

> to demonstrate the necessity for democracy by the worthlessness of the present government, which by and large represents the nobility, by the inadequacy of the constitutional system that brings the bourgeoisie to the helm, by the impossibility of the people helping itself so long as it does not have political power. Its task is to reveal the oppression of the proletarians, small peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie, for in Germany these constitute the "people," by the bureaucracy, the nobility and the bourgeoisie; how not only political but above all social oppression has come about, and by what means it can be eliminated; its task is to show that the conquest of political power by the proletarians, small peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie is the first condition for the application of these means. Its task is further to examine the extent to which a rapid realisation of democracy may be expected, what resources the party can command and what other parties it must ally itself with as long as it is too weak to act alone.

Engels continues:

> Far from starting futile quarrels with the democrats, in the present circumstances, the Communists for the time being rather take the field as democrats themselves in all practical party matters. In all civilised countries, democracy has as its necessary consequence the political rule of the proletariat, and the political rule of the proletariat is the first condition for all communist measures. As long as democracy has not been achieved, thus long do Communists and democrats fight side by side, thus long are the interests of the democrats at the same time those of the Communists. Until that time, the differences between the two parties are of a purely theoretical nature and can perfectly well be debated on a theoretical level without common action being thereby in any way prejudiced. Indeed, understandings will be possible concerning many measures which are to be carried out in the interests of the previously oppressed classes immediately after democracy has been achieved, *e.g.* the running of large-scale industry and the railways by the state, the education of all children at state expense, *etc.*[23]

In this polemic Engels underscores a point made emphatically in the *Manifesto*—that the Communists make vigorous use of a "democratic press," that they declare their principles and their aims openly, that they speak for "the people" and seek widespread popular support based on the interests of popular

constituencies, and that they promote the broadest possible coalition of democratic forces. As they put it in the concluding section of the *Manifesto*, Communists "labour everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries" (102). In their advocacy of such a broad and public movement, Marx and Engels consistently set themselves against those radicals—including the followers of the French revolutionary August Blanqui—who saw Communism as the movement of a conspiratorial elite justified in terms of either tactical expediency or privileged knowledge and inspiration. Marx and Engels unequivocally denounced such views.[24] This is the point of their insistence, in one of the most famous passages of the *Manifesto*, that Communists "do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement," and further that "the theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes" (84–85).

It is because of these clear commitments that Michael Harrington has insisted on "the democratic essence" of the *Manifesto*.[25] To be clear, this "democratic essence" was not liberal, though neither was it adamantly antiliberal. While Marx and Engels did consistently and vigorously defend freedom of expression—as perpetual targets of harassment, censorship, and arrest, they had little choice—their conception of "democracy" was strongly majoritarian, and involved little principled commitment to liberal understandings of civil liberty, minority rights, or constitutional restraints on government. And while they always opposed "Blanquism," and envisioned Communism as a mass movement requiring class alliances and political coalitions, the precise political strategies that they endorsed varied as the circumstances varied. In particular, while they endorsed the use of the ballot box to achieve communism wherever this seemed possible (most notably England and Holland), this did not entail a principled commitment to parliamentarism or nonviolence in the pursuit of proletarian empowerment. (It is perhaps worth keeping in mind here that contemporary supporters of "democracy promotion" are equally agnostic about the circumstances under which the use of violence might be justified as a means of overthrowing a dictatorial regime. I write this as someone who has himself been a supporter of so-called humanitarian intervention in Bosnia and Kosovo; who has never thought that liberal democracy entailed pacifism as a political strategy in nondemocratic and violent situations; and who has watched as the most cynical evocations of "democracy" were used to justify wars in Iraq and

Afghanistan.) Even more to the point, while their political views and commitments were broadly "democratic" in a complicated way, beneath these political commitments lay a set of understandings about labor, historical change, and communism as "the riddle of history solved"—which together comprised their "materialist conception of history"—that engendered some very dangerous ideas that clearly helped set the stage for the Bolshevik Revolution and the party-states that it established. [26] These ideas—about the essential dynamics and directionality of historical change, the power of prevailing views ("bourgeois ideology") to obscure an adequate understanding of these dynamics ("false consciousness"), and the privileged position and special insight accorded the revolutionary proletariat and especially Communists as spokespersons of proletarian interests—have been extensively analyzed and criticized, and they are the focus of the essays below by Steven Lukes and Vladimir Tismaneanu. At the same time, there is one aspect of this that bears some comment here—the paradoxical and indeed perverse way that the *Manifesto* rhetorically constitutes its very own "democratic" credentials and those of its authors. For it is not simply the case that the text espouses democracy. It also positions itself as a tribune of the people whose utterances possess a unique universality.

The *Manifesto's* Mundane History and Grandiose Pretension Reconsidered

The *Communist Manifesto* is now a principal dramatis persona of the monumental history of Western political thought. More, due to its extraordinary circulation, it has come to be regarded as a veritable "classic" of "world literature."[27] This is no doubt largely a function of the influence that it came to exert over the range of Marxisms that took shape after Marx's death in 1883. It is also abetted by the tendency of modern academics to canonize "great books" and to nurture scholarly narratives centered on the conversation of such "classics" across time and space (whether this be construed broadly as "the Western tradition" or even more capaciously as "world civilization"). But no doubt equally important is the *Manifesto's* own unique character as a historical and rhetorical enactment. As I have tried to indicate above, the *Manifesto* positions itself as the rightful heir to the legacy of the Enlightenment, and as an expression of the most authentically democratic tendencies of its time. Its "theoretical conclusions," Marx and Engels insist, "are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations

springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes" (85). Behind this disclaimer is a false modesty that defines the *Manifesto* and that must be considered part of its own intellectual and political legacy. In short, in the name of a sober realism and a disingenuous empiricism ("actual relations . . . under our own eyes"), the *Manifesto* offers an extraordinarily grandiose historical narrative. And from a position of actual marginality, it projects itself as in possession of unique historical insight and a privileged understanding of a historical process in the course of its very unfolding. While it is thus quite "natural" in retrospect to read it as a "classic" text of "the Western tradition" that condenses the main lines of modern political thought and that raises fundamental questions of world historical importance, in fact the *Manifesto* was originally an obscure text, written for a relatively marginal group of radical German émigrés, and published anonymously. Only years later did it first appear in print under the names of Marx and Engels, and only after Marx's death, under the stewardship of Engels, did it begin a second life as widely translated and widely published best seller. There is thus a stark discrepancy between the historical "weight" and grandiose representational claims of this rather brief pamphlet, on the one hand, and its original obscurity, on the other.

Here it is worth recalling some details of the *Manifesto's* mundane history.[28] It was drafted in Brussels at the very end of 1847 by Marx, with the collaboration of Engels, as authorized by the Second Congress of the Communist League. The league, which had recently changed its name from League of the Just—the name change was intended to signal clearer and broader ideological definition—was a radical group of German émigrés based in London. Originally an artisan-centered grouping with a vaguely communist message, under the gradual influence of Marx and Engels the league had become more ideologically centered on the politics of the industrial proletariat, and more oriented toward the "scientific" conception of history that Marx and Engels had first adumbrated in *The German Ideology*. Intended as the league's party program, the *Manifesto* was first published in London in February 1848, in German, as an anonymous, twenty-three-page pamphlet intended for circulation among league activists. Its publication was the culmination of a year-long discussion within the league about ideological direction and political strategy that was in large part occasioned by the first stirrings of revolutionary upsurge throughout Europe, especially in Germany. In the course of a single year—1848–1849—the league's central committee moved from London to Paris to Cologne, following the course of rebellion in the heart of Europe. Marx himself moved during this period from

Brussels to Paris to Cologne (hounded by local authorities at every step), founding his "Organ of Democracy," the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung (NRZ*), in Cologne in June 1848. But by the end of the year the democratic uprising in Germany had been routed, and within months the democratic revolutionaries had been driven underground (the Cologne Communist Trial of 1852 resulted in the conviction of league leaders and the dissolution of the league). In May 1849 Marx was forced to close the *NRZ.* And in early August Marx, fleeing arrest, arrived in London, where he remained until his death in 1883.

The *Manifesto* thus returned to its "humble origins," among the marginalized German exile community in London. As Engels wrote of the *Manifesto* in his Preface to the 1888 English edition translated by Samuel Moore (the same translation reproduced below), "It seemed henceforth doomed to oblivion" (107). Its revival only began more than two decades later, in the midst of the Paris uprising of 1871, commencing a publication history that only in time resulted in the iconic text that we envision when we think of "the *Communist Manifesto*." Indeed, in considering the genealogical complexity of this text, words offered by Michael Foucault in another context are relevant: "Genealogy does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things. . . . On the contrary, to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and to have value for us."[29]

It is not simply that the *Manifesto* has enjoyed a very complex history of circulation and reception. More importantly, its very character as a text—including such things as what it is called and what words are considered to be included within it, that is, what "it" actually *is*—is a complicated historical matter.[30] It is now well known that the currently accepted text was drafted by Marx as a revision of an earlier text penned by Engels in 1847. *That* text, "Principles of Communism"—which was unpublished by Engels, and only discovered in 1914—was originally written in the form of a "catechism," presenting direct questions followed by equally direct answers (e.g., "What is Communism? Communism is the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the proletariat"—a style that was to become the hallmark of Stalin's later contributions). It offers a straightforward and unsentimental outline of each major theme contained in the *Manifesto:* the history of class struggle, the distinctive character of proletarian "wage slavery," the rise and crises of

capitalism, the eventual concentration and growth of the proletariat, and the outlines of a Communist politics centered on the working class.[31]

Upon completing this text, however, Engels concluded that it lacked rhetorical power. He therefore sent it to Marx along with the following note:

> Give a little thought to the Confession of Faith. I think we would do best to abandon the catechetical form and call the thing Communist Manifesto. Since a certain amount of history has to be narrated in it, the form hitherto adopted is quite unsuitable. I shall be bringing with me the one from here, which I did; it is in simple narrative form, but wretchedly worded, in a tearing hurry. I start off by asking: What is communism? and then straight on to the proletariat—the history of its origins, how it differs from earlier workers, development of the antithesis between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, crises, conclusions. In between, all kinds of secondary matter and, finally, the communists' party policy, in so far as it should be made public. The one here has not yet been submitted in its entirety for endorsement but, save for a few quite minor points, I think I can get it through in such a form that at least there is nothing in it which conflicts with our views.[32]

The *Manifesto* is the result of the "little thought" given by Marx to the Engels text. Of course, that text was itself the product of what had already become a deep and extensive intellectual and political collaboration, which had produced, among other things, *The German Ideology* (1846). This set of circumstances is no doubt the reason why the *Manifesto* has come to be known as cowritten by Marx and Engels. But in fact, the actual text of the *Manifesto* was written by Marx, on the basis of an earlier and different text written by Engels. What is often seen as a simple collaboration is thus a quite complex coauthorship.

Indeed, the anonymous twenty-three-page pamphlet originally approved and published by the Communist League's central committee in February 1848 was originally entitled *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, and only came to be called the *Communist Manifesto* with the publication of the 1872 Leipzig edition. It would be an error to regard this change as merely semantic. And the change signified not simply a different political context, marked by the freeing of the text from its original organizational connection to the now-defunct Communist League, but a new "life" for the text itself. Because from this point forward the *Manifesto* would bear the names of its (complex) coauthors but also include their

glosses on the text, in the form of a series of Prefaces that sought to historicize and situate the text and simultaneously infuse it with current meaning. The Prefaces to the 1872 Leipzig edition and the 1882 Russian edition were cowritten by Marx and Engels. After Marx's death in 1883, a series of subsequent Prefaces were written by Engels (to the 1883 German edition; the 1888 English edition, which represented the most substantial commentary; the 1890 German edition; the 1892 Polish edition; and the 1893 Italian edition). These Prefaces have become virtually part of the text of the *Manifesto* itself, making quite manifest the layered nature of the text, as a complex "assemblage" of meanings in Foucault's sense.

"The" *Manifesto* thus consists of an original text (first published anonymously under a different title) but also, in a broader sense, the drafts by Engels that preceded it and the seven variously authored Prefaces that appeared in editions published in the course of two decades after the original was written, authorized, and published. This assemblage of authors and editions presents interesting challenges of interpretation. These challenges are magnified by the distinctive rhetorical character of the text itself, which further complicates and obscures the question of its authorship and indeed its status as a form of discursive representation. The *Manifesto*, in short, in a sense speaks neither for Marx nor for Engels nor Marx and Engels nor for the Communist League of 1848 nor even for the proletariat. It speaks for History itself. Much that is valuable has been written about the *Manifesto* as a work of literature that draws upon and alludes to the imagery and prose of the Bible, Shakespeare, and Goethe. The text not only asserts that history *is* class struggle. Its very structure dramatizes this class struggle. The *Manifesto* is a narrative centered on the encounter between heroic collective agents (bourgeois and proletarians, proletarians and communists) surrounded by less heroic agents (communist and feudal socialists, petty bourgeois socialists, "true" socialists, bourgeois socialists, utopian socialists, and a range of political "parties"). Its main dramatis personae are the revolutionary bourgeoisie, who call into existence an even more revolutionary proletariat, who (in possession of the equally revolutionary "forces of production") enter into collaboration with the Communists, who "merely express" in synthetic and "resolute" form the aspirations of the proletariat. The *Manifesto* stages this process of unfolding class struggle.

At the same time, as Martin Puchner has shown in his brilliant book *Poetry of the Revolution: Marx, Manifestoes, and the Avant-Gardes*, the *Manifesto* is a uniquely presumptuous speech act that anxiously, indignantly, and insistently speaks on behalf of an *imagined* future that gives meaning to the present. While

it presents the class struggle as a "real" process of unfolding, it also intervenes in this process, performatively creating its own addressee, a revolutionary proletariat that identifies politically with communism. As Puchner writes, "The space of this transition from a class in itself to a class for itself is precisely the space in which the *Manifesto* projects itself forward, anticipating what will have happened; it is the space of unauthorized theatricality and performative *poesis*. In this sense, the *Manifesto* practices not only a form of political speech act but a form of futuristic speech act."[33] The *Manifesto* is more than an appeal or a declaration. It is a grandiose historical metanarrative that impersonally describes a teleologically driven present and heralds a redemptive future, yet speaks for no one in particular. As Puchner notes, especially in its original, anonymous version, "the *Manifesto* appeared to be a text arising from the revolution even as it sought to trigger the revolution."[34] In a narrow sense the text can be seen as a rhetorically inflected "declaration of principles" of a specific organization, the Communist League. In a more broadly political sense it can be seen as an expression of the "theoretical conclusions of the Communists," which give voice to the aspirations and interests of the workers. In the broadest sense it can be seen as an articulation of History, which simultaneously renders history intelligible for a mass public audience and in doing so facilitates its forward movement. But however one reads the *Manifesto* rhetorically, it clearly purports to be *much* more than a mere commentary or set of proposals offered for public consideration by one or two radicals living in exile.

The representational status that the *Manifesto* claims for itself is much grander than this. At the same time, while the *Manifesto* speaks in the confident voice of historical self-understanding and self-disclosure, offering a synoptic perspective in which everything makes sense and has meaning, it also, and paradoxically, reveals the complexity of the ideological field of contestation within which it functions, and seeks to clear this field of its competitors. Its final two sections underscore this, especially section III, entitled "Socialist and Communist Literature." Here the text moves from the grandiose and sublime to the banal, presenting a summary and critique of the range of alternative conceptions of socialism on offer. Each is inserted into the grand narrative, shown to represent a class or class fraction other than the proletariat, and found wanting. This section does not offer a careful theoretical critique. But this is unsurprising, since the *Manifesto* is a polemic. This section slights and disparages Marx and Engels's closest ideological competitors. More to the point, it presents these competitors not as rivals of a specific political standpoint held by specific political agents, namely, the particular persons who have written the

text, that is, one Karl Marx and one Friedrich Engels. Instead, it presents these alternative viewpoints as artifacts (in contrast to itself, which is neither "invented" nor "discovered" but simply "expresses" actual relations) that are out of step with history (in contrast to itself, which anticipates a more progressive future, and indeed speaks from a standpoint that can understand these rivals, and their anachronistic deficiencies, better than they understand themselves). Here Marx and Engels diminish their very real ideological adversaries while at the same time maintaining that their targets are not really serious adversaries at all and that in any case such adversaries are not *their* targets, since it is not they who are speaking but rather an impersonal text that is manifesting the "theoretical conclusions of the Communists."

In this way the *Manifesto* not simply prescribes but enacts a politics, purporting to be a transcendent historical representation while imperiously asserting hegemony over the ideological field, claiming for itself a unique universality while agonistically defining itself in opposition to both conservative and bourgeois apologists and false prophets of socialism, and heralding a new form of collective historical agency while justifying this agency and, indeed, its heralding in terms of overarching historical necessities and directionalities. Such a performative politics is hardly unique to the *Manifesto* as a text. At the same time, it is not hard to discern the connection between Marx and Engels's imperious rhetorical posturing, however sincere, and the forms of substitutionism and political authoritarianism that came to characterize "Marxism after Marx," especially after the profound innovations wrought by Lenin's Bolshevik interpretation of Marxism.[35] For in the twentieth century Marxism was plagued by the disjuncture between its ideological claims and organizational forms, on the one hand, and the proletarian constituencies that it purported to represent, on the other. And the more it became clear that Communism did not merely "express actual relations" but *framed* and *organized* them in very specific and often disturbing ways, the more the gap between its representative aspirations and its actual representational status was filled by political assertions of will, a problem latent within the complexities of the original manifesto—the *Manifesto*—that helped to constitute Communism as a tradition.[36]

In connection with its imperious claim to hegemony, it is also perhaps worth noting the *violence* of the *Manifesto's* rhetoric. The *Manifesto* does not issue a call for violent revolution. Its endorsement of "despotic inroads on the rights of property" (91) is a call for what Mill elsewhere labeled "class legislation," that is, the enactment of political measures that infringe upon, limit, or abolish

bourgeois property rights. They are “despotic” in the sense that they involve “conquest” of the state and use of the state to undermine what are considered by bourgeois society to be “natural rights.” They involve the use of the coercive force of the state, but no more so than all political power draws upon state coercion. With regard to political strategy, the *Manifesto* is agnostic concerning the use of violence, and indeed the text displays a remarkable eclecticism in its treatment of the range of class alliances and political coalitions that Communists should seek, based on the range of local circumstances they face. This is not to say that Marx and Engels blanch at violence. To the contrary. But neither do they extol a politics of violent insurrection. The violence of the *Manifesto* lies less in its political program than in its *rhetoric*, which is not simply agonistic but *antagonistic*, insisting on the grounding of communist politics in “hostile antagonism.” This surfaces in its “realistic” account of “the more or less veiled civil war” whose rage characterizes capitalism, and in the more or less matter-of-fact way it anticipates that at some point this war will “break out into open revolution,” leading to a “violent overthrow” of the bourgeoisie (83). Even more, it lies in the disparaging ways in which Marx and Engels treat their political adversaries, and in their faith in a historical trajectory that will sweep away all obstacles to “emancipation.” The *Manifesto* is a fighting text, and the “tremble” (102) of the ruling classes that its penultimate paragraph anticipates is the dying shudder of a class on its way to being supplanted, overthrown, *buried under*, by the proletariat who is its “gravedigger.”

The *Manifesto* is thus at once an ordinary and mundane text that evolved in political space and time, and a grandiose rhetorical enactment that claims historical privilege and indeed revels in a kind of rhetorical violence. An artifact of the mid-nineteenth century, thanks to the cunning of history it both experienced a revival and helped to fuel a revival*ism* of revolutionary radicalism that greatly defined the politics of the twentieth century.

The *Manifesto* and Contemporary Politics

And so here we are, still at the dawn of the twenty-first century, able to gaze back upon the entirety of the twentieth and to rethink the *Manifesto*, and the intellectual/political tradition of Marxism more generally, from the vantage point of more than a century of Marxism and anti-Marxism, liberalism and antiliberalism, totalitarian democracy/dictatorship and liberal democracy, modernity and postmodernity, and, finally, the much discussed and short-lived post-1989 “end of history.” The *Manifesto* is a key text of modern political

thought, in the sense that it condenses much of the history that precedes it and anticipates much of the history that succeeds it, and in the sense that in acquiring a life of its own, it became a principal player in the historical drama that it sought to narrate, the still unfolding drama of political modernity. As the philosopher Charles Taylor has eloquently put it, this drama has exhibited both much grandeur and much misery. The *Manifesto* has contributed as much as any text to both (though, it bears emphasizing, the sources of modern grandeur and even more of misery have been manifold). We can read in it powerful and prescient encomiums to modern technology and its contributions to productivity and the possibilities of mass consumerism, material abundance, and the enhanced quality of "ordinary life," but also a characteristic blindness to the ravages of instrumental reason and of the domination of nature, both nonhuman and human. It celebrates more than any other text in the history of political thought the political agency of workers (and their right/duty to rebel against injustice), but also circumscribes this agency within a single ideological narrative, and simultaneously reduces all other forms of agency to their so-called class content. It issues a ringing critique of the "bourgeois family" and its treatment of women as "instruments of production" under the banner of "privacy"—offering a very early version of the notion that "the personal is political"—and yet enfolds this critique within a discourse of class struggle in which there seems little room for the autonomous political agency of women.[37] It unequivocally endorses the spread of democracy through the broadest possible political inclusion and the subjection of the broadest possible social sphere to public deliberation and regulation. And yet its democratic discourse is markedly antipluralistic, and is tone-deaf to the moral and legal importance of individual rights and democratic procedures.

From the vantage point of the present, perhaps the most prescient aspect of the *Manifesto* is its insight into the way that capitalism revolutionizes all "fixed and frozen" relationships, reducing everything to a "cash nexus" and creating a truly global market in capital, labor, and commodities. As Saskia Sassen points out in her contribution to this volume, the *Manifesto's* account of this is more complicated than it first appears, offering penetrating insights both into the way "globalization" effaces boundaries *and* into the way that these boundaries—especially those associated with the nation-state—are themselves reshaped so as to actively contribute to the "denationalization" of production, finance, and law. While the *Manifesto* most assuredly could not anticipate the current political or economic formats of capital accumulation and globalization, and while its internationalism clearly and fatefully minimized the enduring importance of

national allegiances, it is nonetheless true that more than any other "classic" of modern social and political thought, the *Manifesto* highlights the importance of these global phenomena. Equally important, it diagnosed with great insight the "creative destruction" (as Joseph Schumpeter put it) that this universal capitalism engenders, like a sorcerer who has summoned up mysterious and incontrollable powers from beyond. Further, it underscored the very material consequences of this creative destruction, which leaves in the wake of its "progress" ravaged industries, depopulated communities, and dislocated and disadvantaged workers.

It is often claimed that we inhabit a post-Marxist world. Strictly speaking, to say that we live in a post-Marxist age presumes too much—that there is a single "we" who reads and engages Marx, and that "we" can now see past Marxism; that before the current moment there existed some degree of consensus regarding the importance of Marx, a consensus that no longer exists; and that we, whoever "we" are, can definitively understand and proclaim what no longer defines our era (Marxism) and what does define it (liberalism? fundamentalism? not-Marxism?). This way of thinking is, ironically, too redolent of the worst features of Marxist historicism, with its singular historical script and its "dustbin" of history. In point of fact there is not now nor ever was a single "we." Marxism has always addressed multiple constituencies, and within these constituencies, themselves complex, it has always resonated in a variety of ways. Marxism has indeed lost most of its political support and its intellectual credibility, through a process that culminated in 1989. But 1989 was preceded by 1956 (Khrushchev's anti-Stalin "Secret Speech" and the Hungarian uprising violently suppressed by the Communist regime), which was preceded by 1939 (the Hitler-Stalin Pact), which was preceded by 1923 (the rise of Stalin), which was preceded by 1921 (the Kronstadt rebellion), which was preceded by 1917, which was preceded by 1914, which was preceded by 1899 (the publication of Eduard Bernstein's *Evolutionary Socialism*), which was preceded. . . . Each of these dates signifies a crisis, a critique, an alienation, or an apostasy within Marxism. As so many commentators have observed, Marxism has from the beginning been a tradition of disputation. As Leszek Kolakowski once observed, many generations of Marxists have had their own "'56s," sobering experiences of disillusion and rethinking that caused a break with Marxist allegiances. But, even more to the point, Marxism *never* defined the moral and political horizons of all important intellectuals and politicians, from Max Weber and John Dewey to Hannah Arendt and Albert Camus and Raymond Aron.[38] So whatever may be true regarding the disenchantment of Marxists and of Marxism, it makes no sense to

posit a simplistic dichotomy of Marxist/post-Marxist.

At the same time, it is undoubtedly true that in the post-1968 and especially the post-1989 period, Marxism has ceased to be a galvanizing intellectual or political force *even on the left*, especially in Europe but even more broadly (in the Latin America of Hugo Chavez's Venezuela and Evo Morales's Bolivia, it is populism and not Marxism that is the principal discourse of mobilization). Assuming, of course, that the designation "left" any longer retains a clear and compelling meaning as a political category—a question that has itself received a fair amount of attention since 1989.[39] What Nancy Fraser wrote about "postMarxism" on the occasion of the *Manifesto's* 150th anniversary in 1998 seems right to me as an account of both the intellectual left and the political left more broadly, such as it is: "Marxism as the metanarrative or master discourse of oppositional politics in capitalist societies is finished. So is Marxism as a totalizing theory of the system dynamics, crisis tendencies, and conflict potentials in capitalist societies. Rather, we have witnessed the rise of a new, postmarxian field of critical theorizing. . . . The only possible future for Marxism is as one contributing strand among others in this new postmarxian field."[40] The "postmarxian field" of critique that concerns Fraser includes a range of subaltern and oppositional identities, "multicultural" claims to recognition, and new social movements centering on gender and race, speaking in a cacophony of voices and vocabularies. Fraser maintains that these voices and vocabularies are important in their own right, and that they explode the myth of a single "master discourse" of critique. At the same time, she holds that the Marxian critique of capitalism retains its value when shorn of its totalizing aspirations.

Fraser would be the first to admit that in the decade since she wrote those words "critical theory" has moved even further from Marxism and its distinctive concern with the injustices of capitalism and the disempowerment of workers. And as these concerns have moved even further from the center of theorizing on the left, and as this intellectual left has experienced numerous fractures, Marxism has moved correspondingly farther from the center of political theorizing more generally, as a center of gravity or even simply as a source of countergravitational pull. We no longer have figures like Sidney Hook *or* John Dewey, like Paul Sweezy *or* Joseph Schumpeter, like Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty *or* Hannah Arendt and Raymond Aron. What is gone is not simply the sense of Marxism as a "metanarrative of oppositional politics" but increasingly the sense that there is a real and consequential public intellectual debate about the justice of capitalism and the possibility of alternative futures.[41] Of course there is denunciation of the injustices associated with global debt or

the treatment of postcolonial or indigenous peoples or the rights of migrant laborers, and this is important. But it is less clear that such discourse constitutes *public intellectual* debate, that it is either seriously intellectual or has broad public valence or is attached to well-organized and socially rooted political constituencies. This is the most powerful sense in which we occupy a "post-Marxist" moment—Marxism has ceased to matter very much in a broad political sense, as a source of intellectual or political inspiration or as a source of intellectual or political revulsion. This is so in spite of the recent resurgence of interest in Marx occasioned by the financial crisis, and it is so even in spite of the insight contained in Derrida's account of the lingering presence of Marx's spectre. Derrida knew as much. His call for a recognition of "indebtedness" to Marx was laced with qualifications. He writes, for example, of a "selective critique" that will "filter the inheritance" of its reductive tendencies, and of a "Marxian tradition in its opening and the constant transformation that should have and will have to characterize it." Most important of all, he acknowledges that "a set of transformations of all sorts (in particular, techno-scientifico-economico-media) exceeds both the traditional givens of the Marxist discourse and those of the liberal discourse opposed to it." The "spirit of Marx" that he reclaims is in the end a refusal of any form of essentialism, an "opening to the event and to the future as such." But Derrida makes clear that while such an openness may draw inspiration and even insight from Marx's critique of capitalism, this critique has been the source of closure as well as openness, and it is in any case not the only source of openness. His essay thus ends with a serious discussion of the challenges that today confront human dignity and human rights — "never have violence, inequality, exclusion, famine, and thus economic oppression affected as many human beings in the history of the Earth"—and calls for a "new International" that might creatively address these challenges. His vision is worth quoting:

> The name of new International is given here to what calls to the friendship of an alliance without institution among those who, even if they no longer believe or never believed in the socialist-Marxist International, in the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the messiano-eschatological role of the universal union of the proletarians of all lands, continue to be inspired by at least one of the critical spirits of Marx or Marxism (they now know that there is more than one) and in order to ally themselves, in a new, concrete, and real way, even if this alliance no longer takes the form of a party or of a worker's international, but rather of a kind of counter-conjuration.[42]

A "counter-conjuration," whatever this means, would seem a far cry from the kind of programmatic, mobilizational, and frankly *ideological* texts that anchored Marxism, none more significantly than the *Manifesto*, which was, after all, a *Communist* manifesto. Derrida's "new International" indeed combines a nonspecific but sincere radicalism with a powerful and exemplary commitment to cosmopolitan hospitality and *human rights*. This is in many ways a compelling politics, and it is revealing that in his last years it placed Derrida in an alliance with Habermas, the most explicit formerly Marxist political theorist of liberal democracy.[43] My key point is simply that Derrida's "Marxism" is not really in any political sense a "Marxism" at all, and, indeed, in many ways this "new Internationalism" contains marked features of *liberalism*.[44]

Alain Badiou's injunction to renew what he calls the "communist hypothesis" is even more vague and allusive, however compelling may be the political cause of immigrant *sans papiers* rights to which it is linked. For unlike Derrida's text, Badiou's essay avoids a serious engagement with the failures of actual Communism or the real reasons for the actual marginality of Marxism and the decline of "the communist hypothesis" as an actual political rallying point. Instead, it expresses an almost existential revulsion toward liberal democracy and, indeed, against "every consensual vision of politics." Badiou is candid here: "A politics is a hazardous, militant and always partially undivided fidelity to evental singularity under a solely self-authorizing prescription."[45] He thus prescribes fidelity to Marxism as a form of "courage" and almost ungrounded commitment to oppose liberal democracy. Slavoj Zizek makes a similar move, calling not simply for a renewal of Marxism or of its "communist hypothesis" but for a revival of "Lenin." But his "Lenin" signifies neither "old dogmatic certainty" nor any specific party structures or political strategies, nor does it even seem to implicate the actual history of Communism. "To put it in Kierkegaardian terms," he writes, "the Lenin we want to retrieve is the Lenin-in-becoming, the Lenin whose fundamental experience was that of being thrown into a catastrophic new constellation in which old coordinates proved useless. . . . 'Lenin' stands for the compelling freedom to suspend the stale, existing (post)ideological coordinates . . . it simply means we are allowed to think again."[46] So if for Badiou the renewal of communism means an existential fidelity to revolution, for Zizek it means a commitment to "think"—where "thinking" seems to mean neither an ethics nor a political program nor even a mode of political judgment but instead an insistent and reflexive *rejection* of capitalism and liberal democracy. Such an approach breaks with conventional forms of political theory, and Zizek thus frankly embraces "the *madness* (in the

strict Kierkegaardian sense) of this Leninist utopia."[47] It is perhaps a similar "madness" that lies behind his recent contribution to Verso's new Revolutions series, which offers "classic revolutionary writings set ablaze by today's radical writers": *Slavoj Zizek Presents Robespierre: Virtue and Terror*. Here Zizek—who has similarly "presented" Verso editions of Leon Trotsky's *Terrorism and Communism* and Mao Zedong's *On Practice and Contradiction*—links Robespierre's classic defense of the Jacobin terror to a critique of the "Kantian horizon of democracy" and its counterposition of terror and human rights. "The problem here," he writes, "is not terror as such—our task today is precisely to reinvent emancipatory terror."[48] Such texts no doubt articulate a hostility toward liberalism. But this does not constitute a politics, revolutionary or otherwise, in anything but a gestural sense. Any more than the republished texts of Robespierre, or Trotsky, or Mao, or Lenin, and so on, constitute a program of, or even an incitement to, revolution. With these texts we have traveled a long way from the *Manifesto* and its synthesis of philosophical history and political strategy and its historical optimism about the forward march of labor. We are now in the domain of academic celebrity—"Slavoj Zizek Presents"—and revolutionary nostalgia if not farce.

The reality to which such nostalgia is one particular "left-wing" response is that the world of the *Manifesto* is a world we have lost. The politically most valuable aspects of the Marxist vision contributed to the growth of the modern labor movement, the expansion of political democracy, the development of modern social democratic parties and movements, and the formation of a range of other social justice movements associated historically with the left. The politically most disturbing aspects of the Marxist vision helped to engender Bolshevism, the Russian Revolution, the Comintern, and the experiences of Communist dictatorship in the twentieth century. The world of capitalism and liberal democracy at the dawn of the twenty-first century represents no liberal utopia and no end of history. It is rife with violence and injustice. In such a world creative political thinking and acting are in short supply. The *Manifesto* is part of the history of this world, and the effort to rethink it is a necessary part of the broader rethinking that this world demands. At the same time, the pamphlet's grandiosity, rhetorical militancy, and historical earnestness are hard to take seriously given the range of problems not reducible to the terms of its class analysis, and the manifest political failures associated with the effort to use it as the foundation for a revolutionary politics, and, most important, given the genuine achievements of political liberalism and social democracy.

It is these genuine achievements of political liberalism and social democracy

that indeed form the intellectual and political horizon of this volume as a whole, and account for the fact that while each of the volume's essays underscores the historical importance and even contemporary relevance of Marx's critique of capitalism, none of them is framed around the metanarrative of class struggle that lies at the heart of the *Manifesto*. This is not because class no longer matters. It is because class never mattered *in the way in which the Manifesto claims*, even if the *Manifesto* offered a prescient and indeed profound account of central injustices and crisis tendencies of capitalism, and even if these features of capitalism still exist.

This is why a book like Terry Eagleton's *Why Marx Was Right* is both smart and too clever by at least half. For while it is true enough that Marx was not the straw man his fiercest critics make him out to be, and that he was a brilliant analyst of nineteenth-century capitalism, knocking down foolish and one-sided criticisms of Marx does not a compelling defense of Marx make. For Marx was not a Weberian. He did not simply offer astute analyses of capitalism. He offered a totalizing metanarrative of human emancipation through communism. And the fact that a much-transformed capitalism still exists, that workers suffer and that global inequalities abound, does not vindicate this metanarrative. It simply means that capitalism is still a problem and that we ought to attend to it. And while Marx is one important resource in this effort, it surely does not follow from this that "Marx was right," or even that "he was right enough of the time about enough important issues to make calling oneself a Marxist a reasonable self-description" (which is not quite the same thing as saying that one is a Marxist).[49]

In his introduction to Pluto Press's 2008 edition of the *Manifesto*, the geographer David Harvey, a self-described Marxist, makes a similar leap, from the correct observation that "we live in a world of turbocharged capitalism" to the claim that "the world the *Manifesto* describes has in no way disappeared," and from there to the claim that the *communism* of Marx and Engels remains an unsurpassed horizon. "Go now to the Pearl River Delta (with factories employing as many as 40,000 workers), the maquila zones of Mexico, the clothing factories in Bangladesh, the sewing shops of the Philippines, the shoe producers in Vietnam, the mines of Brazil and Orissa," he writes, "and dare say they were wrong!"[50] Harvey's prose is brilliant. And who could dare to question that the places he mentions are places where the injustices of capitalism thrive? But does it follow from this that it would be outrageous to declare Marx and Engels wrong? Were they the only ones to note these injustices? Is Marxism the only banner under which these injustices have been contested? The answer to

these questions is obviously no. And, indeed, Harvey's own conclusion would seem to concede as much, for in place of the *Manifesto's* own confident materialist account of the overcoming of capitalism, he offers a poetic expression of faith: "Communists are all those who work incessantly to produce a different future to that which capitalism portends. While institutionalised communism may be dead, there are by this measure millions of communists among us, willing to act upon their understandings, ready to creatively pursue the political imperatives that the *Manifesto* defines and, above all, ready to open their hearts and minds to this inspirational message that echoes down to us from the doleful days of 1848. . . . We communists are the persistent spectral presence, conjured up by the bourgeoisie out of the nether world, the sorcerers who can weave our own distinctive magic, our own sense of class destiny, into the woof and weft of our historical geography. . . . The struggle continues."[51] But of course the entire point of the *Manifesto* was to think institutionally not simply about capitalism but about communism as the higher form of society growing within its womb.

As I have noted above, the *Manifesto* was part of a broader, agonistic plebeian public sphere that grew out of the bourgeois public sphere famously analyzed by Jürgen Habermas. Perhaps the most anachronistic feature of the *Manifesto* is not its intellectual credulity toward metanarratives or its simplistic class reductionism or its historical optimism, but the kind of robust public sphere that it presupposed. The *Manifesto* was a public intellectual intervention in a public intellectual debate about the future of Europe and the relationships between capitalism, socialism, and democracy. It was a literary text, a pamphlet written for a plebeian reading public, and it offered a program and a sense of possibility to a public world inflamed by and absorbed in debating programs and possibilities. What was a profoundly political and indeed a revolutionary text intended for a politicized and politically literate readership is now a historical artifact of our postindustrial, postmodern, postliterate culture. As we rethink the *Manifesto* as a historical text, and as we consider its moral and political and economic insights *and* blindnesses, we might also consider how odd it is that this radical text has become academically canonized, domesticated, and incorporated in the ways that it has, at the same time that the politics to which it was linked has been incorporated, effaced, and defeated. Revisiting it can be a sobering exercise that reminds us how far removed we are from a world where public intellectual debates really mattered politically.

At the same time, revisiting it can also be a heartening intellectual and political exercise. Intellectually, it can remind us that in the same way that the

Manifesto entered into and dramatically influenced the course of intellectual history, we are heirs to a complex tradition of intellectual history and political thought that *lives*, if only by virtue of our attentiveness to it. By engaging the *Manifesto* as a work of political theory—along with other important works of political theory—we gain a better understanding of the intellectual but also the *political* history that we inherit, and also invigorate our sense of imaginary possibility. Such an intellectual exercise is never "merely" intellectual. For it involves the exercise not simply of our intellectual capacities but of our capacities for historical imagination, ethical discernment, and political judgment. What this means politically is necessarily an open question. But the question that it opens is the question of who we are and how we wish to inhabit our common world. Reading old books cannot answer this question. But reading them forces us to think and allows us to better to think for ourselves. The *Manifesto* is a historical artifact. But, like all such artifacts, its legacies endure, and our consideration of these legacies helps us not simply to endure but to move forward. In a different context, Hannah Arendt wrote about a particular way of thinking historically: "Like a pearl diver who descends to the bottom of the sea, not to excavate the bottom and bring it to light but to pry loose the rich and the strange, the pearls and the coral in the depths and to carry them to the surface, this thinking delves into the depths of the past—but not in order to resuscitate it the way it was and to contribute to the renewal of extinct ages. What guides this thinking is the conviction that . . . the process of decay is at the same time a process of crystallization, that in the depth of the sea, into which sinks and is dissolved what once was alive, some things suffer a 'sea-change' and survive in new crystalline forms and shapes that remain immune to the elements, as though they waited only for the pearl diver who one day will come down to them and bring them up to the world of the living."[52]

The text of the *Manifesto* that follows is part of the "ocean" that is the history of political thought. A rich text, with a rich and deep history, it is itself a kind of ocean. The essays that follow it are intended as guides. Each of them treats the *Manifesto* from the vantage point of its author's distinctive intellectual and scholarly trajectory.

In "The Morals of the *Manifesto*," Steven Lukes addresses a much-debated question: Is Marx's critique of capitalism a moral critique? More specifically, how should we make sense of the fact that Marx's discussion is laced with indignation and moral judgment, and yet at the same time disparages "merely" moral argument? Lukes—one of the foremost contemporary social theorists,

who has written important books on Émile Durkheim, power, and relativism—writes in an analytic vein, in a manner that recalls the approach of Isaiah Berlin. Like Berlin, Lukes joins intellectual history, ethics, and political theory. And like Berlin, he is preoccupied with the importance of moral pluralism and individual liberty, and with the ways in which historical grand narratives endanger these values.[53] At the same time, Lukes writes as a man of the left, keenly attentive to the moral failings of market societies and the moral progress associated with the development of social democracy. In developing these themes, Lukes returns to concerns developed more than two decades ago in his 1985 introduction to Václav Havel's *The Power of the Powerless* and his *Marxism and Morality* of the same year.[54]

In "The *Communist Manifesto:* Between Past and Present," Stephen Eric Bronner considers the *Manifesto* as a text of European Enlightenment and radical democratic political aspiration. Centering on the democratic revolutions of 1848 that form the essential historical backdrop of the *Manifesto*, Bronner discusses both the broader traditions of post-1789 political radicalism upon which Marx and Engels drew and the democratic legacies of their political project. Bronner's essay focuses on the historical conditions, limitations, and legacies of the *Manifesto*. In developing these themes, Bronner offers a concise yet rich account of the history of Marxist thought, drawing freely from his acclaimed book *Socialism Unbound*. And while he is acutely aware of the *Manifesto's* deficiencies, Bronner also believes that it is a text of enduring intellectual and inspirational value to twenty-first-century democrats.

Vladimir Tismaneanu offers a more jaundiced and skeptical reading of the *Manifesto*. In "Reflections on the Fate of Marxism in Eastern Europe: Fulfillment or Bastardization?" Tismaneanu reflects on the experience of what used to be called "really existing socialism" in Eastern Europe. Tismaneanu comes by this topic honestly. A child of parents who fought for the Republic during the Spanish Civil War, he grew up in the Romania of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Nicolae Ceau$sescu, and emigrated to the West in 1981. Tismaneanu is a professor of government and director of the Center for the Study of Post-Communist Societies at the University of Maryland who has written important intellectual histories of East European Marxism and the anticommunist dissident movements that came to the fore during the revolutions of 1989.[55] He writes as a scholar of Communism and post-Communism who is also a Romanian public intellectual. As chair of Romanian president Traian Basescu's Presidential Commission for the Study of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania, he presided over the drafting of an important and controversial 2006

Final Report documenting and denouncing the crimes committed by the Romanian Communist regime of 1945–1989.[56] While deeply engaged with the question of "reckoning with the past" in the post-Communist world, Tismaneanu has also written extensively about the dangers posed by right-wing populism in post-Communist settings, especially in Romania, most notably in his 1998 *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe*.[57] His essay is a reflection on the responsibility of the *Communist Manifesto* in particular, and Marxism in general, for the crimes committed by Communist regimes in the twentieth century. Tismaneanu's is the most evocative and personal of the essays contained in this volume, and with good reason, given his background and ongoing experience dealing with Communism in Romania. At the same time, in developing his theme, he draws upon a broader antitotalitarian genealogy of Marxism whose most prominent contributors include Czeslaw Milosz, Raymond Aron, Leszek Kolakowski, François Furet, and Agnes Heller.

In "Marxism and Globalization: Revisiting the Political in the *Communist Manifesto*," Saskia Sassen addresses most directly the question of the *Manifesto's* contemporary relevance for thinking about the challenges of globalization and global capitalism. Sassen is a distinguished social theorist who has produced pathbreaking studies of globalization and its effects on the development of the contemporary global city as a new form of urban space.[58] As she indicates in her essay, her work can usefully be seen as the itinerary of a post-1968 social scientist working through the discourse of post-Marxist social theory. Her piece focuses on the ways in which the *Manifesto* anticipates (and fails to anticipate) the complex relationships between territory, economics, and politics that characterize contemporary capitalism. Like such writers as Manuel Castells, Ulrich Beck, and Mary Kaldor, Sassen is interested in the ways that institutions of state sovereignty intersect with new forms of transnationalism.[59] At the same time, her work remains focused on the kinds of dislocations and injustices that have long preoccupied social scientists influenced by both Karl Marx and Max Weber. She makes this clear in a recent interview worth quoting in light of her essay below: "There is a north-south divide marked by radical differences in hunger, deaths, kinds of war. But these differences in a way belong to an older history, even though they are also becoming part of a new history. In this new history, there are realities that cut across borders and across this old north-south divide. Thus the elites in Sao Paulo and the elites in Manila both share an emergent geography of centrality that connects them—rather comfortably—with elites in New York, or in Paris. There are parallel

geographies of poverty and disadvantage that also cut across old divides: we are becoming a planet of urban glamour zones and urban slums. I focus on these types of formations. It's not enough to talk of rich countries and poor countries."[60] Sassen's commentary on the *Manifesto* makes clear that Marx's critical account of the contradictions of capitalism is of continuing relevance, in terms of both its substantive analysis and its method.

Each of the essays that follow the *Manifesto* below offers a distinctive perspective on the text and its importance. In soliciting these essays, I tried to represent a range of approaches in ethical theory, intellectual history, and social theory. At the same time, I sought out commentators who could reflect on the text in terms of their own substantial scholarly agendas. I wished for essays from scholars who were not experts or specialists on Marx, but whose work has put them in a sustained dialogue with Marx, and who could reflect intelligently and at the same time personally on that dialogue. Each of the essays, then, should be viewed as no more than a particular guide through some complicated and deep intellectual and historical waters. There are other guides elsewhere. Such guides are there to help us gain our bearings. But in the end, the only way truly to experience the ocean is to dive in, to discover what crystals lie beneath, and to bring them to the surface. There is beauty in the way such crystals reflect the light of day. There is also illumination. In the passage quoted above, Arendt, one of the greatest political theorists of the twentieth century, and herself a legendary "pearl diver," furnishes great wisdom. Why rethink "the Western tradition"? Why rethink the *Communist Manifesto?* Because doing so promises intellectual and political invigoration, both in the process of reading itself and in the insights and inspiration that such reading might bring to "the world of the living," which is, after all, a world that we share together and that we might change together.

NOTES

1. See Phil Glasper, "Afterword: Is the *Manifesto* Still Relevant?" in Phil Glasper, ed., *The Communist Manifesto: A Road Map to History's Most Important Political Document* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2005), p. 115, n. 11.

2. "Ten Most Harmful Books of the 19th and 20th Centuries," *Human Events*, posted 5/31/2005, at http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=7591; BBC Press Office, "Marx Wins In Our Times Greatest Philosopher Vote," posted 7/13/2005, http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2005/07_july/13/radio4.sh BBC News, "Marx the Millennium's 'Greatest Thinker,"' posted 10/1/1999, at

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/461545.stm.

3. Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto: A Norton Critical Edition*, edited by Frederic L. Bender (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988); Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, with an Introduction and Notes by Gareth Stedman Jones (London: Penguin Classics, 1992); Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, with an Introduction by Martin Malia (New York: Signet, 1998); Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto: A Modern Edition*, with an Introduction by Eric Hobsbawm (London: Verso, 1998); Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto: 150th Anniversary Edition*, with a Foreword by Paul M. Sweezy and "The *Communist Manifesto* after 150 Years" by Ellen Meiksins Wood (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998); Mark Cowling, ed., *The Communist Manifesto: New Interpretations*, Including, in Full, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, translated by Terrell Carver (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998).

4. See Richard Rorty, "Failed Prophecies, Glorious Hopes," Otto Kallscheuer, "The West, the Rest, and the Prophet," Benjamin R. Barber, "How Not to Change the World," Dick Howard, "Toward a Democratic Manifesto," and Saskia Sassen, "From Internationalism to DeNationalization? Thinking about the Manifesto Today," in *Constellations*, vol. 6, no. 2 (1999); "Symposium: The Relevance of Marxism on the 150th Anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto*," with "Introduction" by Julius Jacobson, *New Politics*, vol. 6, no. 4 (new series), and whole of no. 4 [Winter 1998]; Leo Panitch and Colin Leys, eds., *The Communist Manifesto Now: Socialist Register 1998* (London: Merlin Press, 1998); and thirteen commentaries introduced by Bertell Ollman, "What We Can Still Learn from the *Communist Manifesto:* The Dance of the Dialectic, Or How to Study the Communist Future Inside the Capitalist Present," *Socialism and Democracy*, vol. 12, no. 1 (1998), pp. 1–208. See also Aijaz Ahmad, "The *Communist Manifesto* and the Problem of Universality," *Monthly Review*, vol. 50, no. 2 (June 1998); Michael Lowy, "Globalization and Internationalism: How Up-to-Date is the *Communist Manifesto?*" *Monthly Review*, vol. 50, no. 6 (November 1998); and Marshall Berman, "Unchained Melody," *Nation* (May 11, 1998), pp. 11–16; and Glasper, "Afterword."

5. Christopher Hitchens, "The Revenge of Karl Marx," *Atlantic* (April 2009), at http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200904/hitchens-marx; "Marx Really? Why He Matters Now?" *Foreign Policy* (May/June 2009).

6. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), and *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004); Slavoj Zizek, "Have Michael Hardt

and Antonio Negri Rewritten the *Communist Manifesto* for the Twenty-First Century?" *Rethinking Marxism*, nos. 3–4 (2001), at http://www.lacan.com/zizek-empire.htm.

7. Slavoj Zizek, "The Spectre Is Still Roaming Around!" European Graduate School, at http://www.egs.edu/faculty/zizek/zizek-the-spectre-is-still-roaming-around.html.

8. Alain Badiou, "The Communist Hypothesis," *New Left Review* (January/February 2008), pp. 29–42; quote on pp. 34–35.

9. François Cusset, *French Theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States*, tr. Jeff Fort (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

10. Jacques Derrida, "Spectres of Marx," *New Left Review* 105 (May–June 1994), p. 38.

11. Ibid., p. 40.

12. Ibid., p. 56.

13. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991; originally published in 1962).

14. Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," in Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993), and Janet Lyon, *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

15. Quoted by Conor Cruise O'Brien, in "Introduction: The Manifesto of a Counter-Revolution," in Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (London: Penguin Classics, 1986), p. 9.

16. See Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Pelican, 1977), pp. 53–58.

17. One brilliant account is François Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). In a more neoconservative vein, see Stéphane Courtois et al., *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999). See also the critiques of *The Black Book* written by two of this volume's contributors: Steven Lukes, "On the Moral Blindness of Communism," and Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Communism and the Human Condition: Reflections on *The Black Book of Communism*," both in *Human Rights Review* (January–March 2001), pp. 113–24 and 125–34,

respectively.

18. See especially the essays collected in Leszek Kolakowski, *Marxism and Beyond: On Historical Understanding and Individual Responsibility* (London: Paladin, 1969).

19. The literature here is immense. Perhaps the best single volume remains Hal Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution, Volume III: The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1986).

20. See Michael Levin, *Marx, Engels, and Liberal Democracy* (London: Macmillan, 1989), and Stephen Eric Bronner, *Socialism Unbound* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

21. See Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*, pp. 133–40.

22. Quoted in Shlomo Avinieri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 213. Avinieri's treatment of these issues remains classic. For Marx's complete text, see "The Class Struggles in France, 1848–1850, Part II," at the Marx Engels Internet Archive, http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1850/class-struggles-france/ch02.htm.

23. Frederick Engels, "The Communists and Karl Heinzen," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works, Volume 6: 1845–1848* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), pp. 303–4.

24. See Monty Johnstone, "Marx, Blanqui, and Majority Rule," in Ralph Miliband and John Saville, eds., *The Socialist Register 1983* (London: Merlin Press, 1983).

25. Michael Harrington, *Socialism* (New York: Bantam, 1972), pp. 42–53.

26. The most penetrating critique of the "totalitarian" tendencies of Marx and Engels's views on democracy is Claude Lefort, *The Political Forms of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986). See also Dick Howard's *The Specter of Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

27. See Martin Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution: Marx, Manifestoes, and the Avant-Gardes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 47–58.

28. Here I draw especially on Rob Beamish, "The Making of the *Manifesto*," in Panitch and Leys, eds., *The Socialist Register 1998*, pp. 218–39; Frederic L. Bender, "Historical and Theoretical Backgrounds of the *Communist Manifesto*," in his Norton Critical Edition, pp. 9–18; Terrell Carver, "Re-Translating the *Manifesto:* New Histories, New Ideas," in Cowling, ed., *The Communist Manifesto: New Interpretations*, pp. 51–62; and the extensive documentary material surrounding the drafting of the *Manifesto*, entitled "The Communist

League," that is available online at the Marx-Engels Internet Archive, at http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/communist-league/index.htm.

29. Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in Paul Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1991), p. 146.

30. The principal authority remains Bert Andreas's *Le Manifeste Communiste de Marx et Engels: Histoire et Bibliographie, 1848–1918* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1963), whose "A Note on Sources" has been translated by Frederic L. Bender and published in his Norton Critical Edition, pp. 89–93; see also the extensive discussion by provided by Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution*, pp. 32–66.

31. Frederick Engels, "Principles of Communism," in *Collected Works*, vol. 6, pp. 341–57. Indeed, this text is a revision of an *earlier* and even more catechism-like draft, written by Engels in June of 1847, entitled "Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith." Both texts are reproduced here, as part of the textual pre-history of the *Manifesto*.

32. Engels Letter to Marx, in Brussels, 23–24 November, 1847, at http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/letters/47_11_24.htm.

33. Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution*, pp. 31–2.

34. Ibid., p. 33.

35. On substitutionism, see the fine discussion in Ralph Miliband's *Marxism and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976).

36. See Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (London: Verso, 1985).

37. The literature on the complex relations between feminism and Marxism is immense. One useful discussion is Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union," *Capital and Class* 8 (1979), pp. 1–33, reprinted in Lydia Sargent, ed., *Women and Revolution: The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1981).

38. On this general theme, see my *Arendt, Camus, and Modern Rebellion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

39. Much of this attention was sparked by the publication of Norberto Bobbio's *Left and Right: The Significance of a Political Distinction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). See Perry Anderson's "A Reply to Norberto Bobbio," *New Left Review*, vol. 1, no. 231 (September–October 1998). See also Mitchell Cohen's "Why I'm Still Left," *Dissent* (Spring 1997), and my response, "Toward a Politics of Democratic Ambivalence," *Dissent* (Winter 1998).

40. Nancy Fraser, “A Future for Marxism,” *New Politics*, vol. 6, no. 4 (new series) [Winter 1998], at http://www.wpunj.edu/~newpol/issue24/fraser24.htm.

41. Perhaps the most powerful recognition of this is Perry Anderson’s “Renewals,” a 2000 *New Left Review* essay described as “A manifesto for the new series of *NLR* that begins with this issue.” Anderson is worth quoting at length: “Ideologically, the novelty of the present situation stands out in historical view. It can be put like this. For the first time since the Reformation, there are no longer any significant oppositions—that is, systematic rival outlooks—within the thought-world of the West; and scarcely any on a world scale either, if we discount religious doctrines as largely inoperative archaisms, as the experiences of Poland or Iran indicate we may. Whatever limitations persist to its practice, neoliberalism as a set of principles rules undivided across the globe: the most successful ideology in world history. What this means for a journal like *NLR* is a radical discontinuity in the culture of the Left, as it—or if it—renews itself generationally. Nowhere is the contrast with the originating context of the review sharper than in this respect. Virtually the entire horizon of reference in which the generation of the sixties grew up has been wiped away—the landmarks of reformist and revolutionary socialism in equal measure. For most students, the roster of Bebel, Bernstein, Luxemburg, Kautsky, Jaurès, Lukács, Lenin, Trotsky, Gramsci have become names as remote as a list of Arian bishops. How to reweave threads of significance between the last century and this would be one of the most delicate and difficult tasks before any journal that took the term ‘left’ seriously. There seem to be few guide-posts for it.” “Renewals,” *New Left Review*, vol. 1, no. 1 (second series) (January–February 2000), p. 17.

42. Derrida, “Spectres of Marx,” pp. 41, 46, 50, 51, 53.

43. Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida, “February 15, or What Binds Europeans Together: A Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning in the Heart of Europe,” *Constellations*, vol. 10, no. 3 (September 2003).

44. Habermas, in his own 1990 essay “What Does Socialism Mean Today?” is even more explicit: “The challenges of the twenty-first century will be of an order and magnitude that demand answers from Western societies which cannot be arrived at, nor put into practice, without a radical-democratic universalization of interests through institutions for the formation of public opinion and political will. The socialist Left still has a place and political role to play in this arena. It can generate the ferment that produces the continuing process of political communication that prevents the institutional framework of a constitutional democracy from becoming desiccated . . . transforming socialist ideas into the

radically reformist self-criticism of a capitalist society, which, in the form of a constitutional democracy with universal suffrage and a welfare state, has developed not only weaknesses but also strengths. With the bankruptcy of state socialism, this is the eye of the needle through which everything must pass. *This* socialism will disappear only when it no longer has an object of criticism—perhaps at a point when the society in question has changed its identity so much that it allows the full significance of everything that cannot be expressed as a price to be perceived and taken seriously. The hope that humanity can emancipate itself from self-imposed tutelage and degrading living conditions has not lost its power, but it is filtered by a falliblist consciousness, and an awareness of the historical lesson that one would already have achieved a considerable amount if the balance of a tolerable existence could be preserved for the fortunate few—and, most of all, if it could be established on the other, ravaged continents." "What Does Socialism Mean Today? The Rectifying Revolution and the Need for New Thinking on the Left," *New Left Review* (September–October 1990), p. 21.

45. Badiou, "The Communist Hypothesis," p. 23.

46. Zizek, "Have Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri Rewritten the *Communist Manifesto?*" p. 5.

47. Ibid. This entire discussion is repeated almost verbatim in Zizek's more elaborate "Between Two Worlds," the introduction to his collection *Revolution at the Gates: Selected Writings of Lenin from 1917* (London: Verso, 2002).

48. Slavoj Zizek, "Introduction: Robespierre, or the 'Divine Violence' of Terror," in *Slavoj Zizek Presents Robespierre: Virtue and Terror* (London: Verso, 2007), p. xxi.

49. Terry Eagleton, *Why Marx Was Right* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), p. ix.

50. David Harvey, "Introduction," in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Pluto Press, 2008), pp. 11–12.

51. Ibid, pp. 29–30.

52. Hannah Arendt, "Walter Benjamin: 1892–1940," in *Men in Dark Times* (New York: Harcourt, 1968), pp. 205–6.

53. See Steven Lukes, "Isaiah Berlin in Conversation with Steven Lukes," in *Salmagundi*, no. 120 (Fall 1998), pp. 52–134.

54. See Steven Lukes, "Introduction," in Vaclav Havel et al., *The Power of the Powerless* (London: Hutchinson, 1985) and *Marxism and Morality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

55. See especially Vladimir Tismaneanu, *The Crisis of Marxist Ideology in Eastern Europe: The Poverty of Utopia* (London: Routledge, 1988) and *Reinventing Politics: Eastern Europe from Stalin to Havel* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

56. See Charles King, "Remembering Romanian Communism," and Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Confronting Romania's Past: A Response to Charles King," in *Slavic Review*, vol. 66, no. 4 (Winter 2007), pp. 718–28, and Monica Ciobanu, "Criminalising the Past and Reconstructing Collective Memory: The Romanian Truth Commission." *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 16, no. 2 (March 2009), pp. 313–36.

57. Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

58. See especially Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), *Globalization and Its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money* (New York: New Press, 1998), and *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

59. Manuel Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society, Culture, Volume 1: Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: Sage, 1992); and Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006).

60. John Sutherland, "The Ideas Interview: Saskia Sassen." *Guardian*, 7/4/2006, at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/jul/04/globalisation.comment.

A Note on the Texts

The text of the *Communist Manifesto* that follows is the 1888 Samuel Moore English translation of the 1872 second German edition of the *Manifesto*. It was checked and authorized by Friedrich Engels, who added a small number of explanatory footnotes, which have been retained in the text. The Moore text is the "standard" English translation, and it has indeed achieved an iconic status in the English-speaking world and beyond.

As my Introduction indicates, the *Communist Manifesto* is the title given to the text by Marx and Engels in 1872; the text was originally published anonymously in 1848 as the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. This text was a revised version of an unpublished draft written in late 1847 by Engels, entitled "Principles of Communism," which was itself a revised version of a text written even earlier in that year by Engels as a "position paper" for the Communist League of the Just, entitled "Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith." In addition to these earlier versions of the *Manifesto*, the text has come to include a number of Prefaces, written either by Marx and Engels (1872, 1882) or by Engels after Marx's death (1883, 1888, 1890, 1892, 1893).

This volume includes all of these texts. The Engels texts are included as preliminary drafts, separate from the text of the *Manifesto* itself, since while they are clearly part of the intellectual prehistory of the text, they were originally unpublished and only became part of the public domain when they were discovered in the twentieth century. "Principles" was first published in 1914 by Eduard Bernstein in *Vorwarts*, the central organ of the German Social Democratic Party, and the translation included here, by Paul M. Sweezy, is printed with the permission of Monthly Review Press, which originally published the text as a pamphlet in 1952. The earlier "Draft" was discovered by the Swiss scholar Bert Andréas in the archives of Joachim Friedrich Martens, an active member of the Communist League, and was first published in 1969. Published in English for the first time in 1971 in *Birth of the Communist Manifesto* (edited and with an introduction by Dirk Jan Struik), it is reprinted here with the permission of International Publishers. The various Prefaces to the *Manifesto* are included after the text of the *Manifesto* itself, since while they

each originally appeared as a Preface, all in fact appeared well after the original appearance of the *Manifesto* in 1848, and are thus properly part of the "post-history" of the text, even if many readers of subsequent editions of the *Manifesto* no doubt came to the text via the Prefaces. The English translations of the Prefaces are reprinted here with the permission of International Publishers. With regard to all of these texts, I would like to thank Andy Blunden, whose Marx-Engels Internet Archive is a major resource for Marx scholars, for his help in securing proper permissions.

As this Note and indeed this entire volume of texts and commentaries make clear, the *Communist Manifesto* has been widely circulated in a wide range of different historical and political contexts, and it is impossible to republish the text, much less to comment on it, without acknowledging this "intertextuality" not simply as a logistical and legal question of citation but as a much deeper question of *interpretation*. It is thus out of a sense of intellectual "justice" and also with great pleasure that I acknowledge that my own readings of the text have been immeasurably enriched by the earlier work done by Mark Cowling, Terrell Carver, and their collaborators for the 1998 volume *The Communist Manifesto: New Interpretations* (Edinburgh University Press); by Gareth Stedman Jones for the 2002 Penguin edition of the *Manifesto;* and most especially the extraordinary work of annotation and editing done by Frederic L. Bender for the 1988 Norton Critical Edition of the *Manifesto*. These colleagues would no doubt second my observation that what is true of makers of history is also true of makers of critical editions: we do not make them as we please but, to quote Marx's famous *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, "under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past."

Jeffrey C. Isaac

Preliminary Drafts of the *Communist Manifesto*

Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith (1847)

FRIEDRICH ENGELS

Question 1: Are you a Communist?

Answer: Yes.

Question 2: What is the aim of the Communists?

Answer: To organise society in such a way that every member of it can develop and use all his capabilities and powers in complete freedom and without thereby infringing the basic conditions of this society.

Question 3: How do you wish to achieve this aim?

Answer: By the elimination of private property and its replacement by community of property.

Question 4: On what do you base your community of property?

Answer: Firstly, on the mass of productive forces and means of subsistence resulting from the development of industry, agriculture, trade and colonisation, and on the possibility inherent in machinery, chemical and other resources of their infinite extension.

Secondly, on the fact that in the consciousness or feeling of every individual there exist certain irrefutable basic principles which, being the result of the whole of historical development, require no proof.

Question 5: What are such principles?

Answer: For example, every individual strives to be happy. The happiness of the individual is inseparable from the happiness of all, *etc.*

Question 6: How do you wish to prepare the way for your community of property?

Answer: By enlightening and uniting the proletariat.

Question 7: What is the proletariat?

Answer: The proletariat is that class of society which lives exclusively by its

labour and not on the profit from any kind of capital; that class whose weal and woe, whose life and death, therefore, depend on the alternation of times of good and bad business; in a word, on the fluctuations of competition.

Question 8: Then there have not always been proletarians?

Answer: No. There have always been *poor* and *working classes;* and those who worked were almost always the poor. But there have not always been proletarians, just as competition has not always been free.

Question 9: How did the proletariat arise?

Answer: The proletariat came into being as a result of the introduction of the machines which have been invented since the middle of the last century and the most important of which are: the steam-engine, the spinning machine and the power loom. These machines, which were very expensive and could therefore only be purchased by rich people, supplanted the workers of the time, because by the use of machinery it was possible to produce commodities more quickly and cheaply than could the workers with their imperfect spinning wheels and hand-looms. The machines thus delivered industry entirely into the hands of the big capitalists and rendered the workers' scanty property which consisted mainly of their tools, looms, etc., quite worthless, so that the capitalist was left with everything, the worker with nothing. In this way the factory system was introduced. Once the capitalists saw how advantageous this was for them, they sought to extend it to more and more branches of labour. They divided work more and more between the workers so that workers who formerly had made a whole article now produced only a part of it. Labour simplified in this way produced goods more quickly and therefore more cheaply and only now was it found in almost every branch of labour that here also machines could be used. As soon as any branch of labour went over to factory production it ended up, just as in the case of spinning and weaving, in the hands of the big capitalists, and the workers were deprived of the last remnants of their independence. We have gradually arrived at the position where almost *all* branches of labour are run on a factory basis. This has increasingly brought about the ruin of the previously existing middle class, especially of the small master craftsmen, completely transformed the previous position of the workers, and two new classes which are gradually swallowing up all other classes have come into being, namely:

I. The class of the big capitalists, who in all advanced countries are in almost exclusive possession of the means of subsistence and those means (machines, factories, workshops, etc.) by which these means of subsistence

are produced. This is the *bourgeois* class, or the *bourgeoisie*.

II. The class of the completely propertyless, who are compelled to sell their labour to the first class, the bourgeois, simply to obtain from them in return their means of subsistence. Since the parties to this trading in labour are not *equal*, but the bourgeois have the advantage, the propertyless must submit to the bad conditions laid down by the bourgeois. This class, dependent on the bourgeois, is called the class of the *proletarians* or the *proletariat*.

Question 10: In what way does the proletarian differ from the slave?

Answer: The slave is sold once and for all, the proletarian has to sell himself by the day and by the hour. The slave is the property of one master and for that very reason has a guaranteed subsistence, however wretched it may be. The proletarian is, so to speak, the slave of the entire bourgeois *class*, not of one master, and therefore has no guaranteed subsistence, since nobody buys his labour if he does not need it. The slave is accounted a *thing* and not a member of civil society. The proletarian is recognised as a *person*, as a member of civil society. The slave *may*, therefore, have a better subsistence than the proletarian but the latter stands at a higher stage of development. The slave frees himself by *becoming a proletarian*, abolishing from the totality of property relationships only the relationship of *slavery*. The proletarian can free himself only by abolishing *property in general*.

Question 11: In what way does the proletarian differ from the serf?

Answer: The serf has the use of a piece of land, that is, of an instrument of production, in return for handing over a greater or lesser portion of the yield. The proletarian works with instruments of production which belong to someone else who, in return for his labour, hands over to him a portion, determined by competition, of the products. In the case of the serf, the share of the labourer is determined by his own labour, that is, by himself. In the case of the proletarian it is determined by competition, therefore in the first place by the bourgeois. The serf has guaranteed subsistence, the proletarian has not. The serf frees himself by driving out his feudal lord and becoming a property owner himself, thus entering into competition and joining for the time being the possessing class, the privileged class. The proletarian frees himself by doing away with property, competition, and all class differences.

Question 12: In what way does the proletarian differ from the handicraftsman?

Answer: As opposed to the proletarian, the so-called handicraftsman, who still existed nearly everywhere during the last century and still exists here and there,

is at most a temporary proletarian. His aim is to acquire capital himself and so to exploit other workers. He can often achieve this aim where the craft guilds still exist or where freedom to follow a trade has not yet led to the organisation of handwork on a factory basis and to intense competition. But as soon as the factory system is introduced into handwork and competition is in full swing, this prospect is eliminated and the handicraftsman becomes more and more a proletarian. The handicraftsman therefore frees himself *either* by becoming a bourgeois *or* in general passing over into the middle class, or, by becoming a proletarian as a result of competition (as now happens in most cases) and joining the movement of the proletariat—i.e., the more or less conscious communist movement.

Question 13: Then you do not believe that community of property has been possible at any time?

Answer: No. Communism has only arisen since machinery and other inventions made it possible to hold out the prospect of an all-sided development, a happy existence, for all members of society. Communism is the theory of a liberation which was not possible for the slaves, the serfs, or the handicraftsmen, but only for the proletarians and hence it belongs of necessity to the 19th century and was not possible in any earlier period.

Question 14: Let me go back to the sixth question. As you wish to prepare for community of property by the enlightening and uniting of the proletariat, then you reject revolution?

Answer: We are convinced not only of the uselessness but even of the harmfulness of all conspiracies. We are also aware that revolutions are not made deliberately and arbitrarily but that everywhere and at all times they are the necessary consequence of circumstances which are not in any way whatever dependent either on the will or on the leadership of individual parties or of whole classes. But we also see that the development of the proletariat in almost all countries of the world is forcibly repressed by the possessing classes and that thus a revolution is being forcibly worked for by the opponents of communism. If, in the end, the oppressed proletariat is thus driven into a revolution, then we will defend the cause of the proletariat just as well by our deeds as now by our words.

Question 15: Do you intend to replace the existing social order by community of Property at one stroke?

Answer: We have no such intention. The development of the masses cannot be ordered by decree. It is determined by the development of the conditions in

which these masses live, and therefore proceeds gradually.

Question 16: How do you think the transition from the present situation to community of Property is to be effected?

Answer: The first, fundamental condition for the introduction of community of property is the political liberation of the proletariat through a democratic constitution.

Question 17: What will be your first measure once you have established democracy?

Answer: Guaranteeing the subsistence of the proletariat.

Question 18: How will you do this?

Answer:

I. By limiting private property in such a way that it gradually prepares the way for its transformation into social property, e.g., by progressive taxation, limitation of the right of inheritance in favour of the state, etc., *etc.*

II. By employing workers in national workshops and factories and on national estates.

III. By educating all children at the expense of the state.

Question 19: How will you arrange this kind of education during the period of transition?

Answer: All children will be educated in state establishments from the time when they can do without the first maternal care.

Question 20: Will not the introduction of community of property be accompanied by the proclamation of the community of women?

Answer: By no means. We will only interfere in the personal relationship between men and women or with the family in general to the extent that the maintenance of the existing institution would disturb the new social order. Besides, we are well aware that the family relationship has been modified in the course of history by the property relationships and by periods of development, and that consequently the ending of private property will also have a most important influence on it.

Question 21: Will nationalities continue to exist under communism? **Answer**: The nationalities of the peoples who join together according to the principle of community will be just as much compelled by this union to merge with one

another and thereby supersede themselves as the various differences between estates and classes disappear through the superseding of their basis—private property.

Question 22. Do Communists reject existing religions?

Answer: All religions which have existed hitherto were expressions of historical stages of development of individual peoples or groups of peoples. But communism is that stage of historical development which makes all existing religions superfluous and supersedes them.

In the name and on the mandate of the Congress.
Secretary: *Heide* [Alias of Wilhelm Wolff in the League of the Just]
President: *Karl Schill* [Alias of Karl Schapper in the League of the Just]
London, June 9, 1847

Principles of Communism (1847)

FRIEDRICH ENGELS

1. WHAT IS COMMUNISM?

Communism is the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the proletariat.

2. WHAT IS THE PROLETARIAT?

The proletariat is that class in society which lives entirely from the sale of its labor and does not draw profit from any kind of capital; whose weal and woe, whose life and death, whose sole existence depends on the demand for labor—hence, on the changing state of business, on the vagaries of unbridled competition. The proletariat, or the class of proletarians, is, in a word, the working class of the 19th century.

3. PROLETARIANS, THEN, HAVE NOT ALWAYS EXISTED?

No. There have always been poor and working classes; and the working class have mostly been poor. But there have not always been workers and poor people living under conditions as they are today; in other words, there have not always been proletarians, any more than there has always been free unbridled competitions.

4. HOW DID THE PROLETARIAT ORIGINATE?

The Proletariat originated in the industrial revolution, which took place in England in the last half of the last (18th) century, and which has since then been repeated in all the civilized countries of the world.

This industrial revolution was precipitated by the discovery of the steam engine, various spinning machines, the mechanical loom, and a whole series of other mechanical devices. These machines, which were very expensive and hence could be bought only by big capitalists, altered the whole mode of

production and displaced the former workers, because the machines turned out cheaper and better commodities than the workers could produce with their inefficient spinning wheels and handlooms. The machines delivered industry wholly into the hands of the big capitalists and rendered entirely worthless the meagre property of the workers (tools, looms, etc.). The result was that the capitalists soon had everything in their hands and nothing remained to the workers. This marked the introduction of the factory system into the textile industry.

Once the impulse to the introduction of machinery and the factory system had been given, this system spread quickly to all other branches of industry, especially cloth-and book-printing, pottery, and the metal industries.

Labor was more and more divided among the individual workers so that the worker who previously had done a complete piece of work now did only a part of that piece. This division of labor made it possible to produce things faster and cheaper. It reduced the activity of the individual worker to simple, endlessly repeated mechanical motions which could be performed not only as well but much better by a machine. In this way, all these industries fell, one after another, under the dominance of steam, machinery, and the factory system, just as spinning and weaving had already done.

But at the same time, they also fell into the hands of big capitalists, and their workers were deprived of whatever independence remained to them. Gradually, not only genuine manufacture but also handicrafts came within the province of the factory system as big capitalists increasingly displaced the small master craftsmen by setting up huge workshops, which saved many expenses and permitted an elaborate division of labor.

This is how it has come about that in civilized countries at the present time nearly all kinds of labor are performed in factories—and, in nearly all branches of work, handicrafts and manufacture have been superseded. This process has, to an ever greater degree, ruined the old middle class, especially the small handicraftsmen; it has entirely transformed the condition of the workers; and two new classes have been created which are gradually swallowing up all the others. These are:

(i) The class of big capitalists, who, in all civilized countries, are already in almost exclusive possession of all the means of subsistence and of the instruments (machines, factories) and materials necessary for the production of the means of subsistence. This is the bourgeois class, or the bourgeoisie.

(ii) The class of the wholly propertyless, who are obliged to sell their labor to the bourgeoisie in order to get, in exchange, the means of subsistence for their support. This is called the class of proletarians, or the proletariat.

5. UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS DOES THIS SALE OF THE LABOR OF THE PROLETARIANS TO THE BOURGEOISIE TAKE PLACE?

Labor is a commodity, like any other, and its price is therefore determined by exactly the same laws that apply to other commodities. In a regime of big industry or of free competition—as we shall see, the two come to the same thing—the price of a commodity is, on the average, always equal to its cost of production. Hence, the price of labor is also equal to the cost of production of labor.

But, the costs of production of labor consist of precisely the quantity of means of subsistence necessary to enable the worker to continue working, and to prevent the working class from dying out. The worker will therefore get no more for his labor than is necessary for this purpose; the price of labor, or the wage, will, in other words, be the lowest, the minimum, required for the maintenance of life.

However, since business is sometimes better and sometimes worse, it follows that the worker sometimes gets more and sometimes gets less for his commodities. But, again, just as the industrialist, on the average of good times and bad, gets no more and no less for his commodities than what they cost, similarly on the average the worker gets no more and no less than his minimum.

This economic law of wages operates the more strictly the greater the degree to which big industry has taken possession of all branches of production.

6. WHAT WORKING CLASSES WERE THERE BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION?

The working classes have always, according to the different stages of development of society, lived in different circumstances and had different relations to the owning and ruling classes.

In antiquity, the workers were the slaves of the owners, just as they still are in many backward countries and even in the southern part of the United States.

In the Middle Ages, they were the serfs of the landowning nobility, as they still are in Hungary, Poland, and Russia. In the Middle Ages, and indeed right up

to the industrial revolution, there were also journeymen in the cities who worked in the service of petty bourgeois masters. Gradually, as manufacture developed, these journeymen became manufacturing workers who were even then employed by larger capitalists.

7. IN WHAT WAY DO PROLETARIANS DIFFER FROM SLAVES?

The slave is sold once and for all; the proletarian must sell himself daily and hourly.

The individual slave, property of one master, is assured an existence, however miserable it may be, because of the master's interest. The individual proletarian, property as it were of the entire bourgeois class which buys his labor only when someone has need of it, has no secure existence. This existence is assured only to the class as a whole.

The slave is outside competition; the proletarian is in it and experiences all its vagaries.

The slave counts as a thing, not as a member of society. Thus, the slave can have a better existence than the proletarian, while the proletarian belongs to a higher stage of social development and, himself, stands on a higher social level than the slave.

The slave frees himself when, of all the relations of private property, he abolishes only the relation of slavery and thereby becomes a proletarian; the proletarian can free himself only by abolishing private property in general.

8. IN WHAT WAY DO PROLETARIANS DIFFER FROM SERFS?

The serf possesses and uses an instrument of production, a piece of land, in exchange for which he gives up a part of his product or part of the services of his labor.

The proletarian works with the instruments of production of another, for the account of this other, in exchange for a part of the product.

The serf gives up, the proletarian receives. The serf has an assured existence, the proletarian has not. The serf is outside competition, the proletarian is in it.

The serf liberates himself in one of three ways: either he runs away to the city and there becomes a handicraftsman; or, instead of products and services, he gives money to his lord and thereby becomes a free tenant; or he overthrows his

feudal lord and himself becomes a property owner. In short, by one route or another, he gets into the owning class and enters into competition. The proletarian liberates himself by abolishing competition, private property, and all class differences.

9. IN WHAT WAY DO PROLETARIANS DIFFER FROM HANDICRAFTSMEN?

In contrast to the proletarian, the so-called handicraftsman, as he still existed almost everywhere in the past (eighteenth) century and still exists here and there at present, is a proletarian at most temporarily. His goal is to acquire capital himself wherewith to exploit other workers. He can often achieve this goal where guilds still exist or where freedom from guild restrictions has not yet led to the introduction of factory-style methods into the crafts nor yet to fierce competition But as soon as the factory system has been introduced into the crafts and competition flourishes fully, this perspective dwindles away and the handicraftsman becomes more and more a proletarian. The handicraftsman therefore frees himself by becoming either bourgeois or entering the middle class in general, or becoming a proletarian because of competition (as is now more often the case). In which case he can free himself by joining the proletarian movement, i.e., the more or less communist movement.

10. IN WHAT WAY DO PROLETARIANS DIFFER FROM MANUFACTURING WORKERS?

The manufacturing worker of the 16th to the 18th centuries still had, with but few exceptions, an instrument of production in his own possession—his loom, the family spinning wheel, a little plot of land which he cultivated in his spare time. The proletarian has none of these things.

The manufacturing worker almost always lives in the countryside and in a more or less patriarchal relation to his landlord or employer; the proletarian lives, for the most part, in the city and his relation to his employer is purely a cash relation.

The manufacturing worker is torn out of his patriarchal relation by big industry, loses whatever property he still has, and in this way becomes a proletarian.

11. WHAT WERE THE IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND OF THE DIVISION OF SOCIETY INTO BOURGEOISIE AND PROLETARIAT?

First, the lower and lower prices of industrial products brought about by machine labor totally destroyed, in all countries of the world, the old system of manufacture or industry based upon hand labor.

In this way, all semi-barbarian countries, which had hitherto been more or less strangers to historical development, and whose industry had been based on manufacture, were violently forced out of their isolation. They bought the cheaper commodities of the English and allowed their own manufacturing workers to be ruined. Countries which had known no progress for thousands of years—for example, India—were thoroughly revolutionized, and even China is now on the way to a revolution.

We have come to the point where a new machine invented in England deprives millions of Chinese workers of their livelihood within a year's time.

In this way, big industry has brought all the people of the Earth into contact with each other, has merged all local markets into one world market, has spread civilization and progress everywhere and has thus ensured that whatever happens in civilized countries will have repercussions in all other countries.

It follows that if the workers in England or France now liberate themselves, this must set off revolution in all other countries—revolutions which, sooner or later, must accomplish the liberation of their respective working class.

Second, wherever big industries displaced manufacture, the bourgeoisie developed in wealth and power to the utmost and made itself the first class of the country. The result was that wherever this happened, the bourgeoisie took political power into its own hands and displaced the hitherto ruling classes, the aristocracy, the guildmasters, and their representative, the absolute monarchy.

The bourgeoisie annihilated the power of the aristocracy, the nobility, by abolishing the entailment of estates—in other words, by making landed property subject to purchase and sale, and by doing away with the special privileges of the nobility. It destroyed the power of the guildmasters by abolishing guilds and handicraft privileges. In their place, it put competition—that is, a state of society in which everyone has the right to enter into any branch of industry, the only obstacle being a lack of the necessary capital.

The introduction of free competition is thus public declaration that from now

on the members of society are unequal only to the extent that their capitals are unequal, that capital is the decisive power, and that therefore the capitalists, the bourgeoisie, have become the first class in society.

Free competition is necessary for the establishment of big industry, because it is the only condition of society in which big industry can make its way.

Having destroyed the social power of the nobility and the guildmasters, the bourgeois also destroyed their political power. Having raised itself to the actual position of first class in society, it proclaims itself to be also the dominant political class. This it does through the introduction of the representative system which rests on bourgeois equality before the law and the recognition of free competition, and in European countries takes the form of constitutional monarchy. In these constitutional monarchies, only those who possess a certain capital are voters—that is to say, only members of the bourgeoisie. These bourgeois voters choose the deputies, and these bourgeois deputies, by using their right to refuse to vote taxes, choose a bourgeois government.

Third, everywhere the proletariat develops in step with the bourgeoisie. In proportion, as the bourgeoisie grows in wealth, the proletariat grows in numbers. For, since the proletarians can be employed only by capital, and since capital extends only through employing labor, it follows that the growth of the proletariat proceeds at precisely the same pace as the growth of capital.

Simultaneously, this process draws members of the bourgeoisie and proletarians together into the great cities where industry can be carried on most profitably, and by thus throwing great masses in one spot it gives to the proletarians a consciousness of their own strength.

Moreover, the further this process advances, the more new labor-saving machines are invented, the greater is the pressure exercised by big industry on wages, which, as we have seen, sink to their minimum and therewith render the condition of the proletariat increasingly unbearable. The growing dissatisfaction of the proletariat thus joins with its rising power to prepare a proletarian social revolution.

12. WHAT WERE THE FURTHER CONSEQUENCES OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION?

Big industry created in the steam engine, and other machines, the means of endlessly expanding industrial production, speeding it up, and cutting its costs. With production thus facilitated, the free competition, which is necessarily

bound up with big industry, assumed the most extreme forms; a multitude of capitalists invaded industry, and, in a short while, more was produced than was needed.

As a consequence, finished commodities could not be sold, and a so-called commercial crisis broke out. Factories had to be closed, their owners went bankrupt, and the workers were without bread. Deepest misery reigned everywhere.

After a time, the superfluous products were sold, the factories began to operate again, wages rose, and gradually business got better than ever.

But it was not long before too many commodities were again produced and a new crisis broke out, only to follow the same course as its predecessor.

Ever since the beginning of this (19th) century, the condition of industry has constantly fluctuated between periods of prosperity and periods of crisis; nearly every five to seven years, a fresh crisis has intervened, always with the greatest hardship for workers, and always accompanied by general revolutionary stirrings and the direct peril to the whole existing order of things.

13. WHAT FOLLOWS FROM THESE PERIODIC COMMERCIAL CRISES?

First: That, though big industry in its earliest stage created free competition, it has now outgrown free competition; that, for big industry, competition and generally the individualistic organization of production have become a fetter which it must and will shatter; that, so long as big industry remains on its present footing, it can be maintained only at the cost of general chaos every seven years, each time threatening the whole of civilization and not only plunging the proletarians into misery but also ruining large sections of the bourgeoisie; hence, either that big industry must itself be given up, which is an absolute impossibility, or that it makes unavoidably necessary an entirely new organization of society in which production is no longer directed by mutually competing individual industrialists but rather by the whole society operating according to a definite plan and taking account of the needs of all.

Second: That big industry, and the limitless expansion of production which it makes possible, bring within the range of feasibility a social order in which so much is produced that every member of society will be in a position to exercise and develop all his powers and faculties in complete freedom.

It thus appears that the very qualities of big industry which, in our present-

day society, produce misery and crises are those which, in a different form of society, will abolish this misery and these catastrophic depressions.

We see with the greatest clarity:

(i) That all these evils are from now on to be ascribed solely to a social order which no longer corresponds to the requirements of the real situation; and

(ii) That it is possible, through a new social order, to do away with these evils altogether.

14. WHAT WILL THIS NEW SOCIAL ORDER HAVE TO BE LIKE?

Above all, it will have to take the control of industry and of all branches of production out of the hands of mutually competing individuals, and instead institute a system in which all these branches of production are operated by society as a whole—that is, for the common account, according to a common plan, and with the participation of all members of society.

It will, in other words, abolish competition and replace it with association.

Moreover, since the management of industry by individuals necessarily implies private property, and since competition is in reality merely the manner and form in which the control of industry by private property owners expresses itself, it follows that private property cannot be separated from competition and the individual management of industry. Private property must, therefore, be abolished and in its place must come the common utilization of all instruments of production and the distribution of all products according to common agreement—in a word, what is called the communal ownership of goods.

In fact, the abolition of private property is, doubtless, the shortest and most significant way to characterize the revolution in the whole social order which has been made necessary by the development of industry—and for this reason it is rightly advanced by communists as their main demand.

15. WAS NOT THE ABOLITION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY POSSIBLE AT AN EARLIER TIME?

No. Every change in the social order, every revolution in property relations, is the necessary consequence of the creation of new forces of production which no longer fit into the old property relations.

Private property has not always existed.

When, towards the end of the Middle Ages, there arose a new mode of production which could not be carried on under the then existing feudal and guild forms of property, this manufacture, which had outgrown the old property relations, created a new property form, private property. And for manufacture and the earliest stage of development of big industry, private property was the only possible property form; the social order based on it was the only possible social order.

So long as it is not possible to produce so much that there is enough for all, with more left over for expanding the social capital and extending the forces of production—so long as this is not possible, there must always be a ruling class directing the use of society's productive forces, and a poor, oppressed class. How these classes are constituted depends on the stage of development.

The agrarian Middle Ages give us the baron and the serf; the cities of the later Middle Ages show us the guildmaster and the journeyman and the day laborer; the 17th century has its manufacturing workers; the 19th has big factory owners and proletarians.

It is clear that, up to now, the forces of production have never been developed to the point where enough could be developed for all, and that private property has become a fetter and a barrier in relation to the further development of the forces of production.

Now, however, the development of big industry has ushered in a new period. Capital and the forces of production have been expanded to an unprecedented extent, and the means are at hand to multiply them without limit in the near future. Moreover, the forces of production have been concentrated in the hands of a few bourgeois, while the great mass of the people are more and more falling into the proletariat, their situation becoming more wretched and intolerable in proportion to the increase of wealth of the bourgeoisie. And finally, these mighty and easily extended forces of production have so far outgrown private property and the bourgeoisie, that they threaten at any moment to unleash the most violent disturbances of the social order. Now, under these conditions, the abolition of private property has become not only possible but absolutely necessary.

16. WILL THE PEACEFUL ABOLITION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY BE POSSIBLE?

It would be desirable if this could happen, and the communists would certainly be the last to oppose it. Communists know only too well that all conspiracies are

not only useless, but even harmful. They know all too well that revolutions are not made intentionally and arbitrarily, but that, everywhere and always, they have been the necessary consequence of conditions which were wholly independent of the will and direction of individual parties and entire classes.

But they also see that the development of the proletariat in nearly all civilized countries has been violently suppressed, and that in this way the opponents of communism have been working toward a revolution with all their strength. If the oppressed proletariat is finally driven to revolution, then we communists will defend the interests of the proletarians with deeds as we now defend them with words.

17. WILL IT BE POSSIBLE FOR PRIVATE PROPERTY TO BE ABOLISHED AT ONE STROKE?

No, no more than existing forces of production can at one stroke be multiplied to the extent necessary for the creation of a communal society.

In all probability, the proletarian revolution will transform existing society gradually and will be able to abolish private property only when the means of production are available in sufficient quantity.

18. WHAT WILL BE THE COURSE OF THIS REVOLUTION?

Above all, it will establish a democratic constitution, and through this, the direct or indirect dominance of the proletariat. Direct in England, where the proletarians are already a majority of the people. Indirect in France and Germany, where the majority of the people consists not only of proletarians, but also of small peasants and petty bourgeois who are in the process of falling into the proletariat, who are more and more dependent in all their political interests on the proletariat, and who must, therefore, soon adapt to the demands of the proletariat. Perhaps this will cost a second struggle, but the outcome can only be the victory of the proletariat.

Democracy would be wholly valueless to the proletariat if it were not immediately used as a means for putting through measures directed against private property and ensuring the livelihood of the proletariat. The main measures, emerging as the necessary result of existing relations, are the following:

(i) Limitation of private property through progressive taxation, heavy

inheritance taxes, abolition of inheritance through collateral lines (brothers, nephews, etc.), forced loans, *etc.*

(ii) Gradual expropriation of landowners, industrialists, railroad magnates and shipowners, partly through competition by state industry, partly directly through compensation in the form of bonds.

(iii) Confiscation of the possessions of all emigrants and rebels against the majority of the people.

(iv) Organization of labor or employment of proletarians on publicly owned land, in factories and workshops, with competition among the workers being abolished and with the factory owners, in so far as they still exist, being obliged to pay the same high wages as those paid by the state.

(v) An equal obligation on all members of society to work until such time as private property has been completely abolished. Formation of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.

(vi) Centralization of money and credit in the hands of the state through a national bank with state capital, and the suppression of all private banks and bankers.

(vii) Increase in the number of national factories, workshops, railroads, ships; bringing new lands into cultivation and improvement of land already under cultivation—all in proportion to the growth of the capital and labor force at the disposal of the nation.

(viii) Education of all children, from the moment they can leave their mother’s care, in national establishments at national cost. Education and production together.

(ix) Construction, on public lands, of great palaces as communal dwellings for associated groups of citizens engaged in both industry and agriculture and combining in their way of life the advantages of urban and rural conditions while avoiding the one-sidedness and drawbacks of each.

(x) Destruction of all unhealthy and jerry-built dwellings in urban districts.

(xi) Equal inheritance rights for children born in and out of wedlock.

(xii) Concentration of all means of transportation in the hands of the nation.

It is impossible, of course, to carry out all these measures at once. But one will always bring others in its wake. Once the first radical attack on private property has been launched, the proletariat will find itself forced to go ever further, to concentrate increasingly in the hands of the state all capital, all agriculture, all transport, all trade. All the foregoing measures are directed to this

end; and they will become practicable and feasible, capable of producing their centralizing effects to precisely the degree that the proletariat, through its labor, multiplies the country's productive forces.

Finally, when all capital, all production, all exchange have been brought together in the hands of the nation, private property will disappear of its own accord, money will become superfluous, and production will so expand and man so change that society will be able to slough off whatever of its old economic habits may remain.

19. WILL IT BE POSSIBLE FOR THIS REVOLUTION TO TAKE PLACE IN ONE COUNTRY ALONE?

No. By creating the world market, big industry has already brought all the peoples of the Earth, and especially the civilized peoples, into such close relation with one another that none is independent of what happens to the others.

Further, it has co-ordinated the social development of the civilized countries to such an extent that, in all of them, bourgeoisie and proletariat have become the decisive classes, and the struggle between them the great struggle of the day. It follows that the communist revolution will not merely be a national phenomenon but must take place simultaneously in all civilized countries—that is to say, at least in England, America, France, and Germany.

It will develop in each of these countries more or less rapidly, according as one country or the other has a more developed industry, greater wealth, a more significant mass of productive forces. Hence, it will go slowest and will meet most obstacles in Germany, most rapidly and with the fewest difficulties in England. It will have a powerful impact on the other countries of the world, and will radically alter the course of development which they have followed up to now, while greatly stepping up its pace.

It is a universal revolution and will, accordingly, have a universal range.

20. WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ULTIMATE DISAPPEARANCE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY?

Society will take all forces of production and means of commerce, as well as the exchange and distribution of products, out of the hands of private capitalists and will manage them in accordance with a plan based on the availability of resources and the needs of the whole society. In this way, most important of all,

the evil consequences which are now associated with the conduct of big industry will be abolished.

There will be no more crises; the expanded production, which for the present order of society is overproduction and hence a prevailing cause of misery, will then be insufficient and in need of being expanded much further. Instead of generating misery, overproduction will reach beyond the elementary requirements of society to assure the satisfaction of the needs of all; it will create new needs and, at the same time, the means of satisfying them. It will become the condition of, and the stimulus to, new progress, which will no longer throw the whole social order into confusion, as progress has always done in the past. Big industry, freed from the pressure of private property, will undergo such an expansion that what we now see will seem as petty in comparison as manufacture seems when put beside the big industry of our own day. This development of industry will make available to society a sufficient mass of products to satisfy the needs of everyone.

The same will be true of agriculture, which also suffers from the pressure of private property and is held back by the division of privately owned land into small parcels. Here, existing improvements and scientific procedures will be put into practice, with a resulting leap forward which will assure to society all the products it needs.

In this way, such an abundance of goods will be able to satisfy the needs of all its members.

The division of society into different, mutually hostile classes will then become unnecessary. Indeed, it will be not only unnecessary but intolerable in the new social order. The existence of classes originated in the division of labor, and the division of labor, as it has been known up to the present, will completely disappear. For mechanical and chemical processes are not enough to bring industrial and agricultural production up to the level we have described; the capacities of the men who make use of these processes must undergo a corresponding development.

Just as the peasants and manufacturing workers of the last century changed their whole way of life and became quite different people when they were drawn into big industry, in the same way, communal control over production by society as a whole, and the resulting new development, will both require an entirely different kind of human material.

People will no longer be, as they are today, subordinated to a single branch of production, bound to it, exploited by it; they will no longer develop *one* of

their faculties at the expense of all others; they will no longer know only *one* branch, or one branch of a single branch, of production as a whole. Even industry as it is today is finding such people less and less useful.

Industry controlled by society as a whole, and operated according to a plan, presupposes well-rounded human beings, their faculties developed in balanced fashion, able to see the system of production in its entirety.

The form of the division of labor which makes one a peasant, another a cobbler, a third a factory worker, a fourth a stock-market operator, has already been undermined by machinery and will completely disappear. Education will enable young people quickly to familiarize themselves with the whole system of production and to pass from one branch of production to another in response to the needs of society or their own inclinations. It will, therefore, free them from the one-sided character which the present-day division of labor impresses upon every individual. Communist society will, in this way, make it possible for its members to put their comprehensively developed faculties to full use. But, when this happens, classes will necessarily disappear. It follows that society organized on a communist basis is incompatible with the existence of classes on the one hand, and that the very building of such a society provides the means of abolishing class differences on the other.

A corollary of this is that the difference between city and country is destined to disappear. The management of agriculture and industry by the same people rather than by two different classes of people is, if only for purely material reasons, a necessary condition of communist association. The dispersal of the agricultural population on the land, alongside the crowding of the industrial population into the great cities, is a condition which corresponds to an undeveloped state of both agriculture and industry and can already be felt as an obstacle to further development.

The general co-operation of all members of society for the purpose of planned exploitation of the forces of production, the expansion of production to the point where it will satisfy the needs of all, the abolition of a situation in which the needs of some are satisfied at the expense of the needs of others, the complete liquidation of classes and their conflicts, the rounded development of the capacities of all members of society through the elimination of the present division of labor, through industrial education, through engaging in varying activities, through the participation by all in the enjoyments produced by all, through the combination of city and country—these are the main consequences of the abolition of private property.

21. WHAT WILL BE THE INFLUENCE OF COMMUNIST SOCIETY ON THE FAMILY?

It will transform the relations between the sexes into a purely private matter which concerns only the persons involved and into which society has no occasion to intervene. It can do this since it does away with private property and educates children on a communal basis, and in this way removes the two bases of traditional marriage—the dependence rooted in private property, of the women on the man, and of the children on the parents.

And here is the answer to the outcry of the highly moral philistines against the "community of women." Community of women is a condition which belongs entirely to bourgeois society and which today finds its complete expression in prostitution. But prostitution is based on private property and falls with it. Thus, communist society, instead of introducing community of women, in fact abolishes it.

22. WHAT WILL BE THE ATTITUDE OF COMMUNISM TO EXISTING NATIONALITIES?

The nationalities of the peoples associating themselves in accordance with the principle of community will be compelled to mingle with each other as a result of this association and thereby to dissolve themselves, just as the various estate and class distinctions must disappear through the abolition of their basis, private property.

23. WHAT WILL BE ITS ATTITUDE TO EXISTING RELIGIONS?

All religions so far have been the expression of historical stages of development of individual peoples or groups of peoples. But communism is the stage of historical development which makes all existing religions superfluous and brings about their disappearance.

24. HOW DO COMMUNISTS DIFFER FROM SOCIALISTS?

The so-called socialists are divided into three categories.

[Reactionary Socialists:]

The first category consists of adherents of a feudal and patriarchal society which has already been destroyed, and is still daily being destroyed, by big

which has already been destroyed, and is still daily being destroyed, by big industry and world trade and their creation, bourgeois society. This category concludes, from the evils of existing society, that feudal and patriarchal society must be restored because it was free of such evils. In one way or another, all their proposals are directed to this end.

This category of reactionary socialists, for all their seeming partisanship and their scalding tears for the misery of the proletariat, is nevertheless energetically opposed by the communists for the following reasons:

(i) It strives for something which is entirely impossible.

(ii) It seeks to establish the rule of the aristocracy, the guildmasters, the small producers, and their retinue of absolute or feudal monarchs, officials, soldiers, and priests—a society which was, to be sure, free of the evils of present-day society but which brought it at least as many evils without even offering to the oppressed workers the prospect of liberation through a communist revolution.

(iii) As soon as the proletariat becomes revolutionary and communist, these reactionary socialists show their true colors by immediately making common cause with the bourgeoisie against the proletarians.

[Bourgeois Socialists:]

The second category consists of adherents of present-day society who have been frightened for its future by the evils to which it necessarily gives rise. What they want, therefore, is to maintain this society while getting rid of the evils which are an inherent part of it.

To this end, some propose mere welfare measures—while others come forward with grandiose systems of reform which, under the pretense of reorganizing society, are in fact intended to preserve the foundations, and hence the life, of existing society.

Communists must unremittingly struggle against these bourgeois socialists because they work for the enemies of communists and protect the society which communists aim to overthrow.

[Democratic Socialists:]

Finally, the third category consists of democratic socialists who favor some of the same measures the communists advocate, as described in Question 18, not as part of the transition to communism, however, but as measures which they believe will be sufficient to abolish the misery and evils of present-day society

believe will be sufficient to abolish the misery and evils of present-day society.

These democratic socialists are either proletarians who are not yet sufficiently clear about the conditions of the liberation of their class, or they are representatives of the petty bourgeoisie, a class which, prior to the achievement of democracy and the socialist measures to which it gives rise, has many interests in common with the proletariat.

It follows that, in moments of action, the communists will have to come to an understanding with these democratic socialists, and in general to follow as far as possible a common policy with them—provided that these socialists do not enter into the service of the ruling bourgeoisie and attack the communists.

It is clear that this form of co-operation in action does not exclude the discussion of differences.

25. WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE COMMUNISTS TO THE OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES OF OUR TIME?

This attitude is different in the different countries.

In England, France, and Belgium, where the bourgeoisie rules, the communists still have a common interest with the various democratic parties, an interest which is all the greater the more closely the socialistic measures they champion approach the aims of the communists—that is, the more clearly and definitely they represent the interests of the proletariat and the more they depend on the proletariat for support. In England, for example, the working-class Chartists are infinitely closer to the communists than the democratic petty bourgeoisie or the so-called Radicals.

In America, where a democratic constitution has already been established, the communists must make the common cause with the party which will turn this constitution against the bourgeoisie and use it in the interests of the proletariat—that is, with the agrarian *National Reformers*.

In Switzerland, the Radicals, though a very mixed party, are the only group with which the communists can co-operate, and, among these Radicals, the Vaudois and Genevese are the most advanced.

In Germany, finally, the decisive struggle now on the order of the day is that between the bourgeoisie and the absolute monarchy. Since the communists cannot enter upon the decisive struggle between themselves and the bourgeoisie until the bourgeoisie is in power, it follows that it is in the interest of the communists to help the bourgeoisie to power as soon as possible in order the

sooner to be able to overthrow it. Against the governments, therefore, the communists must continually support the radical liberal party, taking care to avoid the self-deceptions of the bourgeoisie and not fall for the enticing promises of benefits which a victory for the bourgeoisie would allegedly bring to the proletariat. The sole advantages which the proletariat would derive from a bourgeois victory would consist

(i) in various concessions which would facilitate the unification of the proletariat into a closely knit, battle-worthy, and organized class; and

(ii) in the certainty that, on the very day the absolute monarchies fall, the struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat will start. From that day on, the policy of the communists will be the same as it now is in the countries where the bourgeoisie is already in power.

The Text of the *Communist Manifesto*

The *Communist Manifesto*

KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS

A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies.

Where is the party in opposition that has not been decried as communistic by its opponents in power? Where is the opposition that has not hurled back the branding reproach of communism, against the more advanced opposition parties, as well as against its reactionary adversaries?

Two things result from this fact:

I. Communism is already acknowledged by all European powers to be itself a power.

II. It is high time that Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the Spectre of Communism with a manifesto of the party itself.

To this end, Communists of various nationalities have assembled in London and sketched the following manifesto, to be published in the English, French, German, Italian, Flemish and Danish languages.

I. Bourgeois and Proletarians[1]

The history of all hitherto existing society[2] is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master[3] and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated

arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other—Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.

From the serfs of the Middle Ages sprang the chartered burghers of the earliest towns. From these burgesses the first elements of the bourgeoisie were developed.

The discovery of America, the rounding of the Cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East-Indian and Chinese markets, the colonisation of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally, gave to commerce, to navigation, to industry, an impulse never before known, and thereby, to the revolutionary element in the tottering feudal society, a rapid development.

The feudal system of industry, in which industrial production was monopolised by closed guilds, now no longer sufficed for the growing wants of the new markets. The manufacturing system took its place. The guild-masters were pushed on one side by the manufacturing middle class; division of labour between the different corporate guilds vanished in the face of division of labour in each single workshop.

Meantime the markets kept ever growing, the demand ever rising. Even manufacture no longer sufficed. Thereupon, steam and machinery revolutionised industrial production. The place of manufacture was taken by the giant, Modern Industry; the place of the industrial middle class by industrial millionaires, the leaders of the whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeois.

Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the

bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages.

We see, therefore, how the modern bourgeoisie is itself the product of a long course of development, of a series of revolutions in the modes of production and of exchange.

Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association in the medieval commune:[4] here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany); there taxable "third estate" of the monarchy (as in France); afterwards, in the period of manufacturing proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, cornerstone of the great monarchies in general, the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative State, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors," and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment." It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. 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. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers.

The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.

The bourgeoisie has disclosed how it came to pass that the brutal display of vigour in the Middle Ages, which reactionaries so much admire, found its fitting complement in the most slothful indolence. It has been the first to show what man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing

man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former Exoduses of nations and crusades.

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind.

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere.

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of Reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. The cheap prices of commodities are the

heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilised ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West.

The bourgeoisie keeps more and more doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has agglomerated population, centralised the means of production, and has concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political centralisation. Independent, or but loosely connected provinces, with separate interests, laws, governments, and systems of taxation, became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier, and one customs-tariff.

The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?

We see then: the means of production and of exchange, on whose foundation the bourgeoisie built itself up, were generated in feudal society. At a certain stage in the development of these means of production and of exchange, the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged, the feudal organisation of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in one word, the feudal relations of property became no longer compatible with the already developed productive forces; they became so many fetters. They had to be burst asunder; they were burst asunder.

Into their place stepped free competition, accompanied by a social and political constitution adapted to it, and by the economic and political sway of the

political constitution adapted to it, and by the economic and political sway of the bourgeois class.

A similar movement is going on before our own eyes. Modern bourgeois society, with its relations of production, of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells. For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeois and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on its trial, each time more threateningly. In these crises, a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises, there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity—the epidemic of overproduction. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians.

In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same

proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed—a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

Owing to the extensive use of machinery, and to the division of labour, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack, that is required of him. Hence, the cost of production of a workman is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for maintenance, and for the propagation of his race. But the price of a commodity, and therefore also of labour, is equal to its cost of production. In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases. Nay more, in proportion as the use of machinery and division of labour increases, in the same proportion the burden of toil also increases, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by the increase of the work exacted in a given time or by increased speed of machinery, *etc.*

Modern Industry has converted the little workshop of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalist. Masses of labourers, crowded into the factory, are organised like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the overlooker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself. The more openly this despotism proclaims gain to be its end and aim, the more petty, the more hateful and the more embittering it is.

The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labour of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex.

No sooner is the exploitation of the labourer by the manufacturer, so far, at an end, that 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.*

The lower strata of the middle class—the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants—all these sink

and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants—all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialised skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.

The proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie. At first the contest is carried on by individual labourers, then by the workpeople of a factory, then by the operative of one trade, in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labour, they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the Middle Ages.

At this stage, the labourers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country, and broken up by their mutual competition. If anywhere they unite to form more compact bodies, this is not yet the consequence of their own active union, but of the union of the bourgeoisie, which class, in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion, and is moreover yet, for a time, able to do so. At this stage, therefore, the proletarians do not fight their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies, the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois, the petty bourgeois. Thus, the whole historical movement is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie; every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

But with the development of industry, the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalised, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labour, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon, the workers begin to form combinations (Trades' Unions) against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occasional revolts. Here and there, the contest

provision beforehand for these occasional revolts. Here and there, the contest breaks out into riots.

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry, and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralise the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle. And that union, to attain which the burghers of the Middle Ages, with their miserable highways, required centuries, the modern proletarians, thanks to railways, achieve in a few years.

This organisation of the proletarians into a class, and, consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier. It compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers, by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself. Thus, the ten-hours' bill in England was carried.

Altogether collisions between the classes of the old society further, in many ways, the course of development of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself, whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all times with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles, it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for help, and thus, to drag it into the political arena. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.

Further, as we have already seen, entire sections of the ruling class are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or are at least threatened in their conditions of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.

Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the progress of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie

goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance, they are revolutionary, they are only so in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat.

The “dangerous class” [*lumpenproletariat*], the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of the old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue.

In the condition of the proletariat, those of old society at large are already virtually swamped. The proletarian is without property; his relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with the bourgeois family relations; modern industrial labour, modern subjection to capital, the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany, has stripped him of every trace of national character. Law, morality, religion, are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.

All the preceding classes that got the upper hand sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.

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. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.

In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat.

Hitherto, every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of the feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the process of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an over-riding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The essential condition for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

II. Proletarians and Communists

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In what relation do the Communists stand to the proletarians as a whole?

The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to the other working-class parties.

They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement.

The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only:

(1) In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality.

(2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.

The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.

They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes. The abolition of existing property relations is not at all a distinctive feature of communism.

All property relations in the past have continually been subject to historical change consequent upon the change in historical conditions.

change consequent upon the change in historical conditions.

The French Revolution, for example, abolished feudal property in favour of bourgeois property.

The distinguishing feature of Communism is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property. But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products, that is based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few.

In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.

We Communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man's own labour, which property is alleged to be the groundwork of all personal freedom, activity and independence.

Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property! Do you mean the property of the petty artisan and of the small peasant, a form of property that preceded the bourgeois form? There is no need to abolish that; the development of industry has to a great extent already destroyed it, and is still destroying it daily.

Or do you mean the modern bourgeois private property?

But does wage-labour create any property for the labourer? Not a bit. It creates capital, *i.e.*, that kind of property which exploits wage-labour, and which cannot increase except upon condition of begetting a new supply of wage-labour for fresh exploitation. Property, in its present form, is based on the antagonism of capital and wage labour. Let us examine both sides of this antagonism.

To be a capitalist, is to have not only a purely personal, but a social *status* in production. Capital 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.

Capital is, therefore, not a personal, it is a social power.

When, therefore, capital is converted into common property, into the property of all members of society, personal property is not thereby transformed into social property. It is only the social character of the property that is changed. It loses its class character.

Let us now take wage-labour.

The average price of wage-labour is the minimum wage, *i.e.*, that quantum of

the means of subsistence which is absolutely requisite to keep the labourer in bare existence as a labourer. What, therefore, the wage-labourer appropriates by means of his labour, merely suffices to prolong and reproduce a bare existence. We by no means intend to abolish this personal appropriation of the products of labour, an appropriation that is made for the maintenance and reproduction of human life, and that leaves no surplus wherewith to command the labour of others. All that we want to do away with is the miserable character of this appropriation, under which the labourer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only in so far as the interest of the ruling class requires it.

In bourgeois society, living labour is but a means to increase accumulated labour. In Communist society, accumulated labour is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the labourer.

In bourgeois society, therefore, the past dominates the present; in Communist society, the present dominates the past. In bourgeois society capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality.

And the abolition of this state of things is called by the bourgeois, abolition of individuality and freedom! And rightly so. The abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom is undoubtedly aimed at.

By freedom is meant, under the present bourgeois conditions of production, free trade, free selling and buying.

But if selling and buying disappears, free selling and buying disappears also. This talk about free selling and buying, and all the other “brave words” of our bourgeois about freedom in general, have a meaning, if any, only in contrast with restricted selling and buying, with the fettered traders of the Middle Ages, but have no meaning when opposed to the Communistic abolition of buying and selling, of the bourgeois conditions of production, and of the bourgeoisie itself.

You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society, private property is already done away with for nine-tenths of the population; its existence for the few is solely due to its non-existence in the hands of those nine-tenths. You reproach us, therefore, with intending to do away with a form of property, the necessary condition for whose existence is the non-existence of any property for the immense majority of society.

In one word, you reproach us with intending to do away with your property. Precisely so; that is just what we intend.

From the moment when labour can no longer be converted into capital, money, or rent, into a social power capable of being monopolised, *i.e.*, from the moment when individual property can no longer be transformed into bourgeois property, into capital, from that moment, you say, individuality vanishes.

You must, therefore, confess that by “individual” you mean no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle-class owner of property. This person must, indeed, be swept out of the way, and made impossible.

Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society; all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of such appropriations.

It has been objected that upon the abolition of private property, all work will cease, and universal laziness will overtake us.

According to this, bourgeois society ought long ago to have gone to the dogs through sheer idleness; for those of its members who work, acquire nothing, and those who acquire anything do not work. The whole of this objection is but another expression of the tautology: that there can no longer be any wage-labour when there is no longer any capital.

All objections urged against the Communistic mode of producing and appropriating material products, have, in the same way, been urged against the Communistic mode of producing and appropriating intellectual products. Just as, to the bourgeois, the disappearance of class property is the disappearance of production itself, so the disappearance of class culture is to him identical with the disappearance of all culture.

That culture, the loss of which he laments, is, for the enormous majority, a mere training to act as a machine.

But don’t wrangle with us so long as you apply, to our intended abolition of bourgeois property, the standard of your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law, &c. Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into a law for all, a will whose essential character and direction are determined by the economical conditions of existence of your class.

The selfish misconception that induces you to transform into eternal laws of nature and of reason, the social forms springing from your present mode of production and form of property—historical relations that rise and disappear in the progress of production—this misconception you share with every ruling class

that has preceded you. What you see clearly in the case of ancient property, what you admit in the case of feudal property, you are of course forbidden to admit in the case of your own bourgeois form of property.

Abolition [*Aufhebung*] of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form, this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution.

The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.

Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents? To this crime we plead guilty.

But, you say, we destroy the most hallowed of relations, when we replace home education by social.

And your education! Is not that also social, and determined by the social conditions under which you educate, by the intervention direct or indirect, of society, by means of schools, &c.? The Communists have not invented the intervention of society in education; they do but seek to alter the character of that intervention, and to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class.

The bourgeois clap-trap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relation of parents and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of Modern Industry, all the family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labour.

But you Communists would introduce community of women, screams the bourgeoisie in chorus.

The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and, naturally, can come to no other conclusion than that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women.

He has not even a suspicion that the real point aimed at is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production.

For the rest, nothing is more ridiculous than the virtuous indignation of our bourgeois at the community of women which, they pretend, is to be openly and

bourgeois at the community of women which, they pretend, is to be openly and officially established by the Communists. The Communists have no need to introduce community of women; it has existed almost from time immemorial.

Our bourgeois, not content with having wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives.

Bourgeois marriage is, in reality, a system of wives in common and thus, at the most, what the Communists might possibly be reproached with is that they desire to introduce, in substitution for a hypocritically concealed, an openly legalised community of women. For the rest, it is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of the community of women springing from that system, *i.e.*, of prostitution both public and private.

The Communists are further reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationality.

The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself *the* nation, it is so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word.

National differences and antagonism between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto.

The supremacy of the proletariat will cause them to vanish still faster. United action, of the leading civilised countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat.

In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another will also be put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end.

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

Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views, and conception, in one word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?

What else does the history of ideas prove than that intellectual production

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

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

When the ancient world was in its last throes, the ancient religions were overcome by Christianity. When Christian ideas succumbed in the 18th century to rationalist ideas, feudal society fought its death battle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisie. The ideas of religious liberty and freedom of conscience merely gave expression to the sway of free competition within the domain of knowledge.

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

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

What does this accusation reduce itself to? The history of all past society has consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms at different epochs.

But whatever form they may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, *viz*., the exploitation of one part of society by the other. No wonder, then, that the social consciousness of past ages, despite all the multiplicity and variety it displays, moves within certain common forms, or general ideas, which cannot completely vanish except with the total disappearance of class antagonisms.

The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas.

But let us have done with the bourgeois objections to Communism.

We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy.

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 productive forces as rapidly as possible.

Of course, in the beginning, this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property, and on the conditions of bourgeois production; by means of measures, therefore, which appear economically insufficient and untenable, but which, in the course of the movement, outstrip themselves, necessitate further inroads upon the old social order, and are unavoidable as a means of entirely revolutionising the mode of production.

These measures will, of course, be different in different countries.

Nevertheless, in most advanced countries, the following will be pretty generally applicable.

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.

2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.

3. Abolition of all rights of inheritance.

4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.

5. Centralisation of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.

6. Centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.

7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of waste-lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.

8. Equal liability of all to work. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.

9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the populace over the country.

10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children’s factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, &c, &c.

When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organise itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

III. Socialist and Communist Literature

1. REACTIONARY SOCIALISM

A. Feudal Socialism

Owing to their historical position, it became the vocation of the aristocracies of France and England to write pamphlets against modern bourgeois society. In the French Revolution of July 1830, and in the English reform agitation, these aristocracies again succumbed to the hateful upstart. Thenceforth, a serious political struggle was altogether out of the question. A literary battle alone remained possible. But even in the domain of literature the old cries of the restoration period had become impossible.[5]

In order to arouse sympathy, the aristocracy was obliged to lose sight, apparently, of its own interests, and to formulate their indictment against the bourgeoisie in the interest of the exploited working class alone. Thus, the aristocracy took their revenge by singing lampoons on their new masters and whispering in his ears sinister prophesies of coming catastrophe.

In this way arose feudal Socialism: half lamentation, half lampoon; half an echo of the past, half menace of the future; at times, by its bitter, witty and incisive criticism, striking the bourgeoisie to the very heart’s core; but always ludicrous in its effect, through total incapacity to comprehend the march of modern history.

The aristocracy, in order to rally the people to them, waved the proletarian

alms-bag in front for a banner. But the people, so often as it joined them, saw on their hindquarters the old feudal coats of arms, and deserted with loud and irreverent laughter.

One section of the French Legitimists and “Young England” exhibited this spectacle.

In pointing out that their mode of exploitation was different to that of the bourgeoisie, the feudalists forget that they exploited under circumstances and conditions that were quite different and that are now antiquated. In showing that, under their rule, the modern proletariat never existed, they forget that the modern bourgeoisie is the necessary offspring of their own form of society.

For the rest, so little do they conceal the reactionary character of their criticism that their chief accusation against the bourgeois amounts to this, that under the bourgeois *régime* a class is being developed which is destined to cut up root and branch the old order of society.

What they upbraid the bourgeoisie with is not so much that it creates a proletariat as that it creates a *revolutionary* proletariat.

In political practice, therefore, they join in all coercive measures against the working class; and in ordinary life, despite their high-falutin phrases, they stoop to pick up the golden apples dropped from the tree of industry, and to barter truth, love, and honour, for traffic in wool, beetroot-sugar, and potato spirits.[6]

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

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

B. Petty-Bourgeois Socialism

The feudal aristocracy was not the only class that was ruined by the bourgeoisie, not the only class whose conditions of existence pined and perished in the atmosphere of modern bourgeois society. The medieval burgesses and the small peasant proprietors were the precursors of the modern bourgeoisie. In those countries which are but little developed, industrially and commercially, these two classes still vegetate side by side with the rising bourgeoisie.

In countries where modern civilisation has become fully developed, a new class of petty bourgeois has been formed, fluctuating between proletariat and bourgeoisie, and ever renewing itself as a supplementary part of bourgeois society. The individual members of this class, however, are being constantly hurled down into the proletariat by the action of competition, and, as modern industry develops, they even see the moment approaching when they will completely disappear as an independent section of modern society, to be replaced in manufactures, agriculture and commerce, by overlookers, bailiffs and shopmen.

In countries like France, where the peasants constitute far more than half of the population, it was natural that writers who sided with the proletariat against the bourgeoisie should use, in their criticism of the bourgeois *régime*, the standard of the peasant and petty bourgeois, and from the standpoint of these intermediate classes, should take up the cudgels for the working class. Thus arose petty-bourgeois Socialism. Sismondi was the head of this school, not only in France but also in England.

This school of Socialism dissected with great acuteness the contradictions in the conditions of modern production. It laid bare the hypocritical apologies of economists. It proved, incontrovertibly, the disastrous effects of machinery and division of labour; the concentration of capital and land in a few hands; overproduction and crises; it pointed out the inevitable ruin of the petty bourgeois and peasant, the misery of the proletariat, the anarchy in production, the crying inequalities in the distribution of wealth, the industrial war of extermination between nations, the dissolution of old moral bonds, of the old family relations, of the old nationalities.

In its positive aims, however, this form of Socialism aspires either to restoring the old means of production and of exchange, and with them the old property relations, and the old society, or to cramping the modern means of production and of exchange within the framework of the old property relations that have been, and were bound to be, exploded by those means. In either case, it is both reactionary and Utopian.

Its last words are: corporate guilds for manufacture; patriarchal relations in agriculture.

Ultimately, when stubborn historical facts had dispersed all intoxicating effects of self-deception, this form of Socialism ended in a miserable fit of the blues.

C. German or "True" Socialism

The Socialist and Communist literature of France, a literature that originated under the pressure of a bourgeoisie in power, and that was the expressions of the struggle against this power, was introduced into Germany at a time when the bourgeoisie, in that country, had just begun its contest with feudal absolutism.

German philosophers, would-be philosophers, and *beaux esprits* (men of letters), eagerly seized on this literature, only forgetting, that when these writings immigrated from France into Germany, French social conditions had not immigrated along with them. In contact with German social conditions, this French literature lost all its immediate practical significance and assumed a purely literary aspect. Thus, to the German philosophers of the Eighteenth Century, the demands of the first French Revolution were nothing more than the demands of "Practical Reason" in general, and the utterance of the will of the revolutionary French bourgeoisie signified, in their eyes, the laws of pure Will, of Will as it was bound to be, of true human Will generally.

The work of the German *literati* consisted solely in bringing the new French ideas into harmony with their ancient philosophical conscience, or rather, in annexing the French ideas without deserting their own philosophic point of view.

This annexation took place in the same way in which a foreign language is appropriated, namely, by translation.

It is well known how the monks wrote silly lives of Catholic Saints *over* the manuscripts on which the classical works of ancient heathendom had been written. The German *literati* reversed this process with the profane French literature. They wrote their philosophical nonsense beneath the French original. For instance, beneath the French criticism of the economic functions of money, they wrote "Alienation of Humanity," and beneath the French criticism of the bourgeois state they wrote "Dethronement of the Category of the General," and so forth.

The introduction of these philosophical phrases at the back of the French historical criticisms, they dubbed "Philosophy of Action," "True Socialism," "German Science of Socialism," "Philosophical Foundation of Socialism," and so on.

The French Socialist and Communist literature was thus completely emasculated. And, since it ceased in the hands of the German to express the struggle of one class with the other, he felt conscious of having overcome "French one-sidedness" and of representing, not true requirements, but the requirements of Truth; not the interests of the proletariat, but the interests of

requirements of Truth, not the interests of the proletariat, but the interests of Human Nature, of Man in general, who belongs to no class, has no reality, who exists only in the misty realm of philosophical fantasy.

This German socialism, which took its schoolboy task so seriously and solemnly, and extolled its poor stock-in-trade in such a mountebank fashion, meanwhile gradually lost its pedantic innocence.

The fight of the Germans, and especially of the Prussian bourgeoisie, against feudal aristocracy and absolute monarchy, in other words, the liberal movement, became more earnest.

By this, the long-wished for opportunity was offered to "True" Socialism of confronting the political movement with the Socialist demands, of hurling the traditional anathemas against liberalism, against representative government, against bourgeois competition, bourgeois freedom of the press, bourgeois legislation, bourgeois liberty and equality, and of preaching to the masses that they had nothing to gain, and everything to lose, by this bourgeois movement. German Socialism forgot, in the nick of time, that the French criticism, whose silly echo it was, presupposed the existence of modern bourgeois society, with its corresponding economic conditions of existence, and the political constitution adapted thereto, the very things whose attainment was the object of the pending struggle in Germany.

To the absolute governments, with their following of parsons, professors, country squires, and officials, it served as a welcome scarecrow against the threatening bourgeoisie.

It was a sweet finish, after the bitter pills of flogging and bullets, with which these same governments, just at that time, dosed the German working-class risings.

While this "True" Socialism thus served the government as a weapon for fighting the German bourgeoisie, it, at the same time, directly represented a reactionary interest, the interest of German Philistines. In Germany, the *petty-bourgeois* class, a relic of the sixteenth century, and since then constantly cropping up again under the various forms, is the real social basis of the existing state of things.

To preserve this class is to preserve the existing state of things in Germany. The industrial and political supremacy of the bourgeoisie threatens it with certain destruction—on the one hand, from the concentration of capital; on the other, from the rise of a revolutionary proletariat. "True" Socialism appeared to kill these two birds with one stone. It spread like an epidemic.

The robe of speculative cobwebs, embroidered with flowers of rhetoric, steeped in the dew of sickly sentiment, this transcendental robe in which the German Socialists wrapped their sorry “eternal truths,” all skin and bone, served to wonderfully increase the sale of their goods amongst such a public.

And on its part German Socialism recognised, more and more, its own calling as the bombastic representative of the petty-bourgeois Philistine.

It proclaimed the German nation to be the model nation, and the German petty Philistine to be the typical man. To every villainous meanness of this model man, it gave a hidden, higher, Socialistic interpretation, the exact contrary of its real character. It went to the extreme length of directly opposing the “brutally destructive” tendency of Communism, and of proclaiming its supreme and impartial contempt of all class struggles. With very few exceptions, all the so-called Socialist and Communist publications that now (1847) circulate in Germany belong to the domain of this foul and enervating literature.[7]

2. CONSERVATIVE OR BOURGEOIS SOCIALISM

A part of the bourgeoisie is desirous of redressing social grievances in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society.

To this section belong economists, philanthropists, humanitaians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organisers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole-and-corner reformers of every imaginable kind. This form of socialism has, moreover, been worked out into complete systems.

We may cite Proudhon’s *Philosophie de la Misère* as an example of this form.

The Socialistic bourgeois want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society, minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They wish for a bourgeoisie without a proletariat. The bourgeoisie naturally conceives the world in which it is supreme to be the best; and bourgeois Socialism develops this comfortable conception into various more or less complete systems. In requiring the proletariat to carry out such a system, and thereby to march straightway into the social New Jerusalem, it but requires in reality, that the proletariat should remain within the bounds of existing society, but should cast away all its hateful ideas concerning the bourgeoisie.

A second, and more practical, but less systematic, form of this Socialism sought to depreciate every revolutionary movement in the eyes of the working

sought to depreciate every revolutionary movement in the eyes of the working class by showing that no mere political reform, but only a change in the material conditions of existence, in economical relations, could be of any advantage to them. By changes in the material conditions of existence, this form of Socialism, however, by no means understands abolition of the bourgeois relations of production, an abolition that can be affected only by a revolution, but administrative reforms, based on the continued existence of these relations; reforms, therefore, that in no respect affect the relations between capital and labour, but, at the best, lessen the cost, and simplify the administrative work, of bourgeois government.

Bourgeois Socialism attains adequate expression when, and only when, it becomes a mere figure of speech.

Free trade: for the benefit of the working class. Protective duties: for the benefit of the working class. Prison Reform: for the benefit of the working class. This is the last word and the only seriously meant word of bourgeois socialism.

It is summed up in the phrase: the bourgeois is a bourgeois—for the benefit of the working class.

3. CRITICAL-UTOPIAN SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM

We do not here refer to that literature which, in every great modern revolution, has always given voice to the demands of the proletariat, such as the writings of Babeuf and others.

The first direct attempts of the proletariat to attain its own ends, made in times of universal excitement, when feudal society was being overthrown, necessarily failed, owing to the then undeveloped state of the proletariat, as well as to the absence of the economic conditions for its emancipation, conditions that had yet to be produced, and could be produced by the impending bourgeois epoch alone. The revolutionary literature that accompanied these first movements of the proletariat had necessarily a reactionary character. It inculcated universal asceticism and social levelling in its crudest form.

The Socialist and Communist systems, properly so called, those of Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, and others, spring into existence in the early undeveloped period, described above, of the struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie (see Section I. Bourgeois and Proletarians).

The founders of these systems see, indeed, the class antagonisms, as well as the action of the decomposing elements in the prevailing form of society. But the proletariat, as yet in its infancy, offers to them the spectacle of a class without any historical initiative or any independent political movement.

any historical initiative or any independent political movement.

Since the development of class antagonism keeps even pace with the development of industry, the economic situation, as they find it, does not as yet offer to them the material conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat. They therefore search after a new social science, after new social laws, that are to create these conditions.

Historical action is to yield to their personal inventive action; historically created conditions of emancipation to fantastic ones; and the gradual, spontaneous class organisation of the proletariat to an organisation of society especially contrived by these inventors. Future history resolves itself, in their eyes, into the propaganda and the practical carrying out of their social plans.

In the formation of their plans, they are conscious of caring chiefly for the interests of the working class, as being the most suffering class. Only from the point of view of being the most suffering class does the proletariat exist for them.

The undeveloped state of the class struggle, as well as their own surroundings, causes Socialists of this kind to consider themselves far superior to all class antagonisms. They want to improve the condition of every member of society, even that of the most favoured. Hence, they habitually appeal to society at large, without the distinction of class; nay, by preference, to the ruling class. For how can people, when once they understand their system, fail to see in it the best possible plan of the best possible state of society?

Hence, they reject all political, and especially all revolutionary action; they wish to attain their ends by peaceful means, necessarily doomed to failure, and by the force of example, to pave the way for the new social Gospel.

Such fantastic pictures of future society, painted at a time when the proletariat is still in a very undeveloped state and has but a fantastic conception of its own position, correspond with the first instinctive yearnings of that class for a general reconstruction of society.

But these Socialist and Communist publications contain also a critical element. They attack every principle of existing society. Hence, they are full of the most valuable materials for the enlightenment of the working class. The practical measures proposed in them—such as the abolition of the distinction between town and country, of the family, of the carrying on of industries for the account of private individuals, and of the wage system, the proclamation of social harmony, the conversion of the function of the state into a mere superintendence of production—all these proposals point solely to the

disappearance of class antagonisms which were, at that time, only just cropping up, and which, in these publications, are recognised in their earliest indistinct and undefined forms only. These proposals, therefore, are of a purely Utopian character.

The significance of Critical-Utopian Socialism and Communism bears an inverse relation to historical development. In proportion as the modern class struggle develops and takes definite shape, this fantastic standing apart from the contest, these fantastic attacks on it, lose all practical value and all theoretical justification. Therefore, although the originators of these systems were, in many respects, revolutionary, their disciples have, in every case, formed mere reactionary sects. They hold fast by the original views of their masters, in opposition to the progressive historical development of the proletariat. They, therefore, endeavour, and that consistently, to deaden the class struggle and to reconcile the class antagonisms. They still dream of experimental realisation of their social Utopias, of founding isolated "phalanstères," of establishing "Home Colonies," or setting up a "Little Icaria"[8]—duodecimo editions of the New Jerusalem—and to realise all these castles in the air, they are compelled to appeal to the feelings and purses of the bourgeois. By degrees, they sink into the category of the reactionary [or] conservative Socialists depicted above, differing from these only by more systematic pedantry, and by their fanatical and superstitious belief in the miraculous effects of their social science.

They, therefore, violently oppose all political action on the part of the working class; such action, according to them, can only result from blind unbelief in the new Gospel.

The Owenites in England, and the Fourierists in France, respectively, oppose the Chartists and the *Réformistes*.

IV. Position of the Communists in Relation to the Various Existing Opposition Parties

Section II has made clear the relations of the Communists to the existing working-class parties, such as the Chartists in England and the Agrarian Reformers in America.

The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement. In France, the Communists ally with the Social-Democrats[9] against

the conservative and radical bourgeoisie, reserving, however, the right to take up a critical position in regard to phases and illusions traditionally handed down from the great Revolution.

In Switzerland, they support the Radicals, without losing sight of the fact that this party consists of antagonistic elements, partly of Democratic Socialists, in the French sense, partly of radical bourgeois.

In Poland, they support the party that insists on an agrarian revolution as the prime condition for national emancipation, that party which fomented the insurrection of Cracow in 1846.

In Germany, they fight with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy, the feudal squirearchy, and the petty bourgeoisie.

But they never cease, for a single instant, to instill into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, in order that the German workers may straightway use, as so many weapons against the bourgeoisie, the social and political conditions that the bourgeoisie must necessarily introduce along with its supremacy, and in order that, after the fall of the reactionary classes in Germany, the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin.

The Communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because that country is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution that is bound to be carried out under more advanced conditions of European civilisation and with a much more developed proletariat than that of England was in the seventeenth, and France in the eighteenth century, and because the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution.

In short, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.

In all these movements, they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.

Finally, they labour everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries.

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. 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!

APPENDIX: PREFACES TO VARIOUS LANGUAGE EDITIONS

Preface to the German Edition of 1872

The Communist League, an international association of workers, which could of course be only a secret one, under conditions obtaining at the time, commissioned us, the undersigned, at the Congress held in London in November 1847, to write for publication a detailed theoretical and practical programme for the Party. Such was the origin of the following Manifesto, the manuscript of which travelled to London to be printed a few weeks before the February Revolution. First published in German, it has been republished in that language in at least twelve different editions in Germany, England, and America. It was published in English for the first time in 1850 in the *Red Republican*, London, translated by Miss Helen Macfarlane, and in 1871 in at least three different translations in America. The French version first appeared in Paris shortly before the June insurrection of 1848, and recently in *Le Socialiste* of New York. A new translation is in the course of preparation. A Polish version appeared in London shortly after it was first published in Germany. A Russian translation was published in Geneva in the ’sixties. Into Danish, too, it was translated shortly after its appearance.

However much that state of things may have altered during the last twenty-five years, the general principles laid down in the Manifesto are, on the whole, as correct today as ever. Here and there, some detail might be improved. The practical application of the principles will depend, as the Manifesto itself states, everywhere and at all times, on the historical conditions for the time being existing, and, for that reason, no special stress is laid on the revolutionary measures proposed at the end of Section II. That passage would, in many respects, be very differently worded today. In view of the gigantic strides of Modern Industry since 1848, and of the accompanying improved and extended organization of the working class, in view of the practical experience gained, first in the February Revolution, and then, still more, in the Paris Commune, where the proletariat for the first time held political power for two whole months, this programme has in some details become antiquated. One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that “the working class cannot simply lay hold of ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own

purposes." (See "The Civil War in France: Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association," 1871, where this point is further developed.) Further, it is self-evident that the criticism of socialist literature is deficient in relation to the present time, because it comes down only to 1847; also that the remarks on the relation of the Communists to the various opposition parties (Section IV), although, in principle still correct, yet in practice are antiquated, because the political situation has been entirely changed, and the progress of history has swept from off the earth the greater portion of the political parties there enumerated.

But then, the Manifesto has become a historical document which we have no longer any right to alter. A subsequent edition may perhaps appear with an introduction bridging the gap from 1847 to the present day; but this reprint was too unexpected to leave us time for that.

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels
June 24, 1872, London

Preface to the Russian Edition of 1882

The first Russian edition of the Manifesto of the Communist Party, translated by Bakunin, was published early in the 'sixties by the printing office of the *Kolokol*.

Then the West could see in it (the Russian edition of the Manifesto) only a literary curiosity. Such a view would be impossible today.

What a limited field the proletarian movement occupied at that time (December 1847) is most clearly shown by the last section: the position of the Communists in relation to the various opposition parties in various countries. Precisely Russia and the United States are missing here. It was the time when Russia constituted the last great reserve of all European reaction, when the United States absorbed the surplus proletarian forces of Europe through immigration. Both countries provided Europe with raw materials and were at the same time markets for the sale of its industrial products. Both were, therefore, in one way of another, pillars of the existing European system.

How very different today. Precisely European immigration fitted North American for a gigantic agricultural production, whose competition is shaking the very foundations of European landed property—large and small. At the same time, it enabled the United States to exploit its tremendous industrial resources with an energy and on a scale that must shortly break the industrial monopoly of

Western Europe, and especially of England, existing up to now. Both circumstances react in a revolutionary manner upon America itself. Step by step, the small and middle land ownership of the farmers, the basis of the whole political constitution, is succumbing to the competition of giant farms; at the same time, a mass industrial proletariat and a fabulous concentration of capital funds are developing for the first time in the industrial regions.

And now Russia! During the Revolution of 1848–9, not only the European princes, but the European bourgeois as well, found their only salvation from the proletariat just beginning to awaken in Russian intervention. The Tsar was proclaimed the chief of European reaction. Today, he is a prisoner of war of the revolution in Gatchina, and Russia forms the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe.

The Communist Manifesto had, as its object, the proclamation of the inevitable impending dissolution of modern bourgeois property. But in Russia we find, face-to-face with the rapidly flowering capitalist swindle and bourgeois property, just beginning to develop, more than half the land owned in common by the peasants. Now the question is: can the Russian obshchina, though greatly undermined, yet a form of primeval common ownership of land, pass directly to the higher form of Communist common ownership? Or, on the contrary, must it first pass through the same process of dissolution such as constitutes the historical evolution of the West?

The only answer to that possible today is this: If the Russian Revolution becomes the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West, so that both complement each other, the present Russian common ownership of land may serve as the starting point for a communist development.

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels
January 21, 1882, London

Preface to the German Edition of 1883

The preface to the present edition I must, alas, sign alone. Marx, the man to whom the whole working class of Europe and America owes more than to any one else—rests at Highgate Cemetery and over his grave the first grass is already growing. Since his death [March 14, 1883], there can be even less thought of revising or supplementing the Manifesto. But I consider it all the more necessary again to state the following expressly:

The basic thought running through the Manifesto—that economic production, and the structure of society of every historical epoch necessarily arising therefrom, constitute the foundation for the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently (ever since the dissolution of the primaeval communal ownership of land) all history has been a history of class struggles, of struggles between exploited and exploiting, between dominated and dominating classes at various stages of social evolution; that this struggle, however, has now reached a stage where the exploited and oppressed class (the proletariat) can no longer emancipate itself from the class which exploits and oppresses it (the bourgeoisie), without at the same time forever freeing the whole of society from exploitation, oppression, class struggles—this basic thought belongs solely and exclusively to Marx.

I have already stated this many times; but precisely now is it necessary that it also stand in front of the Manifesto itself.

Friedrich Engels
June 28, 1883, London

Preface to the English Edition of 1888

The Manifesto was published as the platform of the Communist League, a working men's association, first exclusively German, later on international, and under the political conditions of the Continent before 1848, unavoidably a secret society. At a Congress of the League, held in November 1847, Marx and Engels were commissioned to prepare a complete theoretical and practical party programme. Drawn up in German, in January 1848, the manuscript was sent to the printer in London a few weeks before the French Revolution of February 24. A French translation was brought out in Paris shortly before the insurrection of June 1848. The first English translation, by Miss Helen Macfarlane, appeared in George Julian Harney's *Red Republican*, London, 1850. A Danish and a Polish edition had also been published.

The defeat of the Parisian insurrection of June 1848—the first great battle between proletariat and bourgeoisie—drove again into the background, for a time, the social and political aspirations of the European working class. Thenceforth, the struggle for supremacy was, again, as it had been before the Revolution of February, solely between different sections of the propertied class; the working class was reduced to a fight for political elbow-room, and to the position of extreme wing of the middle-class Radicals. Wherever independent

proletarian movements continued to show signs of life, they were ruthlessly hunted down. Thus the Prussian police hunted out the Central Board of the Communist League, then located in Cologne. The members were arrested and, after eighteen months' imprisonment, they were tried in October 1852. This celebrated "Cologne Communist Trial" lasted from October 4 till November 12; seven of the prisoners were sentenced to terms of imprisonment in a fortress, varying from three to six years. Immediately after the sentence, the League was formally dissolved by the remaining members. As to the Manifesto, it seemed henceforth doomed to oblivion.

When the European workers had recovered sufficient strength for another attack on the ruling classes, the International Working Men's Association sprang up. But this association, formed with the express aim of welding into one body the whole militant proletariat of Europe and America, could not at once proclaim the principles laid down in the Manifesto. The International was bound to have a programme broad enough to be acceptable to the English trade unions, to the followers of Proudhon in France, Belgium, Italy, and Spain, and to the Lassalleans in Germany.

Marx, who drew up this programme to the satisfaction of all parties, entirely trusted to the intellectual development of the working class, which was sure to result from combined action and mutual discussion. The very events and vicissitudes in the struggle against capital, the defeats even more than the victories, could not help bringing home to men's minds the insufficiency of their various favorite nostrums, and preparing the way for a more complete insight into the true conditions for working-class emancipation. And Marx was right. The International, on its breaking in 1874, left the workers quite different men from what it found them in 1864. Proudhonism in France, Lassalleanism in Germany, were dying out, and even the conservative English trade unions, though most of them had long since severed their connection with the International, were gradually advancing towards that point at which, last year at Swansea, their president could say in their name: "Continental socialism has lost its terror for us." In fact, the principles of the Manifesto had made considerable headway among the working men of all countries.

The Manifesto itself came thus to the front again. Since 1850, the German text had been reprinted several times in Switzerland, England, and America. In 1872, it was translated into English in New York, where the translation was published in *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly*. From this English version, a French one was made in *Le Socialiste* of New York. Since then, at least two more English translations, more or less mutilated, have been brought out in

America, and one of them has been reprinted in England. The first Russian translation, made by Bakunin, was published at Herzen's *Kolokol* office in Geneva, about 1863; a second one, by the heroic Vera Zasulich, also in Geneva, in 1882. A new Danish edition is to be found in *Socialdemokratisk Bibliothek*, Copenhagen, 1885; a fresh French translation in *Le Socialiste*, Paris, 1886. From this latter, a Spanish version was prepared and published in Madrid, 1886. The German reprints are not to be counted; there have been twelve altogether at the least. An Armenian translation, which was to be published in Constantinople some months ago, did not see the light, I am told, because the publisher was afraid of bringing out a book with the name of Marx on it, while the translator declined to call it his own production. Of further translations into other languages I have heard but had not seen. Thus the history of the Manifesto reflects the history of the modern working-class movement; at present, it is doubtless the most wide spread, the most international production of all socialist literature, the common platform acknowledged by millions of working men from Siberia to California.

Yet, when it was written, we could not have called it a *socialist* manifesto. By Socialists, in 1847, were understood, on the one hand the adherents of the various Utopian systems: Owenites in England, Fourierists in France, both of them already reduced to the position of mere sects, and gradually dying out; on the other hand, the most multifarious social quacks who, by all manner of tinkering, professed to redress, without any danger to capital and profit, all sorts of social grievances, in both cases men outside the working-class movement, and looking rather to the "educated" classes for support. Whatever portion of the working class had become convinced of the insufficiency of mere political revolutions, and had proclaimed the necessity of total social change, called itself Communist. It was a crude, rough-hewn, purely instinctive sort of communism; still, it touched the cardinal point and was powerful enough amongst the working class to produce the Utopian communism of Cabet in France, and of Weitling in Germany. Thus, in 1847, socialism was a middle-class movement, communism a working-class movement. Socialism was, on the Continent at least, "respectable"; communism was the very opposite. And as our notion, from the very beginning, was that "the emancipation of the workers must be the act of the working class itself," there could be no doubt as to which of the two names we must take. Moreover, we have, ever since, been far from repudiating it.

The Manifesto being our joint production, I consider myself bound to state that the fundamental proposition which forms the nucleus belongs to Marx. That proposition is: That in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic

production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which it is built up, and from that which alone can be explained the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolutions in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class— the bourgeoisie—without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinction, and class struggles.

This proposition, which, in my opinion, is destined to do for history what Darwin's theory has done for biology, we both of us, had been gradually approaching for some years before 1845. How far I had independently progressed towards it is best shown by my "Conditions of the Working Class in England." But when I again met Marx at Brussels, in spring 1845, he had it already worked out and put it before me in terms almost as clear as those in which I have stated it here.

From our joint preface to the German edition of 1872, I quote the following:

> However much that state of things may have altered during the last twenty-five years, the general principles laid down in the Manifesto are, on the whole, as correct today as ever. Here and there, some detail might be improved. The practical application of the principles will depend, as the Manifesto itself states, everywhere and at all times, on the historical conditions for the time being existing, and, for that reason, no special stress is laid on the revolutionary measures proposed at the end of Section II. That passage would, in many respects, be very differently worded today. In view of the gigantic strides of Modern Industry since 1848, and of the accompanying improved and extended organization of the working class, in view of the practical experience gained, first in the February Revolution, and then, still more, in the Paris Commune, where the proletariat for the first time held political power for two whole months, this programme has in some details become antiquated. One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes" (See "The Civil War in France: Address of the General Council of the International Working

Men's Association," 1871, where this point is further developed). Further, it is self-evident that the criticism of socialist literature is deficient in relation to the present time, because it comes down only to 1847; also that the remarks on the relation of the Communists to the various opposition parties (Section IV), although, in principle still correct, yet in practice are antiquated, because the political situation has been entirely changed, and the progress of history has swept from off the Earth the greater portion of the political parties there enumerated.

But then, the Manifesto has become a historical document which we have no longer any right to alter.

The present translation is by Mr. Samuel Moore, the translator of the greater portion of Marx's "Capital." We have revised it in common, and I have added a few notes explanatory of historical allusions.

Friedrich Engels
January 30, 1888, London

Preface to the German Edition of 1890

Since the above [the Preface to the German edition of 1883—J.C.I.] was written, a new German edition of the Manifesto has again become necessary, and much has also happened to the Manifesto which should be recorded here.

A second Russian translation—by Vera Zasulich—appeared in Geneva in 1882; the preface to that edition was written by Marx and myself. Unfortunately, the original German manuscript has gone astray; I must therefore retranslate from the Russian which will in no way improve the text. It reads: [what follows is a reprint of the Preface to the Russian edition of 1882— J.C.I.]

At about the same date, a new Polish version appeared in Geneva: *Manifest Kommunistyczny*.

Furthermore, a new Danish translation has appeared in the *Socialdemokratisk Bibliothek*, Copenhagen, 1885. Unfortunately, it is not quite complete; certain essential passages, which seem to have presented difficulties to the translator, have been omitted, and, in addition, there are signs of carelessness here and there, which are all the more unpleasantly conspicuous since the translation indicates that had the translator taken a little more pains, he would have done an excellent piece of work.

A new French version appeared in 1886, in *Le Socialiste* of Paris; it is the best published to date.

From this latter, a Spanish version was published the same year in *El Socialista* of Madrid, and then reissued in pamphlet form: *Manifesto del Partido Communista* por Carlos Marx y F. Engels, Madrid, Administracion de El Socialista, Hernan Cortes 8.

As a matter of curiosity, I may mention that in 1887 the manuscript of an Armenian translation was offered to a publisher in Constantinople. But the good man did not have the courage to publish something bearing the name of Marx and suggested that the translator set down his own name as author, which the latter however declined.

After one, and then another, of the more or less inaccurate American translations had been repeatedly reprinted in England, an authentic version at last appeared in 1888. This was by my friend Samuel Moore, and we went through it together once more before it went to press. It is entitled: *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Authorized English translation, edited and annotated by Friedrich Engels, 1888, London, William Reeves, 185 Fleet Street, E.C. I have added some of the notes of that edition to the present one.

The Manifesto has had a history of its own. Greeted with enthusiasm, at the time of its appearance, by the not at all numerous vanguard of scientific socialism (as is proved by the translations mentioned in the first place), it was soon forced into the background by the reaction that began with the defeat of the Paris workers in June 1848, and was finally excommunicated “by law” in the conviction of the Cologne Communists in November 1852. With the disappearance from the public scene of the workers’ movement that had begun with the February Revolution, the Manifesto too passed into the background.

When the European workers had again gathered sufficient strength for a new onslaught upon the power of the ruling classes, the International Working Men’s Association came into being. Its aim was to weld together into *one* huge army the whole militant working class of Europe and America. Therefore it could not *set out* from the principles laid down in the Manifesto. It was bound to have a programme which would not shut the door on the English trade unions, the French, Belgian, Italian, and Spanish Proudhonists, and the German Lassalleans. This programme—the considerations underlying the Statutes of the International—was drawn up by Marx with a master hand acknowledged even by Bakunin and the anarchists. For the ultimate final triumph of the ideas set forth in the

Manifesto, Marx relied solely upon the intellectual development of the working class, as it necessarily has to ensue from united action and discussion. The events and vicissitudes in the struggle against capital, the defeats even more than the successes, could not but demonstrate to the fighters the inadequacy of their former universal panaceas, and make their minds more receptive to a thorough understanding of the true conditions for working-class emancipation. And Marx was right. The working class of 1874, at the dissolution of the International, was altogether different from that of 1864, at its foundation. Proudhonism in the Latin countries, and the specific Lassalleanism in Germany, were dying out; and even the ten arch-conservative English trade unions were gradually approaching the point where, in 1887, the chairman of their Swansea Congress could say in their name: "Continental socialism has lost its terror for us." Yet by 1887 continental socialism was almost exclusively the theory heralded in the Manifesto. Thus, to a certain extent, the history of the Manifesto reflects the history of the modern working-class movement since 1848. At present, it is doubtless the most widely circulated, the most international product of all socialist literature, the common programme of many millions of workers of all countries from Siberia to California.

Nevertheless, when it appeared, we could not have called it a *socialist* manifesto. In 1847, two kinds of people were considered socialists. On the one hand were the adherents of the various utopian systems, notably the Owenites in England and the Fourierists in France, both of whom, at that date, had already dwindled to mere sects gradually dying out. On the other, the manifold types of social quacks who wanted to eliminate social abuses through their various universal panaceas and all kinds of patchwork, without hurting capital and profit in the least. In both cases, people who stood outside the labor movement and who looked for support rather to the "educated" classes. The section of the working class, however, which demanded a radical reconstruction of society, convinced that mere political revolutions were not enough, then called itself *Communist*. It was still a rough-hewn, only instinctive and frequently somewhat crude communism. Yet, it was powerful enough to bring into being two systems of utopian communism—in France, the "Icarian" communists of Cabet, and in Germany that of Weitling. Socialism in 1847 signified a bourgeois movement, communism a working-class movement. Socialism was, on the Continent at least, quite respectable, whereas communism was the very opposite. And since we were very decidedly of the opinion as early as then that "the emancipation of the workers must be the task of the working class itself," we could have no hesitation as to which of the two names we should choose. Nor has it ever

occurred to us to repudiate it.

"Working men of all countries, unite!" But few voices responded when we proclaimed these words to the world 42 years ago, on the eve of the first Paris Revolution in which the proletariat came out with the demands of its own. On September 28, 1864, however, the proletarians of most of the Western European countries joined hands in the International Working Men's Association of glorious memory. True, the International itself lived only nine years. But that the eternal union of the proletarians of all countries created by it is still alive and lives stronger than ever, there is no better witness than this day. Because today, as I write these lines, the European and American proletariat is reviewing its fighting forces, mobilized for the first time, mobilized as *one* army, under *one* flag, for *one* immediate aim: the standard eight-hour working day to be established by legal enactment, as proclaimed by the Geneva Congress of the International in 1866, and again by the Paris Workers' Congress of 1889. And today's spectacle will open the eyes of the capitalists and landlords of all countries to the fact that today the proletarians of all countries are united indeed.

If only Marx were still by my side to see this with his own eyes!

Friedrich Engels
May 1, 1890, London

Preface to the Polish Edition of 1892

The fact that a new Polish edition of the Communist Manifesto has become necessary gives rise to various thoughts.

First of all, it is noteworthy that of late the Manifesto has become an index, as it were, of the development of large-scale industry on the European continent. In proportion as large-scale industry expands in a given country, the demand grows among the workers of that country for enlightenment regarding their position as the working class in relation to the possessing classes, the socialist movement spreads among them and the demand for the Manifesto increases. Thus, not only the state of the labour movement but also the degree of development of large-scale industry can be measured with fair accuracy in every country by the number of copies of the Manifesto circulated in the language of that country.

Accordingly, the new Polish edition indicates a decided progress of Polish industry. And there can be no doubt whatever that this progress since the previous edition published ten years ago has actually taken place. Russian

previous edition published ten years ago has actually taken place. Russian Poland, Congress Poland, has become the big industrial region of the Russian Empire. Whereas Russian large-scale industry is scattered sporadically—a part round the Gulf of Finland, another in the center (Moscow and Vladimir), a third along the coasts of the Black and Azov seas, and still others elsewhere—Polish industry has been packed into a relatively small area and enjoys both the advantages and disadvantages arising from such concentration. The competing Russian manufacturers acknowledged the advantages when they demanded protective tariffs against Poland, in spite of their ardent desire to transform the Poles into Russians. The disadvantages—for the Polish manufacturers and the Russian government—are manifest in the rapid spread of socialist ideas among the Polish workers and in the growing demand for the Manifesto.

But the rapid development of Polish industry, outstripping that of Russia, is in its turn a new proof of the inexhaustible vitality of the Polish people and a new guarantee of its impending national restoration. And the restoration of an independent and strong Poland is a matter which concerns not only the Poles but all of us. A sincere international collaboration of the European nations is possible only if each of these nations is fully autonomous in its own house. The Revolution of 1848, which under the banner of the proletariat, after all, merely let the proletarian fighters do the work of the bourgeoisie, also secured the independence of Italy, Germany and Hungary through its testamentary executors, Louis Bonaparte and Bismarck; but Poland, which since 1792 had done more for the Revolution than all these three together, was left to its own resources when it succumbed in 1863 to a tenfold greater Russian force. The nobility could neither maintain nor regain Polish independence; today, to the bourgeoisie, this independence is, to say the last, immaterial. Nevertheless, it is a necessity for the harmonious collaboration of the European nations. It can be gained only by the young Polish proletariat, and in its hands it is secure. For the workers of all the rest of Europe need the independence of Poland just as much as the Polish workers themselves.

F. Engels
London, February 10, 1892

Preface to the Italian Edition of 1893

Publication of the Manifesto of the Communist Party coincided, one may say, with March 18, 1848, the day of the revolution in Milan and Berlin, which were armed uprisings of the two nations situated in the centre, the one, of the continent of Europe, the other, of the Mediterranean; two nations until then

continent of Europe, the other, of the Mediterranean, two nations until then enfeebled by division and internal strife, and thus fallen under foreign domination. While Italy was subject to the Emperor of Austria, Germany underwent the yoke, not less effective though more indirect, of the Tsar of all the Russias. The consequences of March 18, 1848, freed both Italy and Germany from this disgrace; if from 1848 to 1871 these two great nations were reconstituted and somehow again put on their own, it was as Karl Marx used to say, because the men who suppressed the Revolution of 1848 were, nevertheless, its testamentary executors in spite of themselves.

Everywhere that revolution was the work of the working class; it was the latter that built the barricades and paid with its lifeblood. Only the Paris workers, in overthrowing the government, had the very definite intention of overthrowing the bourgeois regime. But conscious though they were of the fatal antagonism existing between their own class and the bourgeoisie, still, neither the economic progress of the country nor the intellectual development of the mass of French workers had as yet reached the stage which would have made a social reconstruction possible. In the final analysis, therefore, the fruits of the revolution were reaped by the capitalist class. In the other countries, in Italy, in Germany, in Austria, the workers, from the very outset, did nothing but raise the bourgeoisie to power. But in any country the rule of the bourgeoisie is impossible without national independence. Therefore, the Revolution of 1848 had to bring in its train the unity and autonomy of the nations that had lacked them up to then: Italy, Germany, Hungary. Poland will follow in turn.

Thus, if the Revolution of 1848 was not a socialist revolution, it paved the way, prepared the ground for the latter. Through the impetus given to large-scaled industry in all countries, the bourgeois regime during the last forty-five years has everywhere created a numerous, concentrated and powerful proletariat. It has thus raised, to use the language of the Manifesto, its own grave-diggers. Without restoring autonomy and unity to each nation, it will be impossible to achieve the international union of the proletariat, or the peaceful and intelligent co-operation of these nations toward common aims. Just imagine joint international action by the Italian, Hungarian, German, Polish and Russian workers under the political conditions preceding 1848! The battles fought in 1848 were thus not fought in vain. Nor have the forty-five years separating us from that revolutionary epoch passed to no purpose. The fruits are ripening, and all I wish is that the publication of this Italian translation may augur as well for the victory of the Italian proletariat as the publication of the original did for the international revolution.

The Manifesto does full justice to the revolutionary part played by capitalism

The Manifesto does full justice to the revolutionary part played by capitalism in the past. The first capitalist nation was Italy. The close of the feudal Middle Ages, and the opening of the modern capitalist era are marked by a colossal figure: an Italian, Dante, both the last poet of the Middle Ages and the first poet of modern times. Today, as in 1300, a new historical era is approaching. Will Italy give us the new Dante, who will mark the hour of birth of this new, proletarian era?

Friedrich Engels
London, February 1, 1893

Essays

The Morals of the *Manifesto*

STEVEN LUKES

What is the moral message of the *Communist Manifesto?* Its political message could not be clearer—"Working men of all countries, unite!" The economics and sociology that it contains are, though as yet rudimentary, sharply and vividly presented. But what answers does it offer to such questions as: What are the harms that capitalism inflicts? By what standards do we judge these to be harms? What would a better world, more fit for human beings, look like? By what standards would we judge it to be better? If we seek to bring it about, which ways of behaving are permissible and which impermissible?

Karl Marx was, as Leszek Kolakowski has reminded us, a German philosopher,[1] but he certainly was not, in the present-day sense, a moral philosopher. He had no interest, and was indeed actively uninterested in, questions of the kind I've just mentioned. Thus a visitor to him in London reports that "the moment that anyone started to talk to Marx about morality, he would roar with laughter."[2] Philosophers, he wrote in the eleventh of his *Theses on Feuerbach*, "have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it."[3] He had no place for the thought that the change from capitalism would not be for the better, and so he scorned the idea that he should engage in writing recipes "for the cook-shops of the future."[4] It was not merely the impatience of a revolutionary that rendered such questions irrelevant, if not absurd. It was that Marx thought that the answers were so *obvious,* so *self-evident*, that to ask them was worse than to be obtuse; it was itself a sign that one was in the grip of a self-serving ideology. In support of this interpretation I would cite the very frequent use by Marx of the stark language of slavery and emancipation. Capitalism involved wage slavery; communism promised human emancipation. To ask what harms slavery inflicts and to wonder in what ways emancipation would be better is indeed worse than obtuse.

However, when reading the *Manifesto* more than one and a half centuries after its publication, these questions insistently arise. For we do so in a world in which *capitalism* has turned out to be extraordinarily versatile, ranging from

repressive and dictatorial regimes in both West and East to the social democracies of Scandinavia, and from highly inegalitarian capitalist societies, such as the United States or Brazil, to the more egalitarian, such as Korea, and the highly egalitarian, such as Taiwan; and there is little reason to think that the range of the feasible varieties of capitalism is limited to those so far actualized.[5] The amazingly prophetic vision of globalizing capitalism that the *Manifesto* offers does not, however, include any inkling of this remarkable diversity of its forms: nor, therefore, does it address the question of the limits such globalization is setting upon the range of that diversity. Moreover, we can no longer think that "communism" or, indeed, "socialism" is the name of a recognizable (even if as yet nonexistent) socioeconomic formation that is both more productively efficient and ethically or humanly superior to any feasible form of capitalism. We can hang on to the idea that such a formation might or even must eventually come into being, but we have no grounds for identifying its distinctive economic mechanisms, social structures, and political institutions. By contrast, Marx knew what the evils of capitalism were, saw them as intrinsic to and irremediable within capitalism, and viewed the abolition of the system that imposed them as being as urgent, inevitable, and as obviously necessary as the abolition of slavery.

So what answers does a rereading of the text deliver? And why ask that? What interest does such an inquiry serve? The answer begins from considering the sheer polemical power of this text, which it retained over the decades well into the twentieth century. It is not, I think, inaccurate to call it morally *inspirational*. More perhaps than any other single Marxist text (and Marxism was a very bibliocentric movement), it conveys a Manichean vision of an intolerable world to be overcome and a truly human world to come, and a general call to action to hasten this transformation. It expresses in concentrated form the *moral* appeal of Marxism, alongside the explanatory mapping of past, present, and future. It is, therefore, a perfect sourcebook for investigating the distinctive structure of moral thinking that, though implicit, for the reasons suggested, inspired generations of adherents—militants, functionaries, fellow travelers, and *marxisant* intellectuals—across the world for more than a century. It is, I venture to suggest, a structure of moral thinking with an afterlife on the left, having survived the demise of the movements that it once inspired. With the fall of Soviet-style communism—once so-called actually existing socialism—it may seem that what remains of the Marxist tradition—alongside various more or less marginal movements and parties in the West and an increasingly empty ideological shell in China and elsewhere in the East—is only its explanatory

power, its exceptionally productive assumptions, models, concepts, and insights available for plunder and contestation by historians and social scientists. But what of its inspirational power? What of its critique of capitalism, which was, in turn, based on a distinctive vision of a better world? What was the basis of the critique and the content of that vision? What does rereading the *Manifesto* suggest about the insight and the partial blindness of that critique and that vision?

The most direct statement in the *Manifesto* about morals is a forthright dismissal of moral discourse on the grounds that it involves a commitment to "eternal truths." In it Marx and Engels respond to an accusation. There are, it is said by the accusers, "'eternal truths, such as Freedom, Justice, etc., that are common to all states of society. But Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion, and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis; it therefore acts in contradiction to all past historical experience'" (90). Marx and Engels do not respond by denying that Communists abolish such "eternal truths." Instead they attack the very idea of "eternal truths" and suggest that the so-called eternal truths in question—"Freedom, Justice, etc."—constitute forms of "the social consciousness of past ages." They then state that this consciousness, "despite all the multiplicity and variety it displays, moves within certain common forms, or general ideas, which cannot completely vanish except with the total disappearance of class antagonisms." So here the message is that these "common forms, or general ideas," are not eternal but destined to vanish with the end of class antagonisms. And this interpretation is supported by what Engels says about another such idea—equality—in *Anti-Dühring:* that it is "anything but an eternal truth" and that it will disappear with the disappearance of class-divided societies. The very idea of equality, wrote Engels, "both in its bourgeois and its proletarian form, is . . . itself a historical product, the creation of which required definite historical conditions that in turn themselves presuppose a long previous history. It is therefore anything but an eternal truth."[6]

And the same was true of what Engels derided as "idealistic phraseology about justice."[7] According to the laws of bourgeois economics, wrote Engels,

> the greatest part of the product does *not* belong to the workers who have produced it. If we now say: that is unjust, that ought not to be so, then that has nothing immediately to do with economics. We are merely saying that this economic fact is in contradiction to our sense of morality. Marx, therefore, never based his communist demands on this, but upon the inevitable collapse of the capitalist mode of production which is daily taking

> place before our eyes to an ever greater degree; he says only that surplus value consists of unpaid labor, which is a simple fact. . . . If the moral consciousness of the mass declares an economic fact to be unjust, as it has done in the case of slavery or serf labor, that is a proof that the fact itself has been outlived, that other economic facts have made their appearance, owing to which the former have become unbearable and untenable.[8]

This antagonistic attitude to moral talk on the part of Marx and Engels, on the grounds that such talk expresses "eternal truths," extends to other concepts—indeed, one might say, to the use of moral vocabulary in general. In *Capital* Marx asks, in criticism of Proudhon, "Do we really know any more about usury when we say it contradicts '*justice éternelle*,' '*équité éternelle*,' and other '*vérités éternelles*' than the fathers of the church did when they said it was incompatible with '*grace éternelle*,' '*foi éternelle*' and '*la volonté éternelle de Dieu*'?"[9]

And Engels wrote, also in *Anti-Dühring*, that the hapless Herr Dühring was seeking "from the midst of the old class society to impose on the future classless society an eternal morality independent of time and changes in reality."[10] "We therefore reject," wrote Engels,

> every attempt to impose on us any moral dogma whatsoever as an eternal, ultimate and forever immutable ethical law on the pretext that the moral world, too, has its permanent principles which stand above history and the differences between nations. We maintain on the contrary that all moral theories have been hitherto the product, in the last analysis, of the economic conditions of society obtaining at the time. And as society has hitherto moved in class antagonisms, morality has always been class morality; it has either justified the domination and interests of the ruling class, or, ever since the oppressed class became powerful enough, it has represented its indignation against this domination and the future interests of the oppressed.[11]

Interestingly, Engels continues by observing that "in this process there has on the whole been progress in morality, as in all other branches of human knowledge," and contemplates a future "really human morality which stands above class antagonisms and above any recollection of them." This, he surmises, will become possible "only at a stage of society which has not only overcome class antagonisms but has even forgotten them in practical life."[12]

Marx likewise wrote of a higher form of "human society" to which he saw

humanity as imminently progressing. The tenth of his *Theses on Feuerbach* asserts that the standpoint of the new materialism is "*human* society, or socialized humanity":[13] his idea was, as he wrote to Ruge, that "we must first try to discover the new world from a criticism of the old one."[14] He never devoted any serious attention, however, to spelling out its features. The most he provided was at a very general level, such as the thought in the *Grundrisse* that history would bring about "universally developed individuals, whose social relations, as their own communal [*gemeinschaftlich*] relations, are hence also subordinated to their own communal control,"[15] and the vision of increasing "the surplus labor time of the mass by all the means of arts and science" and "creating the means of social disposable time, in order to reduce labor time for the whole society to a diminishing minimum, and thus to free everyone's time for their own development."[16]

But, like Engels, Marx was always hostile to moral discourse. It is true that he helped to draft the *General Rules of the International Working Men's Association* in 1864, in which the association's members are enjoined to acknowledge "truth, justice and morality, as the basis of their conduct towards each other and towards all men, without regard to color, creed or nationality," and the principle of "*no rights without duties, no duties without rights*," while the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes is described as a struggle for "equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule."[17] But, as he subsequently wrote to Engels: "I was obliged to insert two phrases about 'duty' and 'right' in the Preamble to the Rules [of the International Working Men's Association], ditto 'truth, morality and justice,' but these are placed in such a way that they can do no harm."[18]

So what is the basis of this antagonism between morality and emancipation? Why do Marx and Engels deny that there are eternal moral truths? One answer might be that they were adherents of what philosophers now call moral antirealism and so did not believe that there are moral *truths* (whether eternal or not). Here the thought is that moral judgments and statements are to be understood as expressions of feeling or projections of our attitudes or human or social constructions of one sort or another. But they cannot have believed this. Such a position would make nonsense of their assumption, referred to above, of the obviousness of the harms and evils of capitalism. Marx and Engels were, in short, in no doubt that capitalism was at odds with human nature, that the harms capitalism inflicted on the working class were real and consisted in its stunting of the possibilities for human flourishing. Thus they wrote, two years before

writing the *Manifesto*, of the "abasement of the working class" and of "the *indignation* at that abasement, an indignation to which it is necessarily driven by the contradiction between its human *nature* and its condition of life, which is the outright, resolute and comprehensive negation of that nature."[19] They clearly thought that these harms and evils were there to be seen and that not to see them as such could only be the result of class-based ideology.

A second answer might be that, like Nietzsche and Freud, Marx and Engels were practitioners of what has been called "the hermeneutics of suspicion," which directs us always to suspect self-serving (or in this case perhaps class-serving) motives behind professions of one or another kind of disinterestedness. But this too is implausible, since this universally applied skepticism was not characteristic of their attitudes. They did not, for instance, claim that their political allies and fellow socialists were driven by unacknowledged self-interested motives (though they did, of course, assume that the proletariat's class interest coincides with the future universal interests of mankind). Indeed, in the *Manifesto* they criticize the Utopian Socialists—Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, and others—for failing to take sides in the class struggle, in other words, for their very moral impartiality and squeamishness. These early, premature, and prescientific socialists wanted to

> improve the condition of every member of society, even that of the most favoured. Hence, they habitually appeal to society at large, without the distinction of class; nay, by preference, to the ruling class. For how can people, when once they understand their system, fail to see in it the best possible plan of the best possible state of society?
>
> Hence, they reject all political, and especially all revolutionary action; they wish to attain their ends by peaceful means, necessarily doomed to failure, and by the force of example, to pave the way for the new social Gospel. (100)

Marx and Engels did, however, thirdly, think that the task of Communists was to suspect and unmask expressions of "bourgeois" morality as "mystifications." For "law, morality, religion, are to him [the proletarian] so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests" (83). Thus the aim of communists is the "abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom" and to show that "under the present bourgeois conditions of production," what is meant by "freedom" is "free trade, free selling and buying" and, indeed, that the very

notion of “the individual” that prevails under such conditions needs to be unmasked, for it there means “no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle-class owner of property. This person must, indeed, be swept out of the way, and made impossible” (87).

This third answer suggests that Marx’s and Engels’s antagonism was not toward morality as such but rather toward bourgeois *moralizing* and, in general, toward the ruling ideology of the bourgeois epoch in which moral—and, indeed, legal and religious—vocabulary carried a particular range of meanings that served bourgeois interests and disserved proletarian interests. Sometimes, perhaps often, of course, the partisan, class-interest-serving use of such terms is obvious, but Marx and Engels are here urging their readers to look behind innocent-seeming universalistic language to discern the prejudices that “lurk” there. The idea is that such language typically conceals its partisan interest-favoring character. Thus “freedom” can typically be interpreted narrowly in such a way as to favor market relationships, and the very concept of the “individual” can be given a truncated meaning—a meaning that later writers have sought to capture by such phrases as “self-ownership” and “possessive individualism.” The “abstract individual,” Marx wrote in the seventh of his *Theses on Feuerbach*, “belongs in reality to a particular form of society”:[20] look and see what particular, historically located kind of individual you are being sold. When moral or legal or religious statements refer to “individuals,” ask just who is included and what counts as being fully an individual.

But there is a fourth answer that the text itself might seem to favor, which focuses on the idea that the truths of morality might be *eternal*. According to this answer, the very making of *eternal*, that is, universally applicable, moral judgments is improper, and it is a practice that will disappear with the ending of class antagonisms. This looks very much like a version of moral relativism, based on the idea that such judgments are always internal to particular forms of social consciousness, that they move “within certain common forms, or general ideas” (91), which vary from place to place and epoch to epoch. No one, on this view, could ever make moral judgments that are anything other than a reflection of local norms and values and that reach beyond their particular context: no one could ever, for instance, assess the freedom or condemn the injustice prevailing elsewhere or at other periods, and they certainly could not claim that there are duties or rights that attach to humans because they are human, or indeed that certain social conditions impede human flourishing. Moreover, on this view different moral judgments could never be in disagreement or conflict, since each judgment would only be true relative to the context within which it moves. On

the other hand, this version of moral relativism does have the curious feature that it will come to an end in a future, post-class-antagonistic world, but only because the very practice of making such judgments will have withered away.

I do not think that Marx and Engels adhered to this fourth position, since they themselves plainly made context-transcending moral judgments, both across classes and across space and historical time. Like much of Marx's and Engels's writing, this text is full of judgments that express moral indignation and passion which it is impossible to read as viewed by them as the reflection of merely local norms and values; and these judgments are plainly in disagreement with the judgments of those who applaud or are indifferent to the conditions and practices Marx and Engels criticize. In short, Marx and Engels are not moral relativists when they write of freedom ("the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" [92]) and when they condemn injustice and inequality ("the exploitation of one part of society by the other" [91], "a more equable distribution of the populace over the country" [92], and so forth).

In practice, as can be seen throughout the *Manifesto*, Marx and Engels did not hesitate to make moral judgments. Thus they cannot have thought that the "bourgeois" interpretation of moral terms exhausted their meaning. In particular, their very commitment to the free development of each person as the condition for the free development of all persons—to emancipation from wage slavery in the fully human society of communism—expresses their assumption that real or true freedom is distinct from its narrow and distorting bourgeois interpretation. But there is much evidence that they thought otherwise about justice and rights.

I believe that Marx and Engels—and, indeed, following them the entire mainline Marxist tradition—thought in different ways about freedom, on the one hand, and issues of injustice and inequality, on the other.

My view is that there is a coherent moral message implicit in the *Manifesto*, which I characterize as a morality of emancipation. This centers on freedom, not social justice and equality. For Marx the wage slavery of capitalism was to be criticized from the (truly human) standpoint of a future beyond class antagonisms in which indeed the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all. This (to sum up the argument in advance of providing it) contrasts with the standpoint of social justice (and rights), which presupposes the persistence, under all human societal conditions, of circumstances that require principles for the allocation of benefits and burdens if citizens of a society are to live in peace and cooperation with one another. The

morality of emancipation thus suggests not only the emancipation of workers from exploitation but, more deeply, the emancipation of all from the very circumstances of justice. Let me now spell out this distinction between a morality of emancipation and a morality of justice. As we shall see, there are two arguments here, one explicitly advanced by Marx and Engels, the other implicit and presupposed by the structure of their thinking.

The Obsolescence of Justice and Rights

The key to Marx's and Engels's explicit argument lies in the concept that is captured by the German term *Recht*, a concept familiar to Continental European jurists, for which (like the French *droit* and the Italian *diritto*) there is no direct English equivalent but which refers to a whole area of morality that the English legal theorist H. L. A. Hart characterized thus: "It is occupied by the concepts of justice, fairness, rights and obligation (if this last is not used as it is by many moral philosophers as an obscuring general label to cover every moral action that we ought to do or forbear from doing)."[21] I believe that György Lukács was exactly true to Marx and Engels in their understanding of morality when he wrote that the "ultimate objective of communism is the construction of a society in which freedom of morality will take the place of the constraints of *Recht* in the regulation of all behavior."[22]

Consider, first, what Marx and Engels had to say about Recht. They scorned "the faith of individuals in conceptions of *Recht*," conceptions that "they ought to get out of their heads." Indeed, they wrote, "as far as *Recht* is concerned, we with many others have stressed the opposition of communism to *Recht*, both political and private, as also in its most general form as the rights of man."[23] Their view was that the social relations governed by Recht (*Rechtverhältnisse*) are "to be grasped neither from themselves nor from the so-called general development of the human mind, but rather have their roots in the material conditions of life, the sum total of which Hegel . . . combines under the name of 'civil society' whose anatomy is to be sought in political economy."[24] For Hegel (according to Marx and Engels), "civil society" meant the war of each against all: it denoted the competitive egoistic relations of emergent bourgeois society, in which individuals pursued their respective individual interests, treating one another as means to their respective ends. Hegel saw rights governing such relations, such as principles of contractual justice and property rights, as institutionalizing internally accepted norms of ethical life within the framework of the state, thereby containing the mutually destructive forces of civil society.

But for Marx and Engels these norms were inherently ideological. They purported to be "objective" principles specifying what is "just" and "fair" and defining "rights" and "obligations." They were said to be universally valid and to serve the interests of all members of society (and perhaps all members of any society) and to be independent of particular partisan or sectional interests. But these claims were spurious and illusory, for they served to conceal the real function of principles of Recht, which was to protect the social relations of the existing order, a function that is the better fulfilled to the extent that the claims are widely accepted as objectively valid. The point, in short, is to unmask the self-understanding of Recht by revealing its real function and the bourgeois interests that lurk in ambush behind it.

This explicit argument of Marx and Engels against the pretensions of Recht goes some way to explain their consistent hostility to all talk of rights (not least the rights of man) and obligations, and, in general, of distributive issues involving social justice, fairness, and equality. Concerning rights, Marx writes in his early essay "On the Jewish Question" of "the so-called *rights of man*" that they are "nothing but the rights of a *member of civil society*, *i.e.* the rights of egoistic man, of man separated from other men and from the community." The "right of man to liberty is based not on the association of man with man, but on the separation of man from man. It is the *right* of this separation, the right of the *restricted* individual, withdrawn into himself." It found its practical application in the right to property, which is "the right to enjoy one's property and to dispose of it at one's discretion, without regard to other men, independently of society, the right of self-interest." This formed the very "basis of civil society," making "every man see in other men, not the *realization* of his own freedom, but the *barrier* to it." In general, "none of the so-called rights of man . . . go beyond egoistic man, beyond man as a member of civil society, that is, an individual withdrawn into himself, into the confines of his private interests and private caprice and separated from the community. In the rights of man, he is far from being conceived as a species being; on the contrary, species-life itself, society, appears as a framework external to the individuals, as a restriction of their original independence. The sole bond holding them together is natural necessity, need and private interest, the preservation of their property and their egoistic selves."[25] And in *The Holy Family* Marx and Engels summarize their view thus: "It was shown that the *recognition of the rights of man* by *the modern state* has not any other meaning than the *recognition of slavery* by the *state of antiquity* had."[26]

As for questions of distributive justice and the discourse of fairness and

equality, Marx was to be even more forthright in his late pamphlet *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, in which he dealt with talk of "'equal right' and 'fair distribution' . . . in order to show what a crime it is to attempt, on the one hand, to force on our Party again, as dogmas, ideas which in a certain period had some meaning but have now become obsolete verbal rubbish, while again perverting, on the other, the realistic outlook, which it cost so much effort to instill into the Party but which has now taken root in it, by means of ideological nonsense about right [*Recht*] and other trash so common among the democrats and French socialists."[27] This, then, is the explicit argument of Marx and Engels against the morality of Recht: anyone who thinks and acts out of a belief in justice and rights is the dupe of ideas and principles that purport to be rationally grounded and to serve the interests of all, but whose real function is serve bourgeois interests and perpetuate the existing order. Yet this argument is plainly in need of another, which Marx and Engels do not make, but which underlies their thought: namely, an argument to show whence the illusions of Recht thinking derive and what the alternative to such thinking might be.

To excavate that argument, we need to ask a question that was addressed and partially answered by David Hume, namely: What do we need principles of justice and rights *for?* To what problem are they are a response? Hume's answer was that we need "the rules of equity or justice" because the "common situation of society" lies between two extremes. Real human societies resemble neither "the *poetical* fiction of the *golden* age" ("the most charming and most peaceable condition, which can possibly be imagined") nor "the *philosophical* fiction of the *state of nature*" ("a state of mutual war and violence, attended with the most extreme necessity"). Hume writes: "Reverse, in any considerable circumstance, the condition of men: Produce extreme abundance or extreme necessity: Implant in the human breast perfect moderation and humanity, or perfect rapaciousness and malice: By rendering justice perfectly *useless*, you thereby destroy its essence, and suspend its obligations upon mankind."[28] Thus, "'tis only from the selfishness and confin'd generosity of men, along with the scanty provision of nature, that justice derives its origin."[29] In other words (the words are J. L. Mackie's), "limited resources and limited sympathies together generate both competition leading to conflict, and an absence of what would be mutually beneficial cooperation."[30] Hume's account of the "common situation of society" that requires the rules of justice is, however, in need both of critical commentary and of supplementation.

First, the commentary. Hume's suggestion is to view limited resources, or

scarcity, as part of "the condition of men," a feature of all nonfictional societies. This claim is not, I think, difficult to accept. But we should distinguish between different forms of scarcity. Thus things can be scarce where there is (1) an insufficiency of production inputs (e.g., raw materials) relative to production requirements; (2) an insufficiency of goods (whether natural or produced) relative to consumption requirements; (3) limits upon the possibility of jointly realizing people's respective individual goals (e.g., because of limits of space and time); and (4) limits upon the possibility of jointly realizing an individual's goals because of the very nature of the goals (e.g., positional goods: we cannot all enjoy high status or the solitude of our neighborhood park). Nature's scantiness is thus not the only source of scarcity, but bringing its other determinants into view does not render the prospect of overcoming it any the less fictional.

"Confin'd generosity," or limited altruism, is also inadequate as a pointer to the motives that call forth the need for justice and rights. For both Hume and Marx saw egoism, or selfishness, as the motivational problem to which justice and rights were the solution. Thus Hume suggested that if you increase sufficiently the benevolence of men, "you render justice useless, by supplying its place with much nobler virtues, and more favourable blessings."[31] But do we not need principles governing the fair allocation of benefits and burdens, for the assigning of duties and the allocation of rights, in the face of the *benevolence* of others? Limited altruism is one reason for rights; misapplied altruism is another. Who could plausibly deny that sincere and conscientious altruists are dangerous people: that they can cause injustice and violate rights?

Second, Hume's account of the human condition, inescapably present in all actualized and in all feasible human societies, needs supplementation with at least two further elements. One was clearly articulated by, among many other thinkers, John Rawls, who incorporated into his earlier, Humean account of what he called "the circumstances of justice" the coexistence of divergent, mutually irreducible and sometimes "contrary conceptions of the good that lead [persons and associations] to make conflicting claims on one another" and "opposing religious, philosophical and moral convictions . . . as well as different ways of evaluating arguments and evidence in many important cases."[32] What Rawls came to stress here is the coexistence of "several irreducibly different perspectives within which values arise; in particular the values that specify obligations, rights, utility, perfectionist ends, and personal commitments." What he called the "fact of reasonable pluralism" amounts to the idea that "different conceptions of the world can reasonably be elaborated from different standpoints

and diversity arises from our distinct perspectives." What Rawls claimed (and I concur) is that it is "unrealistic . . . to suppose that all our differences are rooted solely in ignorance and perversity, or else in the rivalries for power, status or economic gain."[33]

And, finally, there is an epistemological circumstance that renders justice necessary: namely (to state the matter in the broadest terms), the inevitable imperfections of humans' capacity to acquire information and to process it rationally. Given these various cognitive limitations, individuals, banks, corporations, bureaucracies, and governments will get things wrong, both lacking the necessary information and failing to act as rationally they should, because they do not know how to or because they make mistakes, with resulting misallocations of burdens and benefits, and damage to individuals' interests. Countless thinkers have expanded on this theme, in many directions, but perhaps the most relevant in the present context is Friedrich von Hayek. Hayek, after all, won the "socialist calculation debate" with socialists such as Oskar Lange, arguing for the indispensability of market signals for the relaying of inherently dispersed and local knowledge and the limits this set to state-led social engineering. For Hayek the key economic problem was "the fact that the knowledge of the circumstances of which we must make use never exists in concentrated or integrated form, but solely as the dispersed bits of incomplete and frequently contradictory knowledge which all the separate individuals possess . . . it is a problem of the utilization of knowledge which is not given to anyone in its totality."[34] Hayek's egregious error was to derive from this argument wildly extravagant conclusions, employing what Albert Hirschman called "the rhetoric of reaction,"[35] against all attempts at state planning and the rectification of social injustice. Hayek supposed that the "competitive market" can resolve the problem indicated, and he failed to address the realities of monopolistic and oligopolistic markets and massive corporate power.

The implicit argument of Marx and Engels, then, is this. What underlies their explicit rejection of Recht—of the discourse and practice of social justice and rights—is their denial that the *conditions* of Recht, or circumstances of justice, are inherent in human life. Recht, they wrote, "arises from the material relations of people and the resulting antagonism of people against one another."[36] The whole point was to look forward to the overcoming of the basic causes of that antagonism. For if, as they argued, "enlightened self-interest is the principle of all morality, man's private interest must be made to coincide with the interest of humanity. . . . If man is shaped by environment, his environment must be made

human."[37] The basic causes of antagonism, or conflicting interests, were not, therefore, for Marx and Engels, rooted in the human condition and ever present, to a lesser or greater degree, in all real and realizable societies. Instead, such causes were always traceable back to class divisions, which would eventually come to an end with the demise of capitalism. At the very least Marx and Engels had virtually nothing to say about any basis of conflict, whether social or psychological, other than class.

Thus scarcity would be overcome. The prospect of communism was the prospect of a world that would eventually come about that is beyond "the realm of necessity."[38] In "the realm of freedom" or "the higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between metal and physical labor, has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of cooperative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right [*Recht*] be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."[39]

One might wonder (1) whether the claim here is that it is only *bourgeois* right, or Recht, that is left behind and ask (2) whether the banner does not display a principle of justice. I think the answer to (1) is that there will be no more Recht, no more legal and moral rules specifying rights and obligations. The horizon is a limit to thought and action set by bourgeois Recht; beyond it there will be no more bourgeoisie and no more Recht. As for (2), the principle inscribed on the communist banner would not be such a rule, for three distinct reasons. First, those abilities and needs would be infinite, that is, unlimitable in advance and unspecifiable by any rule. Second, the abilities would be harnessed to serving the "common interest" through what Marx called communal or *gemeinschaftlich* relations. And third, the needs would all supposedly be satisfiable without conflicting claims because of the combination of those relations and material abundance.

As for limited altruism, it is true that Marx scornfully condemned egoism and, as we have seen, characterized "egoistic man" as "an individual withdrawn into himself, into the confines of his private interests and private caprice and separated from the community." But Marx and Engels never suggested that the solution lay in expanding altruism, as exhibiting a duty to promote the good of others, or in rendering sympathies less limited. Their idea was rather that, with

the end of class and the class conflicts of capitalist society, the very distinctions between egoism and altruism and between "a *public* man and a *private* man"[40] would wither away. This makes sense of their rejection of Max Stirner's view that "in communist society there can be a question of duties' and interests," holding instead that these are "two complementary aspects of an antithesis which exists only in bourgeois society."[41] Man's "private interest must be made to coincide with the interest of humanity": the very notion of self-interest, both of the self and of the interests of the self, as in conflict with the interests of one's community and "humanity," would, it seems, be overcome and forgotten in practical life.

And there is no hint of anything resembling recognition of "reasonable pluralism" in Marx and Engels: that is, of irreducibly divergent and sometimes contrary perspectives within which values arise, leading to different ways of evaluating arguments and evidence, specifying different obligations, rights, utility, perfectionist ends, and personal commitments, and leading people to make conflicting claims on one another. Their admittedly sketchy picture of the realm of freedom as allowing for "the free development of individualities," in which each will have the means of cultivating his gifts in all directions,[42] is oddly frictionless and individualistic. Under communism, each will be subjugated "to the power of the united individuals," and it will be "impossible that anything should exist independently of individuals, insofar as reality is nevertheless only a product of the preceding intercourse of individuals."[43] There is no suspicion here that individuals might continue to adhere to mutually incompatible worldviews that are not amenable to rational resolution, while rooted in and capable of sustaining social and communal conflicts. That is doubtless why Marx and Engels saw no virtue in preserving a distinct public or political sphere in which such differences among citizens might be contained within mutually acceptable rules.

And finally, Marx and Engels were true children of the Enlightenment, who looked forward to a future of transparent social unity in which both the natural world and the social world (or, rather, the social world as part of the natural world) would potentially be under the rational control of all. Thus Marx wrote in *Capital* of the "associated producers [in] the realm of freedom . . . rationally regulating their interchange with nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favorable to, and worthy of, their human nature."[44] The illusions and distortions of capitalist

ideology would thus no longer impede either the progress of science or the understanding of the associated producers. The social world and its economic dynamics would cease to be opaque and "reified": it would no longer assume "the form of objective powers, even of overpowering objects—of things independent of the relations among individuals themselves."[45]

In sum, Marx and Engels envisioned communism as a future world, firmly placed on the historical agenda, that will have no need of Recht because the conditions of Recht will no longer exist. In this respect Marx's view of Recht morality is exactly parallel to his view of religion, concerning which he wrote: "To abolish religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is to demand their *real* happiness. The demand to give up illusions about the existing state of affairs is *the demand to give up a state of affairs which needs illusions*."[46] Analogously, the demand to give up illusions about "the rights of man" and talk of rights and obligations, justice, equality, and fair distribution is the demand to give up belief in the necessity of the state of affairs that needs those illusions: that is, the belief that the conditions of Recht, or the circumstances of justice, are inevitable. Abandoning that belief licenses the morality of emancipation. Emancipation is emancipation, among other things, from Recht. Justice and rights, after all, are a *remedy* for the problems arising from the conditions of Recht. Why cling to the remedy when you can escape the conditions that require it? Emancipation will bring about a world that is no longer in need of justice and rights.

The Corruption and Contagion of Commodification

If human emancipation consists in emancipation from the conditions that require the principles and practices of Recht, the question remains: What will an emancipated world look like? Marx, as I have indicated, resolutely refused to address this question directly, preferring, as he wrote to Ruge, to "try to discover the new world from a criticism of the old one." His criticisms of the harms resulting from capitalism are manifold, centering on the notions of alienation and exploitation, and including capitalism's sheer waste of resources, human talents and free time. Little of this is explicit in the *Manifesto*, but there is an important and vastly influential line of social, cultural, and indeed moral criticism that is present there: namely, the focus on the effects of the capitalist market in generating what has come to be called *commodification*.

The key passages are rhetorically powerful and well known. The bourgeoisie, write Marx and Engels, creates "a world after its own image" (78). A crucial part of this is the transformation of the character of all social relations.

As the “constantly expanding market” spreads across the surface of the globe, pitilessly tearing asunder “the motley feudal ties that bound man to his ‘natural superiors,’” all that survives is “no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous ‘cash payment’” (76). It is worth noticing that this last phrase comes from the deeply conservative Thomas Carlyle, lamenting Victorian society’s ruthless commercialism and destruction of premodern communal bonds and the “dismal science” of political economy. Five years before the *Manifesto*’s appearance, Carlyle had written of “the brutish godforgetting Profit-and-Loss Philosophy” and protested that “Cash-payment is not the sole nexus of man with man.”[47] This is, of course, a theme that has been very widely discussed and debated ever since. Later Marxists, such as Lukács, took it up, writing of commodity fetishism and reification, as did the members of the Frankfurt school, writing of the “colonization of the life-world,” but critiques of the market along such lines have extended across the left-right spectrum and beyond.

In the *Manifesto*, Marx and Engels develop their own version of this idea by claiming that the bourgeoisie “has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. 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. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.” Thus it has “stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe,” converting “the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers,” and it has even “torn away from the family its sentimental veil,” reducing it to “a mere money relation” (76). In general, “all fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind” (77). The interesting question that these passages raise is this: What precisely is the harm that this transformation of social relations brings about? What, in short, does the *Manifesto*’s critique of commodification amount to?

The answer to this question is not straightforward. For one thing, the passages just cited are ambiguous. For the transformation of social relations in question is in part positive, since it involves their *demystification:* the “religious

and political illusions" that veil exploitative relations are cast aside. In place of religious fervor, chivalrous enthusiasm, philistine sentimentalism, and reverent awe, people come face to face with exploitative relations and see them without those illusions for what they are. On the other hand, the relations are themselves transformed in a deleterious manner, or degraded, by being framed in terms of exchange value or "a mere money relation." So, to repeat my question, now rendered somewhat more precise: What is it that makes this aspect of the transformation of social relations harmful? More precisely still, what is it, *apart from their allegedly exploitative character*, that renders this framing of the relations harmful? Part of the answer is, of course, that the very framing of goods as exchangeable for a monetary price deflects attention from and thus prevents understanding of the source of their value in the labor that went into producing them and the exploitative conditions under which that labor was extracted. But Marx and Engels clearly also thought that exchanging goods for money *as such*—buying and selling them—had harmful or degrading effects upon persons and their relationships. In what does that degradation consist? What impact does framing social relations in terms of exchange value have upon people and their social relations, and in what ways is it harmful?

One clue lies in the mention in the first passage quoted above of resolving "personal worth into exchange value." This recalls Kant's idea that persons have dignity or absolute worth that is beyond price because they are ends in themselves and not to be used as means, and are thus objects of respect. Another clue is Marx's early manuscript on money, which describes the transformative effects of money upon individuals and their relationships. He writes there that money, as "the existing and active concept of value, confounds and exchanges everything." It is "a disruptive power for the individual and for the social bonds," the power to "confuse and invert all natural and human qualities." It is, indeed, "the visible deity, the transformation of all human and natural qualities into their opposites, the universal confusion and inversion of things." Thus, "What I *am* and *can do* is . . . not at all determined by my individuality. I *am* ugly, but I can buy the most beautiful woman for myself. Consequently, I am not *ugly*, for the effect of ugliness, its power to repel, is annulled by money. . . . I am a detestable, dishonorable, unscrupulous and stupid man, but money is honored and so also is its possessor." In short, "I, who can have, through the power of money everything for which the human heart longs, do I not possess all human abilities? Does not my money, therefore, transform all my incapacities into their opposites?" Money "is not exchanged for a particular quality, a particular thing, or a specific human faculty, but for the whole objective world of man and nature.

Thus, from the standpoint of its possessor, it exchanges every quality and object for every other, even though they are contradictory." For Marx, money dehumanizes human relationships. But, he writes, if we "assume man to be man, and his relation to the world to be a human one," then "love can only be exchanged for love, trust for trust, *etc.* If you wish to enjoy art you must be an artistically cultivated person; if you wish to influence other people you must be a person who really has a stimulating and encouraging effect upon others. Every one of your relations to man and to nature must be a *specific expression*, corresponding to the object of your will, of your *real individual* life. If you love without evoking love in return, *i.e.* if you are not able, by the *manifestation* of yourself as a loving person, to make yourself a *beloved person*, then your love is impotent and a misfortune."[48]

A third clue to answering the question posed is to be found, not in Marx's discussion of money or exchange, but in an interesting observation about equality in *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. Why, in addition to the arguments outlined above, did Marx think equality was an inappropriate goal for communists to pursue? The very idea of equality, he there argues, in criticism of the right to equal pay for equal contribution for workers, is problematic because it involves measurement by a single standard. For, as he writes, "unequal individuals (and they would not be different individuals if they were not unequal) are measurable by an equal standard in so far as they are brought under an equal point of view, are considered in one particular aspect only, for instance, as in the present case, are regarded only as workers, everything else being ignored."[49]

Together these clues suggest that the monetary exchange of goods and services, or commodification, has, in Marx's view, several interrelated effects upon individuals and their social relationships. People cease to view others with respect, treating them instrumentally, as means to their respective ends, and they come to view one another "in one particular aspect only" and become indifferent to their unique individualities, to their many sidedness and the complexities of their characters and lives. They come to see both persons and objects as substitutable, and they become indifferent to the differences between them. And personal qualities and relations among people, once money enters the picture, cease to be a "specific expression" of "real individual life": they lose their particularity and become artificial and inauthentic. Monetary exchange thus engenders a kind of corruption that, Marx clearly believed, debases or distorts the value of the good or service being exchanged. He also clearly believed that this in turn generates a kind of contagion of "callous 'cash payment,'" impairing

or degrading otherwise well-functioning and potentially flourishing activities and relationships. It is as though once a single good is bought and sold, this leads to a market regime for that good, which, in turn, leads to a market regime for everything people value, which, in turn, spreads across the surface of the globe.

If these, in the vision suggested by the *Manifesto,* are the effects of commodification, it is worth asking what it is about commerce, or "callous 'cash payment,'" that Marx and Engels can have seen as liable to generate these baneful consequences. In her book *Contested Commodities,* Margaret Radin offers a useful breakdown of what appear to be the component elements of commodification. Goods and services, she suggests, are commodified when they exhibit these attributes:

> (1) objectification—treating persons and things instrumentally, as manipulable at will
>
> (2) fungibility—when they are fully interchangeable with no effect on their value to the holder
>
> (3) commensurability—when their values can be arrayed as a function of one continuous variable or can be linearly ranked
>
> (4) money equivalence—where the continuous variable in terms of which they can be ranked is monetary value[50]

What exactly was it, one wonders, apart from their fundamental critique of exploitation, that was at the heart of Marx and Engels's critique of bourgeois market relations? Was it the dominance of instrumental attitudes, treating people as means, not ends? Was it indifference, the willingness to substitute workers for one another, without concern for the manifold differences among them and the complexities of their several lives? Was it the readiness to compare the incomparable, reducing the rich variety of human value perspectives to ranking on a single scale? Or was it specifically the ranking in terms of money, setting a price on everyone and everything?

Further, more wide-ranging questions arise beyond these. Can there be "bourgeois" market relations without exploitation? Can there be nonexploitative market relations that are not bourgeois? Are there forms of "market socialism" that are feasible and desirable? And is it true—and if so under what conditions—that commercialization crowds out what is intrinsically valuable about a good or service for the individuals involved and that it can in turn crowd out what is intrinsically valuable about that good or service for others, and that the contamination then spreads to other, even most or all, goods and services?

Richard Titmuss, for instance, claimed that selling blood crowds out altruism, diminishing the scope for giving it and thus also other worthwhile things in society. Therefore "private market systems . . . in the United States and other countries deprive men of their freedom to choose to give or not to give," thereby "discouraging and downgrading the voluntary principle. Both the sense of community and the expression of altruism are being silenced."[51] And the economist William Baumol argued that there are services "in which the human touch is crucial, and are thus resistant to labor productivity growth"; they resist standardization because "treatment must be tailored to the individual case," and "quality is, or is at least believed to be, inescapably correlated with the amount of human labor devoted to their production."[52] Baumol's original examples were the performing arts, but he then extended them to other services, such as teaching, doctoring, and policing. But, as Colin Leys has argued, in the medical field, for example, capitalism involves a relentless pressure to "wean customers from services onto consuming material goods and providing the labor component themselves . . . consigning any small residue to 'high-end markets,' or leaving them to (increasingly) beleaguered state provision."[53] Hence the growing consumption of drugs and painkillers, the speeding up of the consultations, and the very fragmentation of medical services.

To what extent is such commodification happening? And to what extent is it distinctive of capitalist market societies? Is it unique to profit-driven markets rather than taxpayer-driven bureaucracies? And in what ways is commodification harmful? To say that it is, is to claim that there are goods and services whose very meaning is "confused and inverted" by treating them as objects, as exchangeable, as commensurable, and as having prices. But are there not many contexts in which seeing the world in a detached and impersonal way and with a certain indifference is, as Georg Simmel maintained, crucial to self-preservation, especially in modern urban settings? Is this "blasé attitude"[54] not even to be valued, perhaps as an essential precondition for and counterpoint to mutual relationships in more intimate settings? Perhaps the very opposition between the market and intimate settings should be questioned, as by J. C. Williams and V. A. Zelizer when they write that "what appear to be self-contained market transactions always involve meaningful negotiated interpersonal relations, such as transfers of money, that, far from predetermining an impersonal gray quality to the social relations involved, instead take their meaning from the interpersonal setting within which they occur."[55] Is it even obvious that treating people instrumentally, as a means to one's individual ends,

is always a bad idea? (Kant's famous categorical imperative enjoins us to treat persons never *simply* as a means.) Does it not depend on the end and on who is doing what in pursuing it? According to his biographer, Beethoven was "filled with a deep conviction as to the significance of his work and his art" and in 1801 referred to two of his friends as "merely instruments on which to play when I feel inclined . . . I value them merely for what they do for me."[56] As for commensurability and pricing, why assume that once you quantify and calculate, you become insensitive to the qualitative aspects of and differences between things? Why assume that one cannot simultaneously know the price of something and view it as priceless? Do we not do this all the time, seeing individuals as sacred while buying life insurance and relying on medical administrators and public officials to allocate resources and pursue policies that are costed on a basis that puts a (regularly updated and commercially based) value on human lives?

None of these questions, of course, was addressed by Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto*. They insistently arise, however, alongside many others, when we reread this still incandescent text. It failed to address them, as did the tradition it inaugurated. It initiated an analysis and critique of the history and present functioning of capitalism that remains unrivaled in its historical vision, sociological insight, and moral outrage. But it offers no answers to the various questions raised here. The harms inflicted on human beings by capitalism and the feasibility and the desirability of communism, or human emancipation, were not subjected to analysis and critique. They were assumed to be self-evident. More than one and a half centuries later we can no longer make that assumption.

NOTES

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56. Maynard Solomon, *The Life of Beethoven* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1977), p. 86.

The *Communist Manifesto*

BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT

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Eighteen forty-eight was one of those historical moments when anything seems possible.[1] Its dynamics were crystallized in the *Communist Manifesto* of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. But the drama associated with "the springtime of the peoples" was only heightened by the stultifying conservatism of the preceding decades. The years 1815–1848 marked an international period of reaction against everything associated with the revolutionary age of insurgent democracy that extended from 1688 to 1789. Political liberalism constituted the primary target of what Prince von Metternich of Austria-Hungary in 1815 termed the "counterrevolutionary principle." He believed (correctly) that democracy has its own logic, and that accepting the notion of popular sovereignty could only lead to ever more radical demands. Metternich and other reactionary leaders among the Continental "great powers" drew a line in the sand on the matter of a parliament at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Ideals inherited from the Counter-Enlightenment became hegemonic: authoritarian understandings of tradition, provincial views of community, religious belief, and intolerance.[2] The antidemocratic reaction was dominated by the old forces of throne and altar, the army and the church, whose colors were reflected in the title of Stendhal's famous novel *The Red and the Black* (1830). The great author termed this epoch a "swamp."

Old-fashioned bourgeois democrats gripped by nostalgia for the age of revolution never reconciled themselves to the age of restoration. Their hearts were still on the barricades. They were delighted by the fall of King Charles XII during the uprisings of 1830 that saved Parliament from being abolished in France. King Louis-Philippe took over the throne. He dressed in suits and told his subjects, "Go get rich!" With the revolts of 1830–1832 in Paris, limited parliamentary institutions (without universal suffrage) were secured under the new monarchies that had emerged following the fall of Napoleon I. But the most important liberal intellectuals of the new age were different from their

predecessors. Alexis de Tocqueville and Alphonse de Lamartine were more circumspect, more respectful of authority, and more concerned with securing their property and their privileges against the incursions of the lower classes. They increasingly viewed “the people” as the masses or the mob. Their remembrances of 1848, indeed, express just those qualities.[3]

No longer was it “the simple souls” of Rousseau to whom the liberal bourgeoisie spoke. The “third estate” of commoners connected neither to throne nor to altar underwent a transformation during the post-Napoleonic age of restoration. The propertied elite had been busy accumulating more property, and its members had learned something from the past. They had little in common with the unemployed artisans and hungry workers of the cities, and less with the peasants, whose parents and grandparents did the fighting during the earlier revolutionary age. As for the disenfranchised and the disinherited, they were disgusted by the corrupt regime of Louis XVIII and devastated by the economic crisis of 1847. While revolution is often seen as the product of what Tocqueville termed “the crisis of rising expectations,” or an ideological deficit and bureaucratic mismanagement, economic catastrophe sparked both the fears of the bourgeoisie and the rising of the working class in 1848.[4] So it was that when the bourgeoisie rose yet again to take political power, their former foot soldiers were both supportive yet wary. Calls for a republic and hatred of the aristocracy united the bourgeoisie and the working class. Yet they understood democracy in very different ways. The *Communist Manifesto* was an expression in theory of the historical dialectic in practice—or, to put it another way, it offered the prospect of a permanent revolution that appeared in 1848.[5]

Revolutions differed from country to country; some saw greater success for the bourgeoisie or the workers than others; in some instances a new republic was actually generated, in others not; in some cases the bourgeoisie was challenged by the workers, in others not. While communists would later use the *Manifesto* to justify the introduction of authoritarian dictatorships, however, activists in 1848 were not motivated by talk about a classless society or communism. Marx and Engels’s manifesto was understood in this context as a successor to Tom Paine’s *The Rights of Man*.[6] Anticipating the East European revolutions of 1989 and those in the Middle East of 2011, the masses on the streets in 1848 were inspired by the vision of the parliamentary republic. Whether that republic would prove liberal or socialist, whether any republic would stay the course, was yet to be decided during the early days of the 1848 revolutions. But something was apparent. Just as these republican uprisings of 1848 were international in

character, so were the reactions against it. While nationalism may have been the burgeoning establishmentarian ideology of the period, a new preoccupation with internationalism only made sense from the revolutionary standpoint. That would remain the case for close to a century. The *Communist Manifesto* reflected this tradition of international revolutionary struggle, and it only made sense that its authors, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, should have produced a work that spoke to none of the uprisings of 1848 in particular but to all of them in general.

No political pamphlet ever gained a greater audience. It was written for an association founded in 1847, the Communist League, with branches in most European capitals. That organization was itself the product of various splits and amalgamations between the Communist Correspondence Society and the League of the Just.[7] Marx and Engels's talents were recognized by the membership. A shared outlook had already formed between them, and their organizational efforts were directed toward replacing the wooly egalitarianism of their rivals with a scientific understanding of capitalism and the role that the working class should play within it.[8] Marx and Engels had met in 1844, and they understood one another immediately. Their friendship would last, uninterruptedly, until Marx's death in 1883 at the age of sixty five. From the start, moreover, it was clear that Engels would—as he himself put the matter—play "second fiddle." With Marx too poor to travel to London for the First Congress of the Communist League in June 1847, Engels was chosen to write a programmatic draft of its beliefs and proposals. His "Principles of Communism" was composed of twenty-five questions, and it came to be known as "the catechism." Its points were clear and, undoubtedly, easy enough to memorize. But the "Principles" lacked historical sweep, and the writing was dry. Engels knew it, too. In a letter to Marx (November 23–24, 1847), therefore, he proposed that they jointly write a manifesto and abandon the form of a catechism. While incorporating many of Engels's formulations, however, Marx basically wrote the work in a burst of literary activity. The new draft provided the contours for a teleological vision of history driven by class conflict along with a more specific analysis of capitalism and its supposedly inevitable collapse. The narrative was, furthermore, conveyed through stirring and prophetic language intent upon bolstering revolutionary solidarity.[9] The names of both Marx and Engels would eventually appear on the final document. As Engels was always happy to admit, however, the *Communist Manifesto* was ultimately Marx's product.

The Communist League was composed of a small if motley crew of middle-class radicals, bohemians, poseurs, and one particularly important figure: Moses

Hess.[10] Marx and Engels had worked with Hess on the magazine *Mirror of Society* (*Gesellschaftsspiegel*) and on a variety of other projects. Hess would actually write his own version of a communist manifesto, and, though it has been lost to history, scholars have noted the influence of his ideas.[11] His concern was with democracy and nonviolence. In utopian fashion, moreover, Hess sought an end to alienation and exploitation of the poor. Marx and Engels developed a stage theory of history predicated on the evolution from feudalism to capitalism to socialism and (only then) to communism. Specific social and economic conditions could not be ignored. Marx and Engels also called for an assault on the state and the employment of force, and for an avoidance of what later would be termed "parliamentary cretinism," especially insofar as counterrevolutionary elements attempt to obstruct democratic and egalitarian developments.[12] They recognized that tensions would exist between capitalist democracy and socialist demands linked to the exercise of power by the proletariat. But they also insisted upon the need to "wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie" and listed ten potentially radical reforms in their manifesto. Marx and Engels emphasized the need for solidarity with all democratic movements, and they stressed the economic contradictions within the new capitalist production process that would generate an ultimate proletarian victory.

The *Communist Manifesto* offered a new way of thinking about history[13]—as the product of class struggle—but it also projected proletarian goals under circumstances in which a capitalist economic system was, everywhere in Europe, still politically dominated by aristocratic representatives of the ancient regime. The liberal revolutions of 1848 everywhere forced "the political rule of the bourgeoisie into democratic conditions, which at every moment help the hostile classes to victory and jeopardize the very foundations of bourgeois society. From the ones it demands that they should not go forward from political to social emancipation; from the others that they should not go back from social to political emancipation."[14] The bourgeoisie found itself in a terrible dilemma. Its most important political representatives had in principle always sought universal suffrage and in practice a republic. In 1848, however, they feared that extending the vote would threaten both their wealth and their social privileges. Faced with the kind of demands raised in the *Communist Manifesto*, therefore, the bourgeoisie turned against the revolution. Its democratic promises and liberating hopes faded into the mist: Locke, Jefferson, and Kant made way for Comte and Spencer. The old liberal philosophers of the revolutionary bourgeoisie still had worlds to conquer, and their various speculative conceptions of the "good life" gave meaning to that enterprise. By 1848, however, those worlds had

disappeared. The self-understanding of the bourgeoisie changed.

Especially in France, where the dynamic behind the international events exhibited its starkest features, the chastened bourgeoisie forged a tacit alliance with the aristocracy to crush the insurgent workers. Liberalism appeared incapable of accommodating socialism. That is why Marx and Engels made the famous claim: "The real birthplace of the bourgeois republic was not the February victory; it was the June defeat."[15] This revolutionary failure left Marx and Engels with a bitter taste. They advised their comrades in the Communist League that next time the proletariat should not remain content with demands for a liberal parliament. The working class would need to make the revolution "permanent" and secure power for itself. Less than eight months later, however, Marx and Engels abandoned this position. In the aftermath of the 1848 revolutions, they lost interest in the Communist League, wrote up their historical reflections, and began a new phase of their intellectual journey.[16]

All over Europe, the failed revolutions of 1848 produced an order dominated politically by the aristocracy and economically by the bourgeoisie. Napoleon III, Bismarck, and the Hapsburgs taught the bourgeoisie the difference between the trappings and the content of power. Marx and Engels drew the appropriate conclusions.[17] They recognized the difference between a class on the rise and a class settled into its privileges. The bourgeoisie was now primarily interested in giving the market a "cosmopolitan character." Viewing capitalism as a potentially international system had led Marx and Engels to oppose earlier supporters of a "national" economic form of socialism or autarky. Their analysis anticipated modern notions of globalization and market globalism. The new capitalist world indeed spelled doom for traditional societies. Thus, Marx and Engels could write: "The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. The cheap prices of commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image" (77–78). This process is perhaps still in its infancy. But it is clear that capitalism has already penetrated the non-Western world and that its imperatives tend to shape the policies of nations. Capital has no loyalty—other than to itself. Creating the world system is the real task of the bourgeoisie. Or, better, it became the real task of the bourgeoisie following the

defeat of revolution in 1848. Introducing parliamentary democracy into Europe became the task of the working class, which carried the dual burden of supporting universal rights and a liberal republic, while fighting for its own social and economic interests. The betrayal by the bourgeoisie of its former revolutionary ideals stunted the development of liberalism in Europe well into the twentieth century.[18] Looking back to 1848, therefore, the irony is inescapable. For by

> stigmatising as "socialistic" what it had previously extolled as "liberal," the bourgeoisie confesses that its own interests dictate that it should be delivered from the danger of its own rule; that, in order to restore tranquility in the country, its bourgeois parliament must, first of all, be given its quietus; that in order to preserve its social power intact, its political power must be broken; that the individual bourgeois can continue to exploit the other classes and to enjoy undisturbed property, family, religion and order only on condition that their class be condemned along with the other classes to like a political nullity; that in order to save its purse, it must forget the crown, and the sword that is to safeguard it must at the same time be hung over its own head as a sword of Damocles.[19]

Sebastian Haffner—among the most iconoclastic and insightful of twentieth-century German historians—put the matter nicely when he noted that from the standpoint of Marx and Engels "who wants the proletarian revolution first wants the bourgeois revolution that is spiritually already transcended and that he actually cannot really want."[20] The republican demand for suffrage is the key to the revolutions of 1848 and the politics of the *Communist Manifesto*. The bourgeoisie desired the overthrow of throne and altar and the creation of a republic, but feared that the exercise of universal suffrage by the propertyless masses (whom James Madison once termed "the great beast") might imperil its economic privileges. The nascent proletariat, meanwhile, also sought a republic and an end to the age of restoration. Nevertheless, historical experience made its members skeptical that a liberal republic would alleviate their economic plight.

Marx and Engels knew that the original revolutionary alliance between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat could not last. Conflicts between the two classes intensified. Each increase in the political power of its class enemy frightened the bourgeoisie. Reforms favorable to the proletariat only seemed to whet its appetite for more radical—or perhaps even more revolutionary—changes. That is precisely what took place in 1848. Especially in France, while the bourgeoisie embraced its *république démocratique*, the proletariat wanted something more

substantive than suffrage and the liberal rule of law. The working class harbored visions of a *république démocratique et sociale* that would temper the whip of the market. The bourgeoisie saw this as curtailing the individual right to private property and its unrestricted exercise. The working class, meanwhile, understood economic equality as an extension of the original liberal bourgeois democratic impulse. The meaning of democracy was thus cast into doubt. Marx and Engels, however, were clear on their interpretation. The *Communist Manifesto* calls not merely for abolishing private property, and more equally redistributing the population between town and country, but for nationalizing transportation and communications, and the largest firms, and for the introduction of a graduated income tax, a national bank, free education, and the end of child labor. Its authors also understood that political power and (potentially) the use of force were necessary to bring all of this about.

The *Communist Manifesto* projects an unavoidable final confrontation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. When that will occur remains unclear. But the certainty that the day of reckoning will come creates the longing to bring it about more quickly. The pamphlet's opening states that the ruling classes will tremble in the face of a new democratic movement committed to economic equality. But that the bourgeoisie should emerge hegemonic and that the miniscule proletariat (rather than the huge peasantry) should serve as the primary agent of social change was more a matter of speculation than of fact in 1848. The *Communist Manifesto* justified its claims through its analysis of capitalism: its logic and its workings. The tract begins with an explicit rejection of the classical liberal economic assumptions. Its fundamental unit of economic analysis is not the individual but class. "Capital is therefore," according to Marx and Engels, "not only personal; it is a social power" (86). Individuals may escape the constraints of the class into which they were born, but, so the argument runs, broader social trends are at work. What binds the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is, actually, nothing more than the "cash nexus." The production of commodities is predicated on the ability to maximize profit ever more efficiently, and, from the standpoint of the bourgeois, the worker appears as a cost of production: the bourgeois buys the time (or "labor power") of the worker at the minimum cost, while the worker seeks to maximize his wages for an arbitrarily determined market price.[21] The conflict between classes (and the tension between bourgeois democracy and socialist demands) is thus generated by the capitalist accumulation process.

Competition drives the system. But it works differently for the two primary classes involved. Competition among the bourgeoisie generates constant

technological innovation that makes “living labor” ever more expendable, thus ever more surely increasing the “industrial reserve army” of the unemployed. Workers thus fear those very technological developments that might—under a different system—provide them with leisure time. As things stand under capitalism, however, technology is employed only to render production faster and cheaper. At the same time, buying power diminishes, so that the “rate of profit” tends to fall. Overproduction results in economic crisis. Capital thereby becomes concentrated in the more resilient and efficient firms. Other firms go bust, and the proletariat expands. Capitalism arises once again from the ashes, and production reaches new heights—until the next crash.

But there is yet another factor in this process. Capitalist expansion rests on the ability of the system to transform all objects into commodities. This has radical implications. Sex, love, and religion all become objects of business. Family values, while supported in principle by so many, are eroded by the very system that these individuals claim to love. Capitalism reduces qualitative differences between phenomena (say, between military hardware and artworks) into quantitative determinations of value. Marx and Engels make this clear in the famous passage that states: “Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind” (77).

There is no turning back. Notions of “feudal” or “petty bourgeois” socialism, which embrace organic images of the small town community, have been rendered anachronistic. Centralization of capital and the expansion of the working class foster the creation of large cities. Old norms and customs fall by the wayside. Individuals appear as strangers to one another, and alienation becomes the condition of modern life. The dignity of work is undermined, and a sense of meaninglessness becomes apparent. So it is that “the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants—all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialised skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population”

(80).

The *Communist Manifesto* assumes that the working class is not homogenous and that capitalism merely sets the objective preconditions for turning the proletariat into its "grave-diggers." The political moment of proletarian action requires consciousness of the task at hand, organization, coordination, unity, and the willingness to intervene in the historical process. Insistence upon the "inevitable" revolution was not meant to excuse (and it did not produce) passivity or fatalism. Teleology has always set an overarching trajectory in motion that raises questions for the individual in his or her concrete situation. Whether in terms of achieving grace, making sense of historical problems, or becoming conscious of exploitation, it calls for action. Marx and Engels learned from Hegel that freedom is "the insight into necessity." Their tract attempted to provide it: proletarian consciousness is the awareness of an inevitable revolution and the commitment to help bring it about. Enthusiasm—and the willingness to place one's life on the line—is generated not by the notion that the revolution might happen but rather by the secure knowledge that it will happen. The extent to which the future is anchored in certainty is the extent to which individuals are willing to sacrifice for it. That is the political reason why Marx and Engels were so insistent upon stressing the "scientific" character of their enterprise against that of their socialist and anarchist rivals. Marx and Engels, it should be noted, also believed that their teleological claims were open to empirical verification. If their socialist "science" constituted a religion, then it was a secular religion and a secular faith that demanded great sacrifices from the faithful.

The *Communist Manifesto* builds on Hegel's notion that "history is the self-realization of the world spirit." The pamphlet was an attempt to envision (with concrete foundations) what was coming as well as what would bring it about. Marx and Engels knew that the proletariat was mostly illiterate, submissive to the bosses, and battered down by the conditions of its everyday life.[22] Workers in still relatively small factories mixed with petty artisans of various stripes to form an inchoate urban mass of highly disparate skills and status. Its leaders were either sectarian anarchists or liberal reformists. They were bohemians, committed workers, disillusioned bourgeois, fallen aristocrats, intellectuals, and artists. All suffered under severe economic hardships. Most were outcasts, hunted by the police, and shunted from one country to another. They were without vision and, for the most part, without a sense of proletarian political purpose. The *Communist Manifesto* emphasized the need for unity among a divided working class. It also called for greater awareness about how capitalism functions and a coordinated political response. The question was whether

workers could do this by themselves, whether their experience of oppression was sufficient to conceive and bring about an alternative, or whether they needed help. Reflecting on the experience of the bourgeois revolutions, Marx and Engels called upon elements of the ruling class to "break off" and join the proletariat.

Many would later see this as presaging the communist "vanguard party" of professional revolutionary intellectuals that would bring consciousness to the workers "from the outside." There is a case to be made for that. The *Communist Manifesto* was written to spur political action, and, beyond any concern with economic demands, it surely inspired Lenin in his abiding commitment to "the actuality of revolution."[23] Marx and Engels endorsed the use of revolutionary violence in appropriating the wealth of the bourgeoisie and countering the almost inevitable reality of counterrevolution.[24] In "The Class Struggles in France 1848 to 1850," Marx also coined the unfortunate term "dictatorship of the proletariat." Yet they believed that the dictatorship would foster democracy and that violence would prove minimal, if only because the proletarian revolution would rest on the class that constituted the great majority of society. Indeed, according to Marx and Engels this would differentiate the proletarian enterprise from all prior revolutions. Against Lenin and his followers, moreover, they maintained that the communists

> do not form a separate party opposed to the other working-class parties.
>
> They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.
>
> They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement. (84)

The *Communist Manifesto* was not a sectarian tract. Its closing pages offer support to the tame and reformist Democratic Socialists of Switzerland, the Polish parties that called for agrarian revolution and fomented the insurrection in Kraków in 1846, and even the liberal bourgeoisie in Germany fighting absolute monarchy and the forces of reaction. Marx and Engels were always unwilling to sacrifice engagement in the struggle of the present in the name of a future society. Their manifesto called upon activists to work "everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries" (82). Their unique obligation was only to introduce into all these movements, no matter what their degree of political development, "the property question." Marx and Engels stressed the role of the proletariat. But they did so in a special way. Highlighting

its international responsibilities, they insisted that the "working men have no country." Following that famous line, however, they could write: "Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself *the* nation, it is so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word" (89). The bourgeoisie was now genuinely international only in its economic dealings. The age of bourgeois democratic revolution had passed. Marx and Engels insisted that the proletariat could now rely only upon itself for its liberation. It would need to push the bourgeois revolution through to its fruition. The proletariat had to "win the battle of democracy" (90).

The *Communist Manifesto* does not specify the political organization best suited to realizing that goal, how best to link the national with the international struggle, or the institutional character of the new proletarian regime. Making claims of this sort would have thrust a transhistorical element into Marx and Engels's quintessentially historical approach. But they would pay the price for their circumspection. Though the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" does not appear in the pamphlet, and the idea of a "vanguard party" would only be introduced by Lenin more than half a century later, the lack of an explicitly democratic organizational model would later open Marx and Engels to claims that they harbored authoritarian intentions. Never mind that the mass-based democratic socialist labor party was not yet on the historical agenda; that its introduction required the "second industrial revolution" of the 1870s and 1880s anticipated by the pamphlet; that the new social democratic party with an explicitly "Marxist" ideology would serve as the political agent for republican democracy; or that its leaders and members, too, venerated the pamphlet.

The *Communist Manifesto* was an expression in theory of the historical dialectic in practice—or, to put it another way, the dynamics that crystallized in the revolutions of 1848.[25] The pamphlet highlights the idea of a class politics, provides logical justifications for it, and calls upon the proletariat to push the bourgeois revolution in a more radical direction. No longer would it be legitimate to pit liberty against equality. Marx and Engels envisioned a new, fully democratic order capable of linking liberty and equality and, thereby, empowering the working class to determine its fate without reference to economic necessity. This idea can already be found in Marx's justly famous letter of September 1843 to Arnold Ruge:

> Reason has always existed, but not always in rational form. The critic, therefore, can start with any form of theoretical and practical consciousness

> and develop the true actuality out of the forms inherent in existing actuality as its ought-to-be and goal. As far as actual life is concerned, the political state especially contains in all its modern forms the demands of reason, even where the political state is not yet conscious of socialistic demands. And the political state does not stop here. Everywhere it claims reason as realized. Equally, however, it everywhere gets into the contradiction between its ideal character and its real presuppositions.[26]

Utopian anticipations are implicit. Marx had already proposed the idea of "human emancipation" as against the merely "political" notion of freedom offered by the liberal state in his essay "On the Jewish Question" (1843). He saw how the standard ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity—freedom from the arbitrary exercise of power by the sovereign, equality before the law, and concern for the good of the state—were contradicted by existing forms of economic life in which the necessity and possibility for work was determined by the blind and arbitrary workings of the market, and egoism prevailed over any notion of the common good. Marx believed it necessary to bring the political values of the liberal state into the market. Whether that can occur peacefully through legislative reform in a liberal republic still remains an open question: the ability to invest (or disinvest) as it wishes has often enabled capital to blackmail socialist proponents of reform into compromising or backtracking on their promises to the working class. In any event, considering the matter dialectically, the young Marx believed that extending democracy from the state into the economy would involve abolishing these two distinct spheres of capitalist society and introducing a new classless and stateless order. The foundations were thus already laid for the "communist" ideal that would inform the *Communist Manifesto*.

Of course, that ideal has been completely tainted through the brutality, corruption, and inefficiency that followed the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. But communism as an idea has deeply democratic and rational roots. It serves as the logical response to what Marx and Engels termed the "prehistory" of humanity. This prehistory is an alienated condition in which selfish material interests prevent humanity from rationally determining its future. The youthful Hegel had already noted how the universal implications of reason—or the liberal rule of law—have not yet been applied to all individuals. Imbalances of power produce conflicts between masters and slaves whereby the latter are denied legal recognition as individuals by the former. Hegel saw all of this as deriving from a lack of consciousness. Common prejudices, religious superstitions, and the like, result in the "cunning of reason," whereby history is made, so to speak, behind

the backs of humanity. Marx and Engels took it a step further. Modern bourgeois society "has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, [that it] is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells" (78–79).

Marx and Engels may have turned Hegel on his head. But Hegel on his head is still Hegel. The *Communist Manifesto* identified the problem of prehistory with the selfish (primarily economic but also political) interests that undermine human solidarity and the ability to develop a common and rational plan for human development. The pamphlet calls for the abolition of private property not merely because it fosters exploitation but because it hinders democracy. Marx and Engels saw the exploitative aspects of capital as self-evident. Less self-evident to their intellectual contemporaries was how that exploitation was politically and ideologically maintained. Securing consent to the workings of the economic system was seen by Marx and Engels as the task of the state as "manager" of the affairs of the ruling class. Insofar as private property and class interests were abolished, therefore, it seemed to them that the state would prove unnecessary.

Socialism was originally understood by the authors of the *Communist Manifesto* as the "transition" to the communist society. The aim of this republican variant was to nationalize capitalist industries and to privilege proletarian interests. The socialist state would thus supposedly erode class rule, foster technology in order to increase production, and create the conditions for its own disappearance. Marx and Engels simply assumed that socialist rule would gradually enable citizens to determine society's needs and remedies until, finally, scarcity disappeared and the possibility emerged for communism and the utopian "leap into the realm of freedom." Marx and Engels were vague on how all of this would take place. But they were clear about the character of the classless society: it would realize freedom as a form of direct democracy. The prophet of this idea was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. His vision was predicated on two basic assumptions: (1) the general will of the community will be peacefully and deliberatively determined without reference to distorting selfish and particular interests; and (2) the individual who enters into this community will be as free as he or she was outside the community. Rousseau refused to consider autonomy and solidarity as mutually exclusive categories—and that same position was held by Marx and Engels. Their pamphlet thus envisioned an "association" in which "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" (92). With the introduction of a communist society based on this ethical idea of citizenship, the prehistory of humanity can come to an end—

and genuine history will begin.

The *Communist Manifesto* was naïve in its understanding of socialism as a transitional phase. Marx and Engels underestimated the role of bureaucracy, the need to sustain investment, and the difficulty of combating the commodity form. But they correctly maintained that the liberal republic in a capitalist society will privilege the interests of capital. They also knew that splits over particular policies are possible within the modern bourgeois democratic state. This becomes evident in their more empirical analyses of 1848 as well as in Marx's famous study of the French counterrevolution of 1851, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*. The degree to which the (bourgeois) ruling class is unified is the degree to which the subaltern (proletarian) class is organizationally and ideologically capable of expressing its own interests. Even under those circumstances, however, the capitalist system obviously privileges the interests of capitalists; or to put it another way, the satisfaction of capitalist interests serves as the precondition for the satisfaction of all other interests. The "managing committee" of the "ruling class" is meant to make sure that this remains the case—and it has done a pretty good job. But not a perfect job: socialist movements have tempered the whip of the market, fostered the interests of working people through sweeping legislation, and served as the vehicle for bringing the liberal republic into Europe.

As for communism, it is usually treated either as an abstraction or as a justification for totalitarian regimes. But that is a mistake. Marx and Engels's speculations anticipate an actual libertarian tradition that has little to do with Leninism. The utopian communist experiment has proven a consistent element of European political life: 1871 was the year of the Paris Commune; 1905 was marked by a mass strike and the eruption of workers' councils or soviets throughout imperial Russia; 1917 was the year of the Bolshevik Revolution, and its slogan was "all power to the soviets;" 1918–1923 witnessed "soviet" uprisings in Austria, Germany, Hungary, and elsewhere; 1928 found them in Shanghai; and the equivalent of workers' councils played an important role in the Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1938, in Hungary in 1956, and in various experiments in 1968. Wonderful descriptions of the libertarian and democratic atmosphere generated by these experiments in realizing the classless society were provided by Victor Serge during the Russian Revolution of 1917 and, most famously, by George Orwell of Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War in *Homage to Catalonia* (1938). Nevertheless, the ideal functioning of the workers' council or soviet is perhaps best recounted by Rosa Luxemburg, who participated in the Russian events of 1905:

> A quiet heroism and a feeling of class solidarity are developing among the masses. . . . Workers everywhere are, by themselves, reaching agreements whereby, for instance, the employed give up one day's wages every week for the unemployed. Or, where employment is reduced to four days a week, there they arrange it in such a way that no one is laid off, but that everyone works a few hours less per week. All this is done as a matter of course. . . . And then too, an interesting result of the revolution: in all factories, committees, elected by the workers, have arisen "on their own," which decide on all matters relating to working conditions, hiring and firing of workers, *etc*. The employer has actually ceased being "the master in his own house."[27]

Communism envisions a new man and a new order of things. It projects the end of the family, religion, scarcity, private property, and the state. It constitutes a "leap into the realm of freedom." The step before the leap, so it would appear, is the introduction of soviets, or workers' councils. But the soviets never ruled Russia. They never ruled anywhere for very long, and when they did, there were problems. Marx was skeptical about the Paris Commune—he actually saw it as the transition to a socialist republic. Forms of direct democracy have proven historically wanting.[28] All of them have been short-lived, administratively disorganized, incapable of assuring civil liberties, often provincial in their cultural attitudes, and unable to deal with normal matters pertaining to sovereignty. Communism, however, still inspires romantics on the far left. Critical of the compromises associated with parliamentary democracy, they harbor apocalyptic visions, nostalgia for authoritarian "lost causes," justifications for fanaticism, and utopian preoccupations with a "communist hypothesis."[29] Unfortunately, however, they remain unable to explain how these decentralized organizational forms might coordinate increasingly complex industries in an increasingly complex market and why—perhaps above all—working people should wish to attend a multitude of meetings.

Communism is thus probably best understood as a regulative ideal. Workers' councils might have a new role to play within a parliamentary state. But that is another discussion. Dialectically speaking, when in power, workers councils have suffered from the same lack of accountability—the same unconcern with the rule of law and an independent judiciary—as the more authoritarian forms of communism that they putatively oppose. Communism as the ideal of direct democracy in concert with the abolition of property may serve as the logical fulfillment of freedom: the idea of humanity taking full control of its powers and

bringing “prehistory” to an end. When put into practice, however, it breaks the connection between the bourgeois revolution and the proletarian revolution: liberalism and socialism. This contradiction hints at the specter haunting the *Communist Manifesto:* the tension between structure and action, analysis and prediction, theory and practice.

No work other than the Bible has been subjected to such scrutiny as the *Communist Manifesto*. And the degree of obsession marks the problem. Too many activists treated it as gospel—or, at least, the touchstone of truth—until the fall of communism in 1989. Too many critics, by the same token, stood defined by what they opposed. The extraordinary insights of this pamphlet, no less than its failings, thereby often get lost. Marx and Engels weren’t fools. They recognized soon enough that the revolution might not be coming quite as quickly as they expected, and they qualified many of their previous assumptions. Later prefaces to the *Communist Manifesto* analyzed the events of the day, new historical conditions, and growing imperialist competition among the great powers. Explicitly historical works like *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* (1853) not only highlighted the political impact of precapitalist classes, and splits within the bourgeoisie, but also introduced the idea of counterrevolution. Both Marx and Engels gradually reached the conclusion that mounting the barricades must give way to a protracted struggle waged by mass socialist labor parties. Marx also indicated that a distinctly “Asiatic mode of production” might short-circuit the dynamics of Western economic development in the *Grundrisse* (1857). That was before his subsequent attempt to unlock the key to commodity production as well its inner contradictions in *Das Kapital* (1867). The two friends remained in constant contact. Marx sketched an anthropology for class struggle in his unfinished *Ethnological Notebooks*, while, later, Engels provided his own version of that enterprise in *The Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), and his influential attack against a now forgotten anti-Semitic philosopher in *Anti-Dühring* (1877).[30] Some of these works were popular and others magisterial. None of them, however, evinces that unique mixture of speculative prophecy and investigative insight that marked their little pamphlet of 1848.

The *Communist Manifesto* provided what soon became a worldwide audience of the disenfranchised and the exploited with a rudimentary way of looking at history and an immanent analysis of the capitalist system. Marx and Engels underestimated the difficulty of overthrowing capitalism as well as the impact of the culture industry, the bureaucratic degeneration of labor parties, the difficulties of coordinating an international assault upon capital, and the

ingrained ideological prejudices attendant upon race, gender, and nation. Inevitable revolution proved less than contingent. It doesn't help to insist that the longed-for day of proletarian victory might yet still occur. This is to misunderstand the character of the old teleology and the political comfort and inspiration it provided the proletariat. No contemporary activist is ready to stake his or her politics on the assumption, which was expressed by a leading figure in the labor movement of the late nineteenth century, "I can see the future appearing as present." The *Communist Manifesto* rests on that belief. Certainty concerning the revolution, however, is a thing of the past. Communism is now, in fact, little more than a regulative ideal; ethics has supplanted the teleology, and socialism must admit its enormous intellectual debt to the Enlightenment political heritage.[31] Yet, for all that, Marx and Engels provided a sense of meaning and knowledge to the exploited searching for something more than the verities of otherworldly religions to make sense of their fate.

The *Communist Manifesto* anticipated a new world. Its authors were more prescient in their analytic investigations of capitalism than the horde of establishmentarian economists who still refuse to grasp its structural contradictions and its crisis character. Marx and Engels comprehended the notion of "creative destruction" before the term became a sound bite. They identified capitalism with the extension of the commodity form and the breakdown of traditional society. They understood that the modern economy was not like a household and that the individual was not the unit of analysis. They recognized that the two dominant classes of the modern production process would prove to be the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, even though their world was still primarily dominated by aristocrats and composed of peasants. Their extraordinary prophecy regarding the triumph of a still nascent capitalism rested less upon its empirical standing at the time than upon its logic of accumulation. Indeed, within capitalist democracy the satisfaction of capitalist interests is still usually the precondition for the satisfaction of all other social interests.

The *Communist Manifesto* is so strange and yet so appealing because, unlike the standard works of mainstream economics, it claims that systemic crises are an ineradicable element of capitalism and that there is an inherent conflict of economic class interest between the bourgeoisie and the working class. Today the working class—or, better, the Western working class—has more to lose than its chains. Postindustrial society (or deindustrialized society) is, arguably, eroding the old industrial working class. In global terms, however, 1 percent of the world population now controls more than 40 percent of planetary wealth (50 percent of the households in the world control 1 percent of the wealth), and even

in the United States 1 percent of the population accrued two-thirds of the nation's total income from 2002 to 2007.[32] Class war has rocked the United States since the economic crisis of 2008. New socialist experiments are under way in Latin America. Few any longer seriously believe in the "invisible hand" of the market that will somehow magically produce equilibrium between supply and demand. There is a renewed interest in socialism.[33] If there is nothing inevitable about the proletarian revolution, there is thus also nothing inevitable about the continuation of a "free" market. Whether to prioritize the needs of working people or business, imperialism or internationalism, remains undecided. To this extent, Marx and Engels were correct in claiming that "every class struggle is a political struggle" (82).

The *Communist Manifesto* inspired millions to political action. The belief that its teleological predictions somehow generated fatalism and passivity—an antipolitical outlook—is simply nonsense. The pamphlet was manipulated by authoritarians and totalitarians. It was used to undermine the very goals that it envisioned. Stalin, in fact, had its notion that "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" (92) transposed in many editions to read: "The free development of all is the condition for the free development of each." Authoritarians could point to the importance of bringing consciousness to the proletariat from outside its ranks and, beyond any stage theory, the pamphlet's activist strain: its endorsement of violence and its call for revolution. They could also note that Marxism, by its very nature, must adapt to specific conditions.

But there is also a sense in which authoritarians ignore the spirit of the pamphlet. Its logic rested on a stage theory of history, and it placed the working class front and center. All the communist experiments were, however, predicated on the idea that socialism could be built in economically backward nations and without a significant working-class constituency. Marx and Engels insisted that the liberation of the proletariat could occur only through its own efforts. Reforms would build the confidence of the working class, economic crisis would spur revolution, violence would prove minimal, and the great transformation of a proletarian majority would result in a republic. This outlook was embraced by a social democratic labor movement with a mass proletarian base that championed democratic values in the aftermath of 1848. More radical positions were also fostered by the manifesto. Advocates of workers' councils justified their politics by its ultimate goal of a stateless and classless society and its radical understanding of democratic citizenship.

The *Communist Manifesto* has (like the Bible) generated endless interpretations. It vacillates between transitional demands for the present and a utopian vision for the future. The specter of ecological destruction alone calls for a new understanding of reform and revolution. It is a larger world and a new time. No longer is the West the absolute point of reference for the planet. No longer are huge and highly organized mass parties relying on this little pamphlet of roughly thirty pages for justification and legitimacy. The *Communist Manifesto* has, however, outlived the communist debacle. It still exhibits a subterranean impact on activists and intellectuals inside and outside the university, among marginal political organizations, and on new socialist movements emerging in parts of the once colonized world. That the tract still inspires so many among the exploited and the disenfranchised, that the young still contest the prim and dire warnings of the old scolds, is a sign of its power and vitality. No serious intellectual can ignore the extraordinary economic, political, and historical insights of this remarkable work. So long as capitalism and the exploitative workings of the commodity form endure so, too, will the appeal of the *Communist Manifesto*.

NOTES

1. See Priscilla Smith Robertson, *Revolutions of 1848: A Social History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952). Also Lewis Namier, *1848: The Revolution of the Intellectuals* (New York: Oxford, 1995); Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions 1848–51* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Michael Rappaport, *1848: Year of Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 2009).

2. Isaiah Berlin, “The Counter-Enlightenment,” in *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas*, ed. Henry Hardy (New York: Penguin, 1982). Also see the fine study by Darrin M. McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

3. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Recollections: The French Revolution of 1848* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1987); Alphonse de Lamartine, *History of the French Revolution of 1848* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library, 2009).

4. According to two contemporary scholars, it is “precisely the economic crises that are most helpful in explaining the simultaneity and regional distribution of the European turmoil of 1848. . . . Even though ideas and institutions undoubtedly shaped the events in question, it was economic misery

and the fear thereof that triggered them." Helger Berger and Mark Spoerer, "Economic Crises and the European Revolutions of 1848," *Journal of Economic History* 61, no. 2 (2001): 295.

5. Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy*, trans. Fred Halliday (London: New Left Books, 1972), p. 41.

6. "Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man* was the first political work in England to state the case of working people in their own terms and with concepts drawn from their own world of experience. It was also the first to express a program of social reform which had wide popular appeal." Julius Braunthal, *History of the International: 1864–1914*, trans. Henry Collins and Kenneth Mitchell (New York: Praeger, 1967), p. 12.

7. For the background, see Max Nettlau, "Londoner kommunistische Diskussionen, 1845: Nach dem Protokollbuch des C.A.B.V.," in *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung* (Berlin, 1922), 10:362–91; see also Ernst Schraeplers, "Der Bund der Gerechten: Seine Tatigkeit in London 1840–1847," in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* (Hannover, 1962), pp. 5–29.

8. Francis Wheen, *Karl Marx: A Life* (New York: Norton, 1999), pp. 90–113.

9. Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Atheneum, 1988).

10. Georg Lukács, "Moses Hess and the Problems of Idealist Dialectics," in *Political Writings, 1919–1929: The Question of Parliamentarism and Other Essays*, ed. Rodney Livingstone and trans. Michael McColgan (London: New Left Books, 1972), pp. 181 ff.; Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), pp. 186 ff.

11. Shomo Barer, "1848: The Making of the Communist Manifesto" in *The Doctors of Revolution: 19th Century Thinkers Who Changed the World* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2000), pp. 1032 ff.

12. August H. Nimtz, "Marx and Engels' Electoral Strategy: The Alleged versus the Real," *New Political Science* 32, no. 3 (September 2010): 367 ff.

13. Eric Hobsbawm, *How to Change the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 101 ff.

14. Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France 1848 to 1850," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, 3 vols. (Moscow, 1969), 1:235–36.

15. Ibid., p. 224.

16. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Address to the Central Committee of the Communist League," in *Selected Works*, 1:175–85. For the minutes of the

last meeting of the Communist League's Central Committee, see *International Review of Social History* 1 (1956): 248–52.

17. Karl Korsch, "Marx' Stellung in der europäischen Revolution von 1848," in *Politische Texte*, ed. Erich Gerlach and Jürgen Seifert (Frankfurt am Main, 1974), pp. 371 ff.

18. There is still much debate about just how seriously the European bourgeoisie ever took the principles articulated by its great philosophers like John Locke, Kant, and Voltaire. It is a pity that Marx never systematized his views on the French Revolution or wrote his planned history of the National Convention in 1793. Note the compilation of Marx's writings on the French Revolution by François Furet, *Marx and the French Revolution*, trans. Deborah Kan Furet (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

19. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, in Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, 1:436.

20. Sebastian Haffner, "Friedrich Engels," in Sebastian Haffner and Wolfgang Venohr, *Preussische Profile* (Berlin: Ullstein, 2008), p. 186.

21. Thus, Engels noted in the English edition of The *Communist Manifesto:* "By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labor. By proletariat, the class of wage laborers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labor power in order to live" (74).

22. Note the still unrivaled study by Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

23. Georg Lukács, *Lenin: A Study on the Unity of His Thought*, trans. Nicholas Jacobs (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), pp. 11 ff.

24. Stephen Eric Bronner, "Notes on the Counterrevolution," *Logos: A Journal of Modern Society and Culture* 10, no. 1 (2011), available at www.logos journal.com.

25. Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy*, trans. Fred Halliday (London: New Left Books, 1972), p. 41.

26. *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, ed. and trans. Loyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat (New York: Doubleday, 1967), p. 213.

27. Rosa Luxemburg, Letter to Karl and Luise Kautsky (2/5/1906), in *The Letters of Rosa Luxemburg*, ed. and trans. Stephen Eric Bronner, 2nd edition (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1993), p. 114.

28. Note the collection of classic writings by "left-wing communists" in Hermann Goerter, Anton Pannekoek, Sylvia Pankhurst, and Otto Ruehle (eds.),

Non Leninist Marxism: Writings on the Workers' Councils (St. Petersburg: Black and Red Publishers, 2007).

29. Slavoj Zizek, *Living in the End Times* (London: Verso, 2010); Slavoj Zizek, *In Defense of Lost Causes* (London: Verso, 2009); Alberto Toscano, *Fanaticism: On the Use of an Idea* (London: Verso, 2010); Alain Badiou, *The Communist Hypothesis* (London: Verso, 2010).

30. Jack Jacobs, "Friedrich Engels and 'the Jewish Question' Reconsidered," *MEGA-Studien* 2 (1998): 1–21.

31. Stephen Eric Bronner, *Reclaiming the Enlightenment: Toward a Politics of Radical Engagement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

32. Report of the World Institute for Development Economic Research of the United Nations (December 3, 2006); Report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (September 9, 2009).

33. Stephen Eric Bronner, *Socialism Unbound: Principles, Practices, and Prospects* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

Reflections on the Fate of Marxism in Eastern Europe

FULFILLMENT OR BASTARDIZATION?

VLADIMIR TISMANEANU

IN MEMORY OF TONY JUDT

In this essay I propose to treat the theses of the *Communist Manifesto*—the incendiary text that Leszek Kolakowski rightly called a "masterpiece of propagandist literature"[1]—as the ideological core of the project to totally transform society, economy, culture, and human nature, a twentieth-century experiment whose laboratory was centered in Eastern Europe. Marxism was a complex political movement, but what distinguished it as a movement was its grandiose and ideologically inflected political ambitions. In this sense Marxism was first and foremost a demiurgic attempt to surpass an abhorred bourgeois order based on market relations (private property), transcend alienated social relations, and organize revolutionary social forces for the ultimate confrontation that would result into the "leap from the kingdom of necessity into the kingdom of freedom."[2] Marx's strong demarcation of his revolutionary thought from other versions of socialism (Christian, reactionary-feudal, petty-bourgeois, critical-utopian) was linked to his firm belief, especially after 1845, that he was in the know, and that his weltanschauung was essentially scientific, that is, both nonutopian, realistic, and accurate. For Marx, the conviction that history was governed by laws—a Hegelian viewpoint that he consistently promoted—meant that once these laws are grasped, reason (thought) and revolution (action) could coincide in a liberating, global proletarian upheaval.[3]

The proletariat, in this soteriological vision, is the universal redeemer, or as the young Marx put it, the Messiah-class of history. The concept of class struggle, as elaborated in the *Manifesto*, was foundational for the whole Marxian revolutionary cosmology. And, as Raymond Aron, Alain Besançon, Robert Conquest, Leszek Kolakowski, and Andrzej Walicki, among others, have shown, in its emphasis on struggle, the Marxian project sanctifies historical violence (a viewpoint unapologetically affirmed by a range of Marxist texts, from Leon

Trotsky's *Their Morals and Ours* to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Humanism and Terror*). Later, Leninism used and abused this philosophy of revolutionary historical *Aufhebung*, celebrating the role of the vanguard party and deriding concerns about the absence of a mature proletariat in industrially underdeveloped Russia. For Lenin, the Bolshevik regime had to resort to any means, including mass terror, to "form a government which *nobody* will be able to overthrow."[4] Lenin reversed the young Marx's original emphasis on the relatively spontaneous revolutionary development of class consciousness. For *this* Marx—as György Lukács showed in his classic *History and Class Consciousness*—the revolutionary *class* symbolized the viewpoint of totality, thereby creating the epistemic premises for acceding to historical truth. For Lenin, on the other hand, not the class but *the party* apprehended totality—and dialectical logic ensured that this oxymoron became palatable for the committed militants.[5] In this substitution of party for class originated the major conflicts between Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg and one of the main distinctions between Soviet and Western Marxisms.[6]

In this sense, there are *two* trajectories laid out in the *Manifesto*, foreshadowing further elaborations in the mature Marxian theory. On one hand, there is the emphasis on the self-development of class consciousness, which lends itself to a more or less social democratic politics of proletarian self-organization and political empowerment—what the American socialist Michael Harrington called "the democratic essence." On the other hand, there is the privileging of an ideologically correct vanguard committed to a totalizing revolution by any means necessary (for, in the words of Leon Trotsky's famous aphorism, you can't make an omelet without breaking some eggs). Yet even the more "humanistic" version of Marxism was deeply Manichean, centering on capitalist exploitation as the fundamental injustice and on proletarian counter-hegemony as agent of its transcendence. This dialectic of class struggle—what C. Wright Mills ironically called a "labor metaphysic"—is the core principle of all versions of Marxism. And its prominence explains why the more elitist and violent form of Marxism that came to dominate the politics of the twentieth century—Bolshevism—can be seen as a "legitimate heir" of Marxism's emancipatory project, even if it is not the only "legitimate heir."[7]

Alexander Yakovlev, a chief supporter of Gorbachevism and the main ideologue of Soviet perestroika, maintained that the cult of apocalyptical violence was the hallmark of the Bolshevik mind.[8] In fact, Leninism was a self-styled synthesis between the Marxian revolutionary doctrine and the Russian

tradition of nihilistic repudiation of the status quo. One can even argue that Marxism would have remained a mere sociological and economic doctrine had Lenin not turned it into a most potent political weapon. It was thanks to Lenin that a new type of politics emerged in the twentieth century, one based on fanaticism, unswerving commitment to the sacred cause, and complete substitution of reason through faith for millions of illuminated zealots. Leninism, a Russian cultural and political phenomenon, rather than classical Marxism, was in fact the foundation of the system that came to an end with the revolutions of 1989–1991. Put briefly, without Leninism, there would have been no totalitarianism, at least not in its Stalinist version. The twentieth century was in fact Lenin's century.[9] Yet, one should not forget that Lenin was a committed Marxist, one who intensely believed that he was fulfilling the founding father's revolutionary vision. According to a joke circulating in Moscow during Brezhnev's time, Karl Marx asked the Politburo's permission to address Soviet workers on television. When offered this opportunity, instead of haranguing them about the evils of capitalism, the founding father of scientific socialism exclaimed, "Proletarians of all countries, forgive me!" This sentence sums up the whole tragedy of Marxism, the chasm between what Karl Marx envisaged and realities of "really existing socialism." This chasm is the main focus of my reflections on the *Manifesto*.

In what follows I wish to consider to what extent the praxis of Soviet-style regimes in East-Central Europe and the USSR reflected or distorted the original Marxian promises. While it is obvious that many historical contingencies separate the original promise of Marx's thought from its Bolshevik incarnation, I strongly believe that it is nevertheless absurd to regard Soviet-style communism as a simple aberration. In developing this theme I draw freely on the insights of a range of political intellectuals who, writing in the 1940s and 1950s, first identified a "totalitarian temptation" within Marxism. Writers such as Boris Souvarine, Czeslaw Milosz, Karl R. Popper, Isaiah Berlin, Hannah Arendt, Raymond Aron, and Albert Camus hardly converged on a single political perspective. But they shared a sense that communism was "a God that failed" miserably, and that in important respects this failure could be traced to deficiencies in the thought of its humanistic founder, Karl Marx. The intellectual history of the twentieth century can be written as a series of political disenchantments with a doctrine that promised universal emancipation and led instead to terror, injustice, inequality, and abysmal human rights abuses. Intellectuals such as Panait Istrati, Ignazio Silone, André Gide, Arthur Koestler, and Manès Sperber, to name only a few, identified themselves with the Soviet

utopia only to discover—some of them earlier, others later—the lie at the very core of the proclaimed humanist creed.[10] Having made this discovery, they converged on the view that the main weakness of Marxist socialism was the absence of a revolutionary ethic, the complete subordination of the means to the worshipped, nebulous end. Their traumatic break with communism, which did not necessarily imply a farewell to Marxism, was a most exacting emotional experience. In the words of Ignazio Silone, "One is cured of communism the way one is cured of a neurosis."[11]

As I came of age politically in the Romania of the "Great Conducător," Nicolae Ceaușescu, these authors—and more contemporary ones, such as François Furet, Leszek Kolakowski, the Yugoslavian Praxis group (Mihailo Markovic, Svetozar Stojanovic), the Budapest neo-Marxist School (Ferenc Feher, Agnes Heller, György Markus, Mihaly Vajda)—helped me to understand the genealogy of the Leninism that held my country (and the whole region) in thrall. While some left-wing critics might argue that this antitotalitarian critique of Marxism is simply an artifact of Cold War liberalism, I would remind them that the "Cold War liberalism" with which I identified centered not on the foreign policy of the United States but on the challenges of trying to live freely as a subject of an ideologically inspired dictatorship. This is the thrust of the argument made by Agnes Heller and Ferenc Fehér in the 1980s when they insisted on the need to discover a common language between critical intellectuals East and West. In other words, in spite of the real uses and manipulations of the term "totalitarianism" during the Cold War, for East European neo-Marxists this was a sociologically, politically, and morally adequate concept.[12] And it is the concept that frames my analysis.

The question of Marxism's culpability has not receded in importance in the wake of the falling of the Berlin Wall. Indeed, it is an essential question of modern historical self-understanding, especially in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, because at the present moment—more than twenty years after the revolutions of 1989—Leninist legacies endure, and there are forces both East and West who maintain that the communist catastrophe was essentially exogenous to the generous pledges of Marxist humanism. This is the case, for instance, for the prominent Romanian Marxist philosopher Ion Iano§i, for whom the text of the *Manifesto* and its historical consequences should not be amalgamated for "partisan reasons."[13] Comparing Marx to Nietzsche, Iano§i writes apologetically about "culpables without culpability," seeking to thereby inoculate Marxism from criticism. In the same vein, Hungarian former dissident

(and briefly Straussian) thinker G. M. Tamás has since 2000 become increasingly vocal in criticizing liberal values (not only liberalism) and championing the need to resurrect working-class political radicalism. Former Romanian dissident thinker Andrei Pleşu responded bitterly to this idealized view of the Marxist legacies in the region, insisting that for the denizens of the former Soviet bloc, these are not abstract speculations but tragic facts of life.[14] Another interesting case is Lukács's former disciple, István Meszáros, a major student of the Hegelian-Marxist concept of alienation, whose enduring anticapitalist convictions have been enthusiastically acclaimed as a paradigm of *pensamiento critico* by Venezuela's "Bolivarian socialist" Hugo Chávez.[15] In all the former communist countries, the far left and the far right tend to share animosities, idiosyncrasies, neuroses, and phobias. What unites these two trends is that they are both "far": they resent the "grayness" of liberal democracy and abhor the "philistine mediocrity" of bourgeois existence.[16] The new-romantic hostility to the challenges of globalized economy generates new salvationist mythologies, including utopian flights into agrarian reveries and the cult of the unadulterated, pristine, archaic *völkisch* community. Disciples of Marx and Lenin close ranks in the company of frantic admirers of Carl Schmitt and Julius Evola, the Italian Fascist mystical philosopher.[17]

In fact, the efforts to rehabilitate the "real Marx" whose ideas were somehow adulterated in the praxis of Soviet-style regimes remain alive not simply in Eastern Europe—where it is very politically dangerous—but throughout Europe more generally, due to the efforts of Slavoj Zizek, Alain Badiou, and other unreconstructed proponents of left-wing political radicalism.[18] Among these the work of Zizek stands out, for its celebrity and for its directness in calling for a renewal of a "Leninist" courage to "smash" the bourgeois state. In the name of proletarian (authentic) democracy, formal liberties can thus be suspended, even suppressed. To achieve a higher version of morality, emancipated from the bondage of bourgeois hypocrisy, traditional morality can be abrogated.[19] With such views, we are back in the mind-set of high Stalinism, or at least its rhetoric. It is as if nothing has been learned about the consequences of making such arguments and then acting on them. Because this mind-set persists, the words of Raymond Aron—one of its most incisive critics—retain their relevance even in this "post-communist" era: "Marxism is a Christian heresy. As a modern form of millenarianism, it places the kingdom of God on Earth following the apocalyptic revolution in which the Old World will be swallowed up. The contradictions of capitalist societies will inevitably bring about this fruitful catastrophe. The victims of today will be the victors of tomorrow. Salvation will come through

the proletariat, that witness to present inhumanity. It is the proletariat that, at a time fixed by the evolution of productive forces and by the courage of the combatants, will turn itself into a class that is universal and will take charge of the fate of mankind."[20]

It was indeed the fate of Marxism in Eastern Europe—Marxism in *power*—to pretend to be in charge of the destiny of humanity by embodying the solution to mankind's millennia-long agonies, fears, and terrors. Never was a political doctrine so frantically ambitious, never was a revolutionary project so much imbued with a sense of prophetic mission and heroic predestination. In the name of this doctrine huge costs were imposed on millions of people. In the end it is of course particular individuals and groups, not doctrines, who act in history and who are responsible for their actions. But such actors act under historical conditions not of their own choosing. And among these conditions are the ideas that are directly found and transmitted from the past. For the Bolsheviks, a primary source of ideas was the *Manifesto*.

In what follows I will show how the *Manifesto* lends itself to such a messianic and rhetorically violent reading. I will then turn, briefly, to the historical record of the Bolshevik attempt to practice such a messianic politics, and conclude by reflecting on the reasons why the effort to comprehend and critically remember this politics is of continuing importance.

The *Communist Manifesto*

The *Communist Manifesto* is perhaps the most inflammatory and impassioned text ever written by a philosopher. In this scathing, vitriolic, and incandescent pamphlet, Marx (in coauthorship with his loyal friend Friedrich Engels) at once pilloried and glorified a whole social class—the bourgeoisie—and a whole social order—capitalism—and prophesied the objective, inexorable necessity of their overthrow by a higher form of society. Written in the middle of the nineteenth century, the *Manifesto* became in the twentieth century the charter of the Bolshevik oracular creed. Marxism, for all its scientific aspirations, in many ways from the beginning represented a secular substitute for traditional religion, offering a totalizing vocabulary in which "the riddle of history" was solved, and envisioning a leap from the kingdom of oppression, scarcity, and necessity to a kingdom of freedom. Its millennialist nature helps to explain its magnetism, its capacity to elicit romantic-heroic behavior, to generate collective fervor, to mobilize the oppressed, to incite political hostility, and to inspire both social hope and mystical delusions. Precisely because of its deliberately simplified

rhetorical devices, the *Manifesto* became the *livre de chevet* for generations of professional revolutionaries. It was the political counterpart to the eleventh of Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach*, in which he assigned philosophy an urgent transformative task by proclaiming that the issue was not how to interpret the world but how to change it. Indeed, insofar as Marxism exhibited and enacted a kind of secularized religious faith in revolution, the *Manifesto* can be seen as its bible. As Leszek Kolakowski concluded in his unsurpassed trilogy, *Main Currents of Marxism:* "The self-deification of mankind, to which Marxism gave philosophical expression, has ended in the same way as all such attempts, whether individual or collective: it has revealed itself as the farcical aspect of human bondage."[21]

The *Manifesto* is an important part of this history of Marxism as tragedy and as farce. The question here is not guilt but intellectual responsibility. Marx was not the philosopher of the Gulag, and the *Manifesto* was a nineteenth-century pamphlet far removed in space and time from the political decisions of the Bolsheviks and their followers. As Sidney Hook warned long ago: "Hegel would not have recognized his progeny in Marx nor Marx in Lenin. The intellectual sins, like all sins of the fathers, should not be visited upon the heads of their children. There is even less warrant for attributing the sins of the children to their fathers, especially when there is strong doubt of their legitimacy."[22] But essential components of Marx's doctrine permitted and perhaps even enabled the Bolshevik experiment, whose outcome was almost a century of communist dictatorship in Russia and Eastern Europe. The evolution of this dictatorship no doubt was politically overdetermined. But one crucial factor was clearly the ideological dispositions of the Leninist movement toward "revolutionary dictatorship." And these cannot be disassociated from the attacks on bourgeois rights and private property articulated in the founding fathers' writings, especially in the *Manifesto*. Such attacks were justified by a notion of high historical necessity, whereby a "prehistory" of alienation and oppression would give way to a truly "human emancipation": "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" (92). In these passionately effervescent lines of the *Manifesto*, one can decipher the whole tragedy that was to follow: Lenin's forcing of the pace of history, the genesis of Bolshevism as a matrix for generalized terror, the Stalinist horrors, and the universe of the secret police and the Gulag.

It is equally true that one can discover in the *Manifesto* a powerful appeal to social harmony, a call for the reconciliation of individual and society, and a

vision of enlightened political community. These themes too have had their effect, in some cases even inspiring Marxist critics of Leninism. But, reading the *Manifesto* in hindsight, from the vantage point of a long history of "proletarian dictatorship," I would argue that these impulses are overshadowed by the vindictive spirit of the pamphlet's oracular monism.

And one need go no further than the famous opening lines of part I for evidence of this monism: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. . . . Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other—Bourgeoisie and Proletariat" (74–75). From the outset, the *Manifesto* announces what the great Russian Marxist Georgi Plekhanov called a "monist view of history," according to which all historical conflict is reducible to class conflict and all political debate is reducible to the question of which class you represent or support. The most profound reflection on this reduction is György Lukács's *History and Class Consciousness*, which reads the thought of Marx as an "expression" of "the standpoint of the proletariat." Lukács offers an ingenious interpretation of Marxism as the unfolding "truth" of the class struggle. And in reducing questions of truth or falsity and right or wrong to questions of "class standpoint," he is simply following the lead of the *Manifesto*. For it is Marx himself who declares there that "the theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes" (85). The intellectual distance separating this formulation from the Bolshevik idea that the communists are in possession of "politically correct" insight into the movement and the *meaning* of history is not far.

The *Manifesto* does more than articulate a grand historical narrative of the progressive rise and fall of classes. It represents "the proletariat" as the ultimate collective agent, destined to bring the story of class struggle to a close. At the same time, it reduces all questions of morality to questions of class power. The story of capitalism is a story of how the bourgeoisie expropriates feudal property, makes the modern "bourgeois" state its own, and wields political power to enhance the process of capital accumulation, unwittingly calling into existence its own "grave-diggers"—the industrial proletariat. And as the proletariat evolves it comes to an increasing awareness of its "mission," as the

only “really revolutionary class,” to abolish—indeed, to “destroy”—not simply private property but human oppression itself. The *Manifesto* presents proletarian empowerment and human emancipation as not contingently related but essentially the same thing. And it describes this empowerment in strikingly Manichean terms, complete with “decisive hours” of conflict, “despotic inroads” on property, and the “sweeping away” of outmoded historical conditions. “In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat,” Marx and Engels write, “we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat” (83). It could be said that in laying out this historical trajectory Marx intends merely to describe and not to prescribe. And yet the pamphlet is laced with moral outrage and denunciation, and buoyed by a vision of ultimate liberation (“the free development of each . . . the free development of all”). More to the point, it heaps scorn on any reservations on the part of other communists or socialists—much less “the bourgeoisie”—regarding the morality or justice of class struggle. For according to the *Manifesto*, “political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another” (92).

To identify these texts in the *Manifesto* is not to imply that this is all that is there. But these are central texts, and they articulate what Marx himself maintains is most distinctive about “Communism” as a political formation, as distinct from the various socialists and utopians that he disparages—that it unsentimentally, resolutely, and presciently both comprehends and apprehends the “real movement” of history, a movement heretofore marked by exploitation, expropriation, and violence, at the same time that it now, finally, stands at the threshold of a new dispensation. Marx does not here articulate a “Leninist” theory of the “vanguard party.” Indeed, he insists that “the Communists do not form a separate party” (84). But he also insists that the “Communists” alone possess a proper and historically privileged understanding of “the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement” (85).

For Marx, communism unites ideological superiority, political militance, and an unblanching and resolute appreciation of “historical tasks.” The distance separating Marx from Lenin on this score is barely perceptible. It is thus easy to see how Lenin could claim, in *The State and Revolution*, that the *Manifesto* contains “the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat” even though Marx and Engels had yet to name that idea. For its central theme is clearly for Lenin “the

proletariat organized as the ruling class." Because political power is the organized power of one class or another, and because the state "is an organization of violence for the suppression of some class," for Lenin it makes perfect sense that the proletariat must seize state power and use it "to crush the resistance of the exploiters." Such a politics, he insists, "is absolutely irreconcilable with reformism, and is a slap in the face for the common opportunist prejudices and philistine illusions about 'the peaceful development of democracy.'" And there is more. For the "truth" of this perspective is only manifest by communism. "By educating the workers' party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat, capable of assuming power and leading the whole people to socialism, of directing and organizing the new system, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader of all the working and exploited people in organizing their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie."[23] And thus the foundation for violent tutelary dictatorship was laid.

Again, Lenin's reading of the *Manifesto* was not the only possible "Marxist" reading. At the same time, with its totalizing aspirations, Marxism—which purported to be the ultimate explanatory archetype—was ripe for degeneration into dogma and the persecution of heretics that punctuated it once transfigured into Leninism. Marx imagined an ideal proletariat, ready to renounce all social, communitarian, and cultural bonds. What really happened was precisely the opposite of Marx's prophesy. The proletariat failed to initiate the apocalyptical breach so powerfully announced in the *Manifesto*. The revolutionary subject refused to perform its allegedly predestined role. And so Bolshevism arrived on the scene to help the historical process "forward." The Bolshevik Revolution in fact was anything but the total movement bound to overthrow the existing order and usher in the realm of freedom. Rather, the Bolsheviks inaugurated a pattern of dictatorial conduct that carried to an extreme both the Jacobin terroristic logic and the fanaticism of Russia's radical movements of the nineteenth century. Claiming to be Marx's most faithful disciple, Lenin despaired over the "embourgeoisement" of the Western proletariat. According to him, in the stage of imperialism, industrial workers cannot spontaneously acquire revolutionary consciousness, being merely a class "in itself." To become a class "for itself," that is, to act in accordance with the Marxian script, consciousness should be injected from without by the self-appointed avantgarde of professional revolutionaries. Bolshevism presupposed this chasm between the ignorant proletariat and the "enlightened," pedagogical elite, and it elevated this presupposition into a governing principle. In doing so, it drew upon central

tropes of the *Manifesto*. And while the Bolshevik reading of the text—and the Marxian corpus more generally—was not the only possible reading, it was most assuredly a possible and arguably probable reading that was indeed the most politically *effective* reading. We can perhaps imagine other worlds in which a different realization of Marxian ideas might be possible. But in the real world of historical actuality, there was only one successful effort to "overthrow the bourgeoisie" and institute the "sway of the proletariat." And it laid waste to the eastern half of Europe.

Marxism's Failure

Contrary to the Marxian scenario heralded in the *Manifesto*, the twentieth century was dominated not by the conflict between bourgeoisie and proletariat but rather by the rivalry between totalitarian blueprints inspired by absolutist and utopian ideologies (communism and fascism, in their various incarnations) on the one hand, and liberal democratic experiments on the other. As distinguished social thinkers such as Karl Popper, Hannah Arendt, Raymond Aron, Isaiah Berlin, and François Furet have shown, the struggle has pitted the partisans of the open society against those who seek to redesign society on the basis of a social or racial theory. In the case of Marxism, it is hard not to agree with those Soviet and post-Soviet thinkers who found the original error in the founding father's hostility to private property and "bourgeois right," and in his exaltation of egalitarian collectivism as a solution to all forms of social and economic injustice.[24] It is precisely in this demonization of property—exacerbated during Stalin's rule, when whole social classes were physically exterminated in the name of a uniquely simplistic and simple-minded reading of the original thesis—that we can identify the fundamental source of the breakdown of the Marxian paradigm. Demonizing property was not Marx's original contribution to the socialist tradition. Yet no other thinker gave such an inflammatory, full-fledged expression to this time-honored form of social ressentiment. Isaac Deutscher was right to describe Stalinism as a tribalization of Marxism, a combination of degraded historical materialism and primitive magic.[25] But for this Western conception to lend itself to such a combination, seeds of the monstrous distortion must have existed in the initial construct.

The contemporary decline of Marxism cannot be understood without also taking into account the hostility toward democratic institutions, the inherent antiparliamentarianism, the arrogant dismissal of the key propositions of liberalism, and the uncompromising hostility to any conception of nation and

religion that are latent within it. In essence, from its early stage to its mature developments, Marxism remained fundamentally hostile to the principle and the practice of private property and markets, considered as inimical to the thriving of human personality. Lenin found therefore his source of inspiration of the centrally planned economic model in Marx's own contempt for spontaneous, anarchic, and destructive market forces. It was also this visceral rejection of private property that energized Lenin and later Stalin in exalting the need to get rid of peasant land ownership, seen as a source of continuous rebirth of capitalism, "day by day, hour by hour, spontaneously, and in mass proportion" (Lenin).[26] Second, it disparaged democratic institutions and scorned "bourgeois rights." The result was the celebration of a charismatic revolutionary party endowed by History to perform genuine social miracles (Stalin used to say: "There is no fortress we Bolsheviks cannot storm," an echo of Marx's "storming the skies"). Third, it misread human nature, more precisely human psychology. It assumed one could fundamentally revolutionize human nature, transform it according to the grandiose anthropological vision of a fully pacified existence in which there would be no division of labor, no distinction between cities and countryside, or between intellectual and physical activities—or, for that matter, between politically organized groups.

Marxism failed in the twentieth century because it underestimated the existential quandaries of human existence, the needs of many for deep spiritual or cultural sources of meaning, and thus the profound importance of the human right to privacy. It aimed to create a perfect society whose materialization in the communist experiments, from Moscow to Phnom Penh, came closer to Kafka's *Penal Colony* than to the paradisiacal visions of traditional utopians.[27] Rereading the *Manifesto* today, we are overwhelmed by a sense of immense melancholy for all those lives sacrificed on the altar of an irresponsible teleology that managed to represent itself as the embodiment of "human emancipation." The heated discussion unleashed by the publication of the *Livre Noir du communisme* (*The Black Book of Communism*) in France highlighted the almost unimaginable costs of bringing Utopia to power.[28] Whether or not the death toll of twentieth-century communism comes to ninety-four million people—as Stéphane Courtois controversially claimed—there can be no doubt about the destructiveness of communism, whether measured in millions of lives, the debasement of culture, the extinguishing of freedom, or the legacies of suspicion and despair. Like Germans after Hitler, like Italians after Mussolini, like Chileans after Pinochet, East Europeans have engaged in serious and ongoing efforts to reckon with a traumatic past. This necessarily involves analyses of the ideological blueprints

that galvanized murderous political passions, catalyzed mass resentment, and organized social energies in disastrous forms of social engineering.[29]

Writing shortly before his death in 1983, Raymond Aron concluded his lifelong endeavor to analyze Marxism by pointing to its colossal theological and practical failure: "The prophecy, contradicted by both the evolution of capitalism and by the experience of so-called socialist regimes, remains as empty as it was at the beginning: How would the proletariat become the ruling class? Why would the proletariat become the ruling class? Why would collective ownership suddenly produce unprecedented efficiency? What magic wand would accommodate authoritarianism and centralized planning to personal freedom and democracy? What was to replace the market economy other than bureaucratic planning? The mystification began with Marx himself when he called his prophecy scientific."[30]

This is indeed the way Marxism appears in the aftermath of the convulsive twentieth century: a hidebound and often abstruse millennialism, having little to do with the reality and the challenges of industrial civilization and unable to offer as remedies for human suffering anything other than empty slogans and ossified dogmas. As the "opium for the intellectuals," it is almost extinct. This twilight is, at least in its implications, a grandiose *fin de partie:* we see the final agony of a hopeless attempt to overcome the limits of human nature by imagining a total break in the chain of those often strange and inexplicable occurrences that for want of a better term we have come to call "history." Yet the waning of utopian radicalism does not mean the demise of an enduring yearning for social engineering. Historical hubris has not vanished, nor have the sources of human anguish and misery, and so the danger of new follies persists: "The communist ideology seems to be in a state of rigor mortis, and the regimes that still use it are so repulsive that its resurrection may seem to be impossible. But let us not rush into such a prophecy (or anti-prophecy). The social conditions that nourished and made use of this ideology can still revive; perhaps—who knows?—the virus is dormant, waiting for the next opportunity. Dreams about the perfect society belong to the enduring stock of our civilization."[31]

Some Tentative Conclusions

It is morally objectionable and intellectually untenable to propose a totally dispassionate or indifferent reading of the *Manifesto*, without taking into account the experience of the real human beings who were subjected to an experiment

inspired by its ideas. The prose of the *Manifesto* is indeed exhilarating and galvanizing, and many of its criticisms of the moral and economic defects of market democracies remain valid. Yet the thrust of this electrifying pamphlet was the exaltation of violent revolutions as the privileged way to accelerate the leap into the kingdom of freedom. Undoubtedly, in the twentieth century Marx's ideas were distorted almost beyond recognition. But it is impossible to completely separate the Bolshevik praxis from these ideas. There is a temptation to present the Soviet experiment as a kind of aberration in the history of the revolutionary, socialist left, and to exempt the basic Marxist schema from any culpability for this experiment. Those so tempted (from French socialist politician Jacques Attali to influential American historian Geoff Eley) often invoke the role of modern social democratic movements and parties in advancing the causes of both political democracy and social justice.[32] Yet the undeniably profound achievements of social democracy in the West have more to do with the legacies of Ferdinand Lassalle and Eduard Bernstein, Leon Blum and Willy Brandt, and Olaf Palme and Michael Harrington—all committed democrats—than with the revolutionary chiliasm and dialectical critique of law and morality that are deeply rooted within Marxism and to be found within the *Manifesto*.

At issue here is the extent to which core ideas of a tradition can be considered responsible for political practices enacted in their name. Clearly this is not a simple matter. Bolshevism was surely not the only legitimate heir of Marxism. After all, among the first to describe Stalinism as a system akin to Fascism, a version of totalitarianism, were the Mensheviks, once Lenin's archrivals within Russian social democracy.[33] Moreover, within Marxism were critical impulses that helped to inspire the left-wing critique of totalitarianism (think of Boris Souvarine, Cornelius Castoriadis, or Claude Lefort); and it is no mistake that two of the best histories of Marxism come from Polish thinkers—Leszek Kolakowski and Andrzej Walicki—who were able to plumb the apocalyptic and messianic depths of Bolshevist Marxism because they had not simply experienced it but come to oppose it from within, as "revisionist Marxists."

The history of ideas is not a domain of simple causality, and the Hegelian category of mediation (*Vermittlung*) is very important here. Yet, there is an emotional/mythological infrastructure in Marxism (Alvin Gouldner called it the "paleo-symbolic matrix") that led to (and certainly allowed for) the appeals of Stalinism so movingly documented by François Furet in *The Passing of an Illusion:* a frantic cult of the movement, a fetishizing of the revolution, a

deification of history. All these themes are present in the *Manifesto*, even if only in embryonic form.[34]

The fate of Marxism in Eastern Europe highlights the role of awakening, apostasy, and metanoia: it was precisely disenchanted Marxists, those intellectuals who had broken with Stalinism, who decisively contributed to the erosion of the ideocratic-partocratic systems (a term proposed by Martin Malia, following Waldemar Gurian and Abdurakhman Avtokhanov, in his *The Soviet Tragedy*).[35] Marxist revisionism represented a major corrosive force in the disbandment of the Leninist ideological hubris. By contrasting the official pretense to the abysmal realities and offering the concept of alienation as an interpretive key for understanding bureaucratic authoritarianism, the revisionists offered alternative discourses of emancipation. The very fact that they had belonged to the communist "family" made their critique poignantly explosive and exasperatingly annoying for the nomenklaturas. It was only after the defeat of the Prague Spring in August 1968 that many revisionists became aware of the need to transcend the selflimited neo-Marxist paradigm and embrace a larger perspective on human rights, democracy, and freedom. The destiny of the Budapest school (from old Lukács to Agnes Heller, Ferenc Fehér, György Márkus, Mihály Vajda, János Kis, and György Bence); the experiences of Adam Michnik, Karel Kosik, Jacek Kuron, Zygmunt Bauman, Krzystof Pomian, and Leszek Kolakowski); Ernst Bloch's impact on East Germany's revisionists; and so on—all these cases illustrate a noble tradition of moral dignity, the reclaiming of the concept of alienation against the totalitarian Moloch, and a phenomenology of honor and resistance that played a crucial role in the constitution of dissident movements and the demise of state socialist systems. Equally important have been the critical and "post-Marxist" contributions of such "Western" political intellectuals as Carlo Rosselli, Norberto Bobbio, Edgar Morin, Dick Howard, Cornelius Castoriadis, and Claude Lefort, who have sought to rediscover new horizons of emancipatory practice beyond the ossified ideologies of the past.[36] Post-Marxism recognizes the persistence of the traditional socialist agenda but admits the waning of redemptive forms of political radicalism. Post-Marxism confronts therefore the need to acknowledge the incontrovertible fact that "Marxism as a doctrine cannot be separated from the history of the political movements and systems to which it led."[37]

The myth of a singular world proletarian revolution has long since been dispelled. It was not this myth, however, that made communism such a poignantly seductive ideology. More important was the promise of universal

transformation, the promise that this miserable Vale of Tears will be replaced by an Arcadian world in which all individuals will be happy and free. Furthermore, for intellectuals, communism offered the chance to feel important, and indeed to imagine themselves as the enlightened paragons of a titanic revolutionary explosion. Understanding the impact of communism is impossible without fathoming the colossal inebriating effect of the Marxist vision of a complete reconciliation of theory and practice, a "riddle of history solved." From the eleventh of the *Theses on Feuerbach* to the last line of the *Manifesto*, Marx issued a persistent call to mobilize understanding and harness the forces of modernity, all in the name of a radical transformation of the world, a reconciliation of man with nature and history. Such a totalizing vision no doubt possesses great intellectual and moral appeal. But if we have learned anything from the twentieth century, it is that the domain of morality and politics is a domain of finitude, difference, and limit. The "riddles of history" have no "final solutions" worth seeking.

This is perhaps the major lesson of the great revolutionary upheavals of 1989, one that needs to be heeded by friends of a decent society East and West: men and women indeed make their history, but not in accordance with ideological blueprints devised by self-appointed custodians of mandatory happiness. Historical progress is a double-edged sword, a political myth that can be used for the most inhuman purposes. Political religions (and Marxism was a most forceful one) proclaim the need to construct perfectly homogenous communities with disregard for the destinies of concrete individuals, and sacralize the province of politics as inherently superior to any other field of human experience.[38] The antiauthoritarian revolutions of 1989 were in fact anti-teleological, anti-eschatological, anti-utopian, and anti-ideological civic movements. Ideology was for the men and the women of those revolutions the name of abdication and self-enslavement to alien forms of coercion and debasement. If we think about the experience of the Solidarity movement in Poland, we realize that the movement was first and foremost a search for moral renewal, for organizing a life in truth, as opposed to a life in duplicity, hypocrisy, and humiliation. The men and women who became the revolutionaries of 1989 took to the streets of Budapest, Prague, Warsaw, Leipzig, and Timisoara on behalf of such values as dignity, honor, liberty, and truth. The causes of the revolutions were complex, of course, but two were particularly salient: the ideological erosion of the communist regimes and the civic mobilization from below.[39] The self-restrained revolutionaries were eclectically proud to go beyond any frozen "left"-"right" dichotomy in

emphasizing the plenitude of human freedom as a fundamentally nonnegotiable principle. This explains why so many disenchanted Marxists, individuals who had experienced the tragic effects of ideological hubris, could be among the leaders of those antiradical, liberal democratic movements.[40] The revolutions of 1989 culminated with the demise of the USSR in December 1991. An ideological century, dominated by utopian dreams and an international civil war, came to an end in a generally peaceful, gentle, nonbelligerent way.[41] The revolutions of 1989 rehabilitated the values of decency, civility, tolerance, and moderation, and have thereby offered humanity the hope that democratic civilization can prevail over barbarism. The great and complex Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci once referred to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 as a "revolution against *Capital*." He meant by this that the revolutionaries had repudiated an economistic and mechanistic reading of history, and had enacted a belief in the creative *praxis* of organized communist politics. To the extent that Gramsci was correct, this revolution "against *Capital*" was also a revolution inspired by the revolutionary poetry of the *Manifesto*. And whatever else the revolutions of 1989 may turn out to be, it is clear that they represent revolutions *against* the *Manifesto* and its poetry and its prose of revolutionary upheaval.

NOTES

1. Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism: With a New Preface and Epilogue* (New York: Norton, 2005), p. 187.

2. See Andrzej Walicki, *Marxism and the Leap to the Kingdom of Freedom: The Rise and Fall of the Communist Utopia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).

3. See part III of the *Manifesto*.

4. See Slavoj Zizek, ed., *Revolution at the Gates: Selected Writings of Lenin from 1917* (London: Verso, 2002), p. 113 (Lenin's italics).

5. For the mind-set of Bolshevik-style illuminated militants, see Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966); Arthur Koestler's contribution in Richard H. Crossman, ed., *The God That Failed* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), pp. 15–75.

6. See Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism* (London: Verso, 1976).

7. For a perceptive approach to the main themes of Marxism and an

evaluation of what is dead and what is alive in that doctrine, see Jon Elster, *An Introduction to Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 186–200. Shlomo Avineri's masterful book *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), which came out during the 150th anniversary of Marx's birth (a year full of revolutionary pathos, illusions, and resurrected utopias), remains a most useful treatment of Marx's concept of revolution. Avineri's conclusion on the relationship between Marxism and Bolshevism is worth quoting: "One must concede that, with all the differences between Marx and Soviet, Leninist Communism, Leninism would have been inconceivable without Marxism" (p. 258).

8. Alexander Yakovlev, *A Century of Violence in Soviet Russia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002). For the fate of Marxism in Russia, see Steven G. Marks, *How Russia Shaped the Modern World: From Art to Anti-Semitism, Ballet to Bolshevism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 275–335. For the centrality of the concept of violence in utopian revolutionary doctrines, see Paul Hollander, ed., *Political Violence: Belief, Behavior, and Legitimation* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), as well as my review in *Society* 47, no. 1, January–February 2010, pp. 76–79.

9. See Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Lenin's Century: Bolshevism, Marxism, and the Russian Tradition," *Partisan Review* LXIX, no. 3, Summer 2002, pp. 408–14.

10. See Crossman, *The God That Failed*. For an insightful approach to the literature of antitotalitarian disenchantment, see John V. Fleming, *The Anti-Communist Manifestos: Four Books That Shaped the Cold War* (New York: Norton, 2009). An outstanding contribution to the topic is Michael Scammell, *Koestler: The Literary and Political Odyssey of a Twentieth-Century Skeptic* (New York: Random House, 2009).

11. See Stanislao Pugliese's superb biography, *Bitter Spring: A Life of Ignazio Silone* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), p. 105. Unlike many fellow ex-communists, Silone remained attached to the ideals of a democratic left, defining himself as "a Christian without a Church, a socialist without a party" (p. 244).

12. See Ferenc Fehér and Agnes Heller, *Eastern Left, Western Left: Totalitarianism, Freedom, and Democracy* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press International, 1987), especially the chapters "An Imaginary Preface to the 1984 Edition of Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*" and "In the Bestiarium: A Contribution to the Cultural Anthropology of 'Real Socialism,'" pp. 243–78. For a provocative approach to the relevance, limits, and

contemporary meanings of the totalitarian paradigm, see Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick, eds., *Beyond Totalitarianism: Stalinism and Nazism Compared* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009). See also Jeffrey C. Isaac, "The Road to Apostasy," *East European Politics and Societies* 16, no. 2 (2002), pp. 564–71, and "Critics of Totalitarianism," in Terence Ball and Richard Bellamy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 181–201.

13. See Marx and Engels, *Manifestul Partidului Comunist*, edited by Cristian Preda (Bucuresti: Ed. Nemira, 1998), p. 150. The volume includes the *Manifesto* as well as a number of contemporary, post-1989 reactions to it.

14. For the Tamás-Plesu exchange, see http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2009–06–16-tamas-ro.html. More recently, I have myself engaged in an exchange with G. M. Tamás, arguing that his espousal of Alain Badiou's extolment of the "communist hypothesis" amounts to a frivolous ignorance of historical realities and an implicit rejection of bourgeois-liberal modernity. See Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Marxism Histrionic: G. M. Tamás & Co.," and G. M. Tamás, "Un delict de opinie," *Revista* 22 (Bucharest), July 2–26, 2010, pp. 5–9.

15. http://www.monthlyreview.org/books/structuralcrisisofcapital.php, accessed August 24, 2010.

16. For the famous metaphor "gray is beautiful," see Adam Michnik, *Letters from Freedom: Post–Cold War Realities and Perspectives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 317–27. On the relationship between radical ideas and totalitarian experiments, see H.-R. Patapievici, *Politice* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1996).

17. I examine these trends in my book *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998; paperback edition, 2009).

18. See Slavoj Zizek, *In Defense of Lost Causes* (London: Verso, 2008); Sebastian Budgen, Stathis Kouvelakis, and Slavoj Žižek, eds., *Lenin Reloaded: Toward a Politics of Truth* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

19. See Steven Lukes, *Marxism and Morality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*, third edition, with a new introduction by the author (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2001); Arthur Koestler, *The Invisible Writing* (New York: Macmillan, 1969).

20. See Raymond Aron, The *Dawn of Universal History: Selected Essays from a Witness to the Twentieth Century*, introduction by Tony Judt (New York:

Basic Books, 2002), p. 203.

21. See Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, p. 1212.

22. See Sidney Hook, *Marxism and Beyond* (Totowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1983), p. 22.

23. V. I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution. The Marxist Teachings of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1976), pp. 13, 14, and 17.

24. See Alexander S. Tsipko, *Is Stalinism Really Dead?* (New York: HarperCollins, 1990).

25. See Isaac Deutscher, "Marxism and Primitive Magic," in Tariq Ali, ed., *The Stalinist Legacy: Its Impact on 20th Century World Politics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), pp. 106–17.

26. Quoted in Adam Ulam, *The Bolsheviks: The Intellectual and Political History of the Triumph of Communism in Russia*, with a new preface by the author (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 523.

27. For an informative approach to contemporary efforts to resurrect Marxism, including the disconcerting "theological turn" inspired by the writings of Jacob Taubes on Paulinian eschatology, see Göran Therborn, *From Marxism to Post-Marxism* (London: Verso, 2008).

28. See Stéphane Courtois et al., *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*, consulting editor for the American edition Mark Kramer (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), as well as Stéphane Courtois, ed., *Du passé nous faisons table rase! Histoire et mémoire du communisme en Europe* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2002).

29. See Steven Rosefielde, *Red Holocaust* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Norman Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Democracy and Memory: Romania Confronts Its Communist Past," *Annals of the American Academy of Political Science*, special issue on "The Politics of History in Comparative Perspective," Martin O. Heisler, special editor, vol. 617, May 2008, pp. 166–80.

30. See Raymond Aron, *Memoirs: Fifty Years of Political Reflection* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1990), p. 414.

31. Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, p. vi.

32. See Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

33. See André Liebich, *From the Other Shore: Russian Social Democracy*

after 1921 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

34. See François Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, trans. by Deborah Furet (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 189–454.

35. See Martin Malia, *The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia* (New York: Free Press, 1992); for the role of ideas in the demise of Leninist regimes, see Daniel Chirot, ed., *The Crisis of Leninism and the Decline of the Left: The Revolutions of 1989* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991).

36. See Dick Howard, *The Specter of Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Stanislao G. Pugliese, *Carlo Roselli: Socialist Heretic and Antifascist Exile* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999); Cornelius Castoriadis, *Domaines de l'homme: Les carrefours du Labyrinthe II* (Paris: Seuil, 1977); Raymond Taras, ed., *The Road to Disillusion: From Critical Marxism to Postcommunism in Eastern Europe* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1992); Claude Lefort, *Complications: Communism and the Dilemmas of Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

37. See Tony Judt, *Reappraisals: Reflections on the Forgotten Twentieth Century* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008), p. 133.

38. See Emilio Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

39. See Charles Maier, "What Have We Learned since 1989?" and Vladimir Tismaneanu, "The Revolutions of 1989: Causes, Meanings, Consequences," *Contemporary European History* 18, no. 3, August 2009, pp. 253–70 and pp. 271–88, respectively.

40. See Vladimir Tismaneanu, *The Crisis of Marxist Ideology in Eastern Europe: The Poverty of Utopia* (London: Routledge, 1988); Vladimir Tismaneanu, ed., *The Revolutions of 1989* (London: Routledge, 1999), especially the chapters by S. N. Eisenstadt, Jeffrey C. Isaac, Tony Judt, and Leszek Kolakowski; Agnes Heller and Ferenc Fehér, *The Grandeur and Twilight of Radical Universalism* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1991); and Jacek Kuron's wonderful memoirs, *La foi et la faute: À la rencontre et hors du communisme* (Paris: Fayard, 1991).

41. See Sigmund Neumann, *Permanent Revolution: Totalitarianism in the Age of International Civil War*, second edition, with a new preface by Hans Kohn (New York: Praeger, 1965).

Marxism and Globalization

REVISITING THE POLITICAL IN THE *COMMUNIST MANIFESTO*

SASKIA SASSEN

I explore in this essay whether the *Communist Manifesto* contains elements that might help to illuminate key features of the current phase of economic globalization. This is the second time that I have been called upon to reflect on this question. The first was in 1998 by the editors of *Constellations*, who organized one of many symposia occasioned by the 150th anniversary of the *Manifesto* and the new edition introduced by Eric Hobsbawm (1998). In that earlier contribution, I approached the *Manifesto* primarily as a work of social theory, asking whether it contained analytic elements, perhaps buried beneath its passionate calls for a more just world, that resonate with or inform current agendas of social research, and in particular my own inquiries into the ways that contemporary forms of globalization transform space and time.

The challenges posed by globalization have only grown in the interim, and so it makes perfect sense to revisit this theme. I do so in the same spirit passionately articulated by Richard Rorty in that earlier symposium: "Just as the New Testament is still read by millions of people who spend little time wondering whether Christ will someday return in glory, so the *Communist Manifesto* is still read even by those of us who hope and believe that full social justice can be attained without a revolution of the sort Marx predicted: that a classless society, a world in which 'the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all,' can come about as a result of what Marx despised as 'bourgeois reformism.' Parents and teachers should encourage young people to read both books. The young will be morally better for having done so" (Rorty 1999: 216). Like Rorty, I believe that the *Manifesto* retains its importance even if one accepts, as I do, that its revolutionary and prophetic elements have been rendered obsolete. At the same time, unlike Rorty, I am interested in the *Manifesto* not as a work of moral uplift but as a work of social *science* that can be assessed in terms of the explanatory value of its core concepts and themes.

In these terms, I am interested primarily in the kind of internationalism

posited by the *Manifesto*, one centered on the structural recurrence of the core dynamics of capitalism. While the *Manifesto* speaks of growing interdependence among countries, in my reading this proposition does little theoretical work in the text, whose analytical framework deals less with the modalities of interdependence than the ways in which the global marketplace tends to generate the same results in every country it touches. This analytical framework has important implications for the possibility of a new kind of internationalist politics, one centered more on recurrence of structural activators in country after country than on interdependence. But this framework is also constrained from fully theorizing such a politics, due to its underlying historical determinism. And while Marx and Engels do write extensively about the state, their view accords it little complexity or autonomy. As a consequence, in their account there is no real *making* of history and hence no *making* of the political.

These aspects of the *Manifesto* resonate in complicated ways with my own recent work on today's forms of corporate economic and formal/informal political globalization. This work is not in any direct or evident sense Marxist. But it draws from, and recodes, important elements present in Marxism and especially in the *Manifesto*. Like many contemporary social theorists—indeed, like many social, economic, and political theorists of the twentieth century—my thinking has both been influenced by and objected to one or another proposition in the writings of Marx on capitalism. Indeed, I would submit that it is impossible to write seriously about the topics of globalization, urban transformation, and social change without reckoning with Marx's panoramic theorization.

At the same time, I am neither a scholar of, nor an expert on, Marx or Marxism. I was educated partly in the Marxist tradition in Latin America, Italy, and France. I wrote a thesis in philosophy at the Université de Poitiers on the method of dialectic logic—work supervised by the Hegelian Marxist Jacques d'Hondt, a student of Jean Hyppolite, the great Hegelian translator of Marx into French. I am surely not a Marxist in the narrow sense of the word. I merely was educated and came of age in Marxist settings—like many of my generation, the "generation of '68.'" At the same time, I have used Marx in my work. And while I will suggest that Marx's framework—especially in the *Manifesto*—is both limited and limiting, I would also maintain that it is important for understanding contemporary forms of globalism to work through this framework.

While the *Manifesto* and Marx's work more generally contain many useful ideas (see my discussions in, e.g., Sassen 1984; 1988; and 2001), it is Marx's understanding of the political economy and the politics of internationalism that

have been most central to my own work, and will thus be the principal focus of this essay. That understanding of internationalism sharply contrasts with today's notions of the global, as these tend to be centered on the fact of growing interdependence among countries. But interdependence is not enough to mark the specificity of a period—our world has long been interdependent. Further, insofar as today's notions tend to postulate the effacement of space and time, Marx's view is far superior.

What I want to extricate from Marx's work is his thesis about the structural conditions of capitalism that recur in country after country and thereby produce a particular kind of internationalism and a particular kind of internationalist class politics. This internationalism is based on the multisitedness of a distinct historical dynamic of capital accumulation that leads to particular forms of action and reaction—including forms of politics. It is not predicated on the growing interdependence of countries—though it can coexist with the latter—so much as on the recurrence of similar conditions within countries. Marx does speak in the *Manifesto* and elsewhere of the interdependencies between nations that capitalism begets, observing, for example, that "in place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations" (77). But the kind of interdependence he writes about is not, I would argue, a structural dynamic, and Marx does not really theorize it. As I will indicate below, "interdependence" in the *Manifesto* is a sort of add-on, a superstructural condition at best. The social formation analyzed by Marx is an internationalism based on the structural recurrence of particular conditions in several countries, and such a formation can coexist with national states that are not particularly interdependent and that might be quite closed to external forces. Indeed, it is compatible not simply with distinct nations but with virulent nationalisms. This opens up a possibility that is quashed in the dominant explanations of the current phase of globalization. These have a strong tendency to confine the global to a condition constructed as *external* to the nation-state; the global and the national are, then, viewed as mutually exclusive. Thomas Friedman's *The World Is Flat* is perhaps the best-known popular statement of this view that the universal market sweeps away the particular nation. *In contrast, on my reading Marx posits an internationalism that is embedded, ultimately, in national conditions that recurred in a number of countries (and eventually, with the expansion of capitalism, would recur in countries across the world*). More specifically, Marx's account centers on largely domestic, nationally based structural conditions that emerge in diverse capitalist countries and feed the mobilization of nationally based working

classes, and ultimately (Marx predicts and/or prophesies) generate worldwide proletarian revolution. I see here an internationalism through recurrence rather than interdependence.

The critical feature of Marx's understanding of working-class internationalism is that it is constituted *inside* the national, as distinct from what we might call the organizational internationalism of the empires of the time (see Sassen 2008: chapter 3). It is an internationalism that can arise because capitalist development in countries across the world is, for Marx, subject to the same tendencies and outcomes, albeit marked by the specificity of each country's institutional arrangements. The *Manifesto* is not nearly as specific as *Capital* in outlining the "universal" (and therefore recurring) laws of capitalist production; instead, the *Manifesto* refers to these recurrences only in much more general and less structural terms: "Modern industrial labour, modern subjection to capital, the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany, has stripped him [the proletarian] of every trace of national character" (83).

Now allow me an interpretive leap: there is a parallel between Marx's insight into structural recurrence as a source of internationalism and the way that a number of social theorists currently understand the components of globalization. Much of my own recent work has focused on distinguishing kinds of globality that are constituted through recurrence and horizontality from those that are centered in the power of vertically integrated international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the financial and trading interdependencies they manage and govern. It is these latter that have received most of the attention in today's mainstream academic and popular discussions of globalization. While not denying the weight of these, I have sought to capture dimensions of the global constituted *inside the national*, which coexist with the ongoing and strong presence of the national state and various forms of nationalism. Such phenomena raise questions about the limitations of the current vocabulary of globalization. For they involve changes that require state action and alter state structures and policies, *even as they also involve the incipient denationalizing of what was historically constructed as national*. Further, these processes of denationalization—always partial and often highly specialized—recur in country after country, although always in country-specific ways. Thus, whether we focus on new forms of trade, labor, or migration policy, or new modes of regulating global communications technology, or new ways of organizing urban space, contemporary globalization involves the nation-state as a crucial medium and agent, even when it functions to lower the boundaries to global flows and in effect to denationalize processes

contained within national formal boundaries.

These processes present challenges different from those analyzed by Marx, and they also open up new possibilities. Thus I would not confine matters to the generality of national *class* struggles as posited by Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto:* "Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie" (83). For while Marx focused his attention almost exclusively on the forms of disadvantage associated with mid-nineteenth-century proletarianization, I would argue that beginning in the 1980s neoliberal policies have produced troubling conditions in countries worldwide that affect a growing range of economic strata, from the poor to the traditional middle classes. These conditions are generating new forms of political agency. They range from human rights struggles against abusive governments to anti-gentrification struggles and demands for housing in a growing number of global cities. They also include electronic activisms that, while aimed at national actors, gain their power from first becoming visible to larger publics on a global scale that strengthens their negotiations with those national actors.

These types of conditions and practices constitute the global; *but they do so via recurrence, in country after country, and much less via interdependence*. This does not preclude the possibility that they might become more interdependent over time. But it does mean that the processes currently summed up by "globalization" remain profoundly situated in a national space and temporality. These types of globally recurrent local struggles are one element in the active *making* of the political, even if this political is mostly informal. Marx does not quite allow for this making; for on his view the struggle of the proletariat is rooted in larger historical processes—the dynamics of capitalism—that determine its character as class struggle. There is in Marx what we might describe as a truncated political imaginary.

When I began researching globalization in the early 1980s, I was not thinking about the structural recurrence contained in Marx's internationalism. This may have been partly due to the fact that the Marxist scholarship and the critiques of this scholarship—at least in what I was reading at the time—were focused on very different issues. Internationalism was mostly dealt with as a question of cross-country working-class solidarity. Given my resistance to broad categories such as "the" global economy with its associated notions of placelessness and space-time compression, I was keen on detecting the particular moment when "the global economy" hits the ground, not just in the former

colonies (e.g., off-shore production), but also in its most advanced sites. Out of this came my notion of "the global city."

In short, I detected that as countries became incorporated into the global economy at an accelerated pace in the 1990's, the expansion of corporate economic globalization, deregulation and privatization brought with it a systemic demand for an increasing number of global cities (e.g., New York, London, Tokyo, Mumbai), territorially based sites of production, distribution, and consumption for the highly networked information-based global economy. Today the network of global cities is a worldwide multisited infrastructure for the global corporate economy (Sassen 2011; Taylor *et al.* 2006; Banerjee-Guha 2010).

A key proposition in my current research is that the post-1980s work of each state in laying the groundwork for the global corporate economy inside its own territory is an instance of structural recurrence. It contains the seeds of a new type of *state* internationalism, an internationalism that arises out of the recurrence of particular structural conditions deep inside each nation-state. Such a state internationalism is to be distinguished from interdependence and from participation, whether willing or forced, in vertically integrated systems such as the IMF and the WTO, and from traditional international relations of national states.

Aspects of this argument converge with Marx's understanding in the *Manifesto*. I thus agree with Marx's assertion, albeit with some tempering and qualifiers, that "the bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. . . . It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image" (77–78). Yet if Marx's focus is on the way powerful countries project themselves onto the global stage via imperialism, my focus is on the work of capitalist states to denationalize internal spaces in order to accommodate the global corporate system (Sassen 2008: chapter 4).

Let me elaborate. A key insight of my previous work on global cities is that globalization is embedded in national territory, that is to say, in a geographic terrain that has been encased in an elaborate set of national laws and administrative capacities. This embedding of the global requires at least a partial lifting of these national encasements and hence signals a necessary participation by the state, even when it concerns the state's own withdrawal from owning or

by the state, even when it concerns the state's own withdrawal from owning or regulating key economic sectors.

Herein lies an emergent internationalism of states, one for now confined to enabling the formation of the global corporate economy, but one that could potentially expand to include global social justice agendas and global commons agendas, such as the environmental challenge. For most of their variegated histories, national states have adopted nationalist positions in the international domain, at the limit conducting themselves as private actors seeking maximum benefits for their interests. Thus even a misplaced and narrow internationalism such as that we see today is a change worth noting. But making it work for broader agendas will take politics, and more precisely, the making of new components of the political.

And this is where Marx fails us. His historical determinism does not leave much ground for the making of the political. The structural trends of capitalism, written into "History," overpower the political in his analysis. In contrast, I want to detect the possibility of an internationalism inside the state that contains the potential for making the political. This means entering the state and recovering it as a space for conflicts, both in Nicos Poulantzas's (1975) sense of a space for class struggle and as a space where global struggles beyond class play out (Sassen 2008: chapters 4 and 5).

As states have come to participate in the implementation of cross-border regimes—whether the global economic system or the international human rights regime—they have undergone at times significant transformations, because accommodating such global regimes comes at a price for the preexisting forms of state authority. In the case of the global economy, this negotiation entails the development inside national states of the mechanisms necessary for (a) the reconstitution of certain components of national capital into "global capital," and (b) the development of new types of rights/entitlements for foreign capital[1] in what are still national territories in principle under the exclusive authority of their states.[2] Such changes can be instituted through legislative acts, court rulings, executive orders and policies, and the extension of private forms of authority (Sassen 2008: chapter 5). This negotiation also calls for developments aimed at making states more competitive, notably the shrinking of welfare programs, monetary policies that favor the financial sector, and fiscal policies that favor capital owners.

Marx captures a basic reality when he posits that "the need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions

everywhere. The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. . . . All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations" (77).

This "settling" of the bourgeoisie everywhere brings key components of the most powerful global corporate actors deep inside the national state itself, and hence within reach of citizens (still) confined to the national. These global actors are dependent on particular forms of statework to ensure conditions favorable for their operations. Such statework is a source of corporate empowerment, but also a potential source of vulnerability.

Given all of this, we might say that Marx and Engels got it right when they wrote in the *Manifesto* that "the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" (76). For Marx the state is subject to the interests of the hegemonic class. "Political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another" (92).

Yet while Marx may have been quite right to reject the autonomy of the state (especially in his own day), he was deeply mistaken to reduce all forms of political power to class power, and to regard these as determined by laws of history viewed as themselves essentially beyond the influence of politics. Thus while Marx calls for the overthrow of all existing conditions through revolutionary political action, this action is always framed by the historical "logic" outlined in his materialist conception of history. "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*" (91; emphasis added).

Instead, I ask whether the state itself actually gains a particular kind of power (for good or ill!) from its own efforts to denationalize specific components of its institutional frame to accommodate the interests of foreign firms and investors. Rather than merely executing the interests of corporate power, particular actors and agencies inside the state (particularly the executive branch of government, centered on ministries of finance, central banks, etc.) become the carriers of novel forms of state authority, even as others lose power (particularly those state agencies connected to the social wage and social justice functions). This emergent form of state power does not replace but works alongside older well-established forms of state authority.[3]

The embeddedness of the global thus requires at least a partial lifting of these national encasements and hence signals a necessary participation by the state, even when it concerns the state's own withdrawal from regulating the economy. I contend that the mix of processes we describe as globalization is indeed producing, deep inside the national state, a very partial but significant form of authority, a hybrid that is neither fully private nor fully public, neither fully national nor fully global.[4] Such new forms of hybrid state power require detailed sociological investigation.[5] They signal not a decline of the state but a reconfiguration of its functions and powers (see, for instance, works as diverse as Amin 2010; Harvey 2003; Aman 1998; Cohen 2001; Beck 2006; Datz 2007; Likosky 2002; Helleiner 1999).

This reconfiguration of national state functions and powers in the face of globalization has important implications for the way we understand struggles for social justice. Precisely because corporate economic globalization strengthens the legitimacy of claims by foreign investors and firms, it renders *visible* the work of national states to accommodate their rights and contracts in what remain basically national economies. In principle, a similar dynamic is also present when privatization and deregulation concern native firms and investors, for here too the "privileged position" of certain business interests is exposed. But the key is that under current conditions the use of the state as an agent of denationalization is engendered by the new forms of global accumulation and the accessibility of national economies to foreign firms and financial resources that these require.

Such a granting of rights to foreign firms and investors needs to be seen as a partial denationalizing of specific forms of state authority and not as a "withdrawal" of the state, for it very much relies upon state agency and intervention. The particular substance and conditionality of this new mode of state authority remain insufficiently recognized and theorized. Though housed or located in national state capacities and institutions, this mode of authority is not national in the way we had come to understand this feature of states over the past century. It involves new, hybrid linkages of the national and the global that are themselves the outcome of ongoing political negotiations involving a range of "domestic," "foreign," and global actors. These complex transformations inside the state are partial and incipient but also strategic. And at the same time that they are the result of power struggles, they also lay the basis for future power struggles.

In addition, this partial, often highly specialized process of denationalization

can also take place in domains of "globalization" beyond the economic. Perhaps the most notable example of this is the relatively recent development and expansion of the human rights regime, which has empowered national courts to sue foreign firms and dictators (see, e.g., Stephens 2001; Sassen 2008: chapter 8) and granted undocumented immigrants certain economic and social rights (Jacobson and Ruffer 2006; Fraser 2009; Falk 1987; Ribas-Mateos 2005). Denationalization is, thus, multivalent: it endogenizes the global agendas of many different types of actors, not only corporate firms and financial markets, but also human rights, indigenous rights, and consumer rights activists, environmental movements, and transnational religious movements.

Indeed, there is an interesting "dialectic" at play in the development of these new forms of denationalized state power, which simultaneously challenge and destabilize what have historically been constructed as essential powers of the nation-state (see Arrighi 1994; see also the debate in Davis 1999). In my view, dialectics of empowerment/disempowerment hold both for hegemonic "superpowers" such as the United States and for diverse nonhegemonic countries. The U.S. government, for example, has acted as the hegemonic power of this period to lead/force other states to deregulate capital and labor, thereby adopting a new set of obligations toward global capital. In so doing it has contributed to globalizing the conditions that denationalize forms of state authority in more and more countries throughout the world. At the same time, the new forms of power exercised by the denationalized states increasingly feed the power of new emerging structures beyond the state, whether global capital markets, the WTO regime, or the international human rights regime. That is to say, as some state agencies contribute to the development of the global economy and thereby gain new powers, state power in these domains increasingly assumes the form of a denationalized administrative capacity designed to underwrite nonstate forms of interaction and governance (Sassen 2008: chapter 5). Such a development can be seen as a lethal mutation of the Marxist notion of the withering away of the state. But whereas Marx envisioned such an "administration of things" as a feature of a postrevolutionary society that was beyond politics and domination, the kind of administration that is increasingly put in place by processes of denationalization is both capitalist and preeminently *political*. Indeed, the principal agency responsible for putting it into place is none other than the state itself.

This has important implications for politics.

Both the modalities of capitalism analyzed by Marx, and the modalities of the globalized state that I have discussed, can be conceived as infrastructures for

political action. For Marx such action is understood as class struggle, which recurs inevitably in capitalist countries and leads, ultimately, to revolutionary transformation and the demise of the state as we know it. Marx was a brilliant analyst of nineteenth-century capitalism. And his critique of the injustices of capitalism is unsurpassed. At the same time, the revolutionary transformations he envisioned have not come to pass, and the world that we inhabit at the dawn of the twenty-first century is governed by a new form of capitalist globalization and "internationalism" that is centered in the denationalized state.

While the state's role in denationalization currently tends to be confined to furthering economic globalization, it is conceivable and indeed possible for the state to address a broad range of global issues, from the democratizing of multilateral economic institutions, to the strengthening of the international human rights regime, to the enhancement of the powers of the International Criminal Court to bring to trial officials who abuse their people, to the securing of equitable economic development. Of course there is a huge discrepancy between the capacity of the state to effect such broad outcomes and its capacity to underwrite globalized capital accumulation. For the necessary legal and administrative instruments and regimes have not yet been developed that would allow state agencies to address and implement these larger aims of global social justice. Further, while global capitalist actors have a wide range of state-enforced options at their disposal, citizens seeking to globalize their capacities for governance have few material, legal, or political resources at hand, and confront burdensome obstacles to collective action.[6] At the same time, state participation in global processes potentially creates an enabling environment not only for global actors and institutions but also for citizens seeking to subject states to greater accountability and public scrutiny.

The key point is that today's powerful global economic actors actually *need* national states, especially in the highly developed world, the rhetorics of antistatism and global mobility notwithstanding. Such a "need" translates into a novel type of national state authority that grants the liberal state more freedom of maneuver in responding to a wide range of global actors and addressing questions of social welfare than the conventional rhetoric of state powerlessness suggests. In this sense the state is both an agent and an object of contestation. It would appear, further, that these new forms of state authority have developed in uneven and differential ways. The globalized state, in other words, is quite fractured. In particular, the executive branch of government (whether presidential or ministerial) is gaining powers at the expense of the legislature (Sassen 2008: chapter 4). These power shifts are grounded in major changes in

the organizational architecture of the state apparatus, and to some extent they transcend party politics. Such a powerful executive branch is a potentially dangerous thing, and constitutional conflicts centered around such danger are an important part of current political discourse. At the same time, the very source of danger is also a potential source of opportunity. For an enlightened executive might move more components of the state toward broader global justice agendas, and in doing so might even democratize the powers of the executive branch itself. While such a combination of enlightenment and power is rare, it is a possibility worth taking seriously. More generally, the possibilities for contesting and politicizing the state, thereby seizing the opportunity to exploit fractures within the state to address strategically social justice agendas, are worth taking seriously.

Marx developed powerful analytical tools with which to grasp the deep politico-economic and social structures of capitalism. But he was on weaker conceptual ground when it came to the complexities of the state and its freedom of maneuver. And while his understanding of economic internationalism was powerful, it was undermined by his underdeveloped understanding of the political. By centering his analysis on structural tendencies, he could not see how the excesses of early capitalism would lead to political struggles demanding, and partly succeeding in forcing, the development of the regulatory state. This failure had profound implications for the evolution and crises of Marxism in the twentieth century. As important, it has obscured one of the most novel and important features of contemporary globalization—the complex ways that such globalization reconstitutes the state itself, generating new state power and new intrastate differentiations and making possible new political configurations. I thus conclude with an irony: the tradition of thought initiated by the *Manifesto* is both indispensable to an understanding of globalization and an obstacle to such understanding. For if the *Manifesto* presents one of the most powerful diagnoses of the expansion of the global capitalist market and the "reduction" of social relations by "the cash nexus," an analysis that is prescient in anticipating many features of our current global economy, it fails to understand the political constitution of these very processes, which are *deeply* political, even if in new and sometimes obscure ways.

NOTES

1. Seen from the perspective of firms and investors operating transnationally, the objective is to enjoy the protections traditionally exercised by the state in the

national realm of the economy for national firms, notably guaranteeing property rights and contracts. How this gets done may involve a range of options. See, for example, Cox 1987; Cutler, Haufler, and Porter 1999; Hall and Biersteker 2002; McGrew and Held 2007; Mansell *et al.* 2009.

2. Two very different bodies of scholarship which develop lines of analysis that can help in capturing some of these conditions are represented by the work of Rosenau, particularly his examination of the domestic "frontier" inside the national state (Rosenau 1997), and by the work of Walker problematizing the distinction inside/outside in international relations theory (Walker 1993). An interesting variant on this subject is Callaghy, Kassimir, and Latham 2001, which examines the proliferation of global nonstate-centered networks in the case of Africa.

3. Several scholars began to focus on the nature of this engagement in the 1990s (e.g., Strange 1996; Scholte 1997; Cerny 2000; Dark 2002; Panitch and Leys 1999; Doremus *et al.* 1999; Kagarlitsky 1999). One way of organizing the major issues is to ask whether the role of the state is simply one of reducing its authority—for example, as suggested with such terms as "deregulation" and "privatization," and generally "less government"—or whether it also requires the production of new types of regulations, legislative items, court decisions, in brief, the production of a whole series of new "legalities." I use this term to distinguish this production from "law" or "jurisprudence" (Sassen 1996: chapter 1; 2008: chapter 5).

4. Among the issues raised by this type of analysis are the increased autonomy and influence of a whole variety of types of processes and actors. The literature on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including transnational ones (TNGOs), and the associated forms of activism, has also generated a series of interesting insights into the changed position of states since the 1980s in a context of multiple globalizations (e.g., Keck and Sikkink 1998; Annheuer, Glasius, and Kaldor 2002; Ong 1999; O'Brien *et al.* 2000; Boli and Thomas 1999; Tennant 2007; for a critical account that partly rejects the notion that these nonstate actors actually represent a politics that undermines existing forms of authority, including that of the state, see Drainville 2004; see also Cederman and Kraus 2005). I would also include here a variety of global networks, some of long standing, fighting emergent global agents such as trafficking gangs (e.g., Global Survival Network [ongoing reports, e.g., 1997]; Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking [*Annual*]; for a general review of these types of organizations see Sassen 2008: chapter 7). Along these lines a new set of concrete instances has come about with the September 11, 2001, attack on the

World Trade Center, i.e., the use by international organized terrorism of the global financial system and the international immigration regime (see, for a variety of analyses, Calhoun, Price, and Timmer 2002).

5. Along these lines of analysis, I have long argued that economic globalization is in fact a politico-economic system partly located inside national states (Sassen 1996: chapters 1–2; 2008: chapters 4, 5, and 6), thereby having the effect of partly denationalizing specific, often highly specialized components of state work and of state-based institutions, such as citizenship.

6. Elsewhere (Sassen 2008: chapter 6) I examine some of these issues from the perspective of the institution of citizenship. This produces a domain for global politics that can be distinguished from the notion developed above that state participation in the global economy should function as a bridge for a country's citizens to participate in global governance. However, I see an emergent institutional resonance between the features of the state discussed here and the features of an evolving institution of citizenship.

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[Editor's note: As I indicate in A Note on the Texts, the *Communist Manifesto* is the title given to the text by Marx and Engels in 1872; the text was originally published in 1848 as the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. The translation here is the 1888 English translation by Samuel Moore, who retained the original title but used the text of the 1872 second German edition. J.C.I.]

1. By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour. By proletariat, the class of modern wage labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour power in order to live [Engels, 1888 English edition].

2. That is, all *written* history. In 1847, the pre-history of society, the social organisation existing previous to recorded history, was all but unknown. Since then, August von Haxthausen (1792–1866) discovered common ownership of land in Russia, Georg Ludwig von Maurer proved it to be the social foundation from which all Teutonic races started in history, and, by and by, village communities were found to be, or to have been, the primitive form of society everywhere from India to Ireland. The inner organisation of this primitive communistic society was laid bare, in its typical form, by Lewis Henry Morgan's (1818–1861) crowning discovery of the true nature of the gens and its relation to the tribe. With the dissolution of the primeval communities, society begins to be differentiated into separate and finally antagonistic classes. I have attempted to retrace this dissolution in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, second edition, Stuttgart, 1886 [Engels, 1888 English edition and 1890 German edition (with the last sentence omitted)].

3. Guild-master, that is, a full member of a guild, a master within, not a head of a guild [Engels, 1888 English edition].

4. “Commune” was the name taken in France by the nascent towns even before they had conquered from their feudal lords and masters local self-government and political rights as the “Third Estate.” Generally speaking, for the economical development of the bourgeoisie, England is here taken as the typical country, for its political development, France [Engels, 1888 English edition]. This was the name given their urban communities by the townsmen of Italy and France, after they had purchased or conquered their initial rights of self-government from their feudal lords [Engels, 1890 German edition].

5. Not the English Restoration (1660–1689), but the French Restoration (1814–1830) [Engels, 1888 English edition].

6. This applies chiefly to Germany, where the landed aristocracy and squirearchy have large portions of their estates cultivated for their own account by stewards, and are, moreover, extensive beetroot-sugar manufacturers and distillers of potato spirits. The wealthier British aristocracy are, as yet, rather above that; but they, too, know how to make up for declining rents by lending their names to floaters or more or less shady joint-stock companies [Engels, 1888 English edition].

7. The revolutionary storm of 1848 swept away this whole shabby tendency and cured its protagonists of the desire to dabble in socialism. The chief representative and classical type of this tendency is Mr. Karl Gruen [Engels, 1890 German edition].

8. *Phalanstères* were Socialist colonies on the plan of Charles Fourier; *Icaria* was the name given by Cabet to his Utopia and, later on, to his American Communist colony [Engels, 1888 English edition]. “Home Colonies” were what Owen called his Communist model societies. *Phalanstères* was the name of the public palaces planned by Fourier. *Icaria* was the name given to the Utopian land of fancy, whose Communist institutions Cabet portrayed [Engels, 1890 German edition].

9. The party then represented in Parliament by Ledru-Rollin, in literature by Louis Blanc, in the daily press by the *Réforme*. The name of Social-Democracy signifies, with these its inventors, a section of the Democratic or Republican Party more or less tinged with socialism [Engels, 1888 English edition].