

MARX ENGELS

Pre-Capitalist
Socio-Economic
Formations

A Collection



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CONTENTS

PREFACE	9
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KARL MARX and FREDERICK ENGELS PRE-CAPITALIST SOCIO-ECONOMIC FORMATIONS

<i>K. MARX. From</i> CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRITIQUE OF HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF LAW	28
<i>K. MARX. ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHIC MANUSCRIPTS OF 1844 . . .</i>	30
[<i>First Manuscript</i>]	
<i>From</i> Rent of Land	30
<i>K. MARX and F. ENGELS. THE GERMAN IDEOLOGY</i>	37
<i>From</i> Chapter I. Feuerbach. Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlooks	37
[Production and Intercourse. Division of Labour and Forms of Property—Tribal, Ancient, Feudal]	37
[The Division of Material and Mental Labour. Separation of Town and Country. The Guild-System]	41
[The Role of Violence (Conquest) in History]	45
<i>F. ENGELS. From</i> PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNISM	48
<i>K. MARX AND F. ENGELS. MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY</i>	50
<i>From</i> I. Bourgeois and Proletarians	50
<i>F. ENGELS. From</i> THE PEASANT WAR IN GERMANY	52
<i>K. MARX. From</i> FORCED EMIGRATION	67
<i>K. MARX. THE BRITISH RULE IN INDIA</i>	69
<i>K. MARX. From</i> REVOLUTIONARY SPAIN	77

K. MARX. ECONOMIC MANUSCRIPTS OF 1857-1859	83
From INTRODUCTION	83
PRE-CAPITALIST ECONOMIC FORMATIONS	84
K. MARX. A CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY	137
From Preface	137
K. MARX. CAPITAL. Volume I	140
From Chapter I. Commodities	140
From Chapter X. The Working-Day	141
Chapter XXVI. The Secret of Primitive Accumulation	143
From Chapter XXVII. Expropriation of the Agricultural Population from the Land	147
K. MARX. CAPITAL. Volume III	155
From Chapter XX. Historical Facts about Merchant's Capital	155
Chapter XXXVI. Pre-Capitalist Relationships	158
Interest in the Middle Ages	180
Advantages Derived by the Church from the Prohibition of Interest	183
From Chapter XXXVII. Introduction	184
Chapter XLVII. Genesis of Capitalist Ground-Rent	188
I. Introductory Remarks	188
II. Labour Rent	198
III. Rent in Kind	204
IV. Money Rent	207
V. Metayage and Peasant Proprietorship of Land Parcels	215
K. MARX. THEORIES OF SURPLUS-VALUE. Part I	230
From Addenda	230
[(f) The Labour of Handicraftsmen and Peasants in Capitalist Society]	230
K. MARX. THEORIES OF SURPLUS-VALUE. Part III	232
From Chapter XXIV. Richard Jones	232
F. ENGELS. ANTI-DOHRING	234
From Morality and Law. Equality	234
From The Force Theory (Conclusion)	238
Theoretical	243
F. ENGELS. From PREPARATORY WRITINGS FOR ANTI-DOHRING	269
K. MARX. LETTER TO THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE OTECHEST-UENNIYE ZAPISKI	270

F. ENGELS. THE MARK	274
K. MARX. From REPLY TO A LETTER FROM VERA ZASULICH (Draft)	294
F. ENGELS. A CONTRIBUTION TO THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE GERMANS	298
Caesar and Tacitus	298
The First Battles with Rome	314
Progress Up to the <i>Völkerwanderung</i>	332
Note—the German Tribes	346
F. ENGELS. From THE FRANKISH PERIOD	361
The Radical Transformation of the Relations of Landown- ership Under the Merovingians and Carolingians	361
The District and Army Structure	375
F. ENGELS. From THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE	389
Preface to the First Edition	389
I. Prehistoric Stages of Culture	391
1. Savagery	392
2. Barbarism	394
V. The Rise of the Athenian State	398
VI. The Gens and the State in Rome	410
VIII. The Formation of the State Among the Germans	422
IX. Barbarism and Civilisation	435
F. ENGELS. [THE DECLINE OF FEUDALISM AND THE RISE OF THE BOURGEOISIE]	460
F. ENGELS. CONCERNING <i>THE PEASANT WAR</i>	472
F. ENGELS. From "THE LABOUR MOVEMENT IN AMERICA"	474
Preface to the American edition of <i>The Condition of the Working-class in England</i>	474
F. ENGELS. From the AFTERWORD to "SOZIALES AUS RUSSLAND"	475
F. ENGELS. From THE HISTORY OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY	482
LETTERS	487
Marx to Pavel Vasilyevich Annenkov, December 28, 1846	489
Engels to Marx, June 6, 1853	503
Marx to Engels, March 8, 1855	505
Engels to Ferdinand Lassalle, May 18, 1859	506
Marx to Engels, March 25, 1868	509
Engels to Marx, November 22, 1882	512
Engels to Marx, December 15, 1882	513

Engels to Marx, <i>December 16, 1882</i>	515
Engels to Marx, <i>December 22, 1882</i>	517
Engels to Karl Kautsky, <i>February 16, 1884</i>	517
Engels to Friedrich Sorge, <i>March 7, 1884</i>	518
Engels to Paul Lafargue, [<i>about August 11, 1884</i>]	519
Engels to Joseph Bloch, <i>September 21 [-22], 1890</i>	520
Engels to Conrad Schmidt, <i>October 27, 1890</i>	525
Engels to Laura Lafargue, <i>June 13, 1891</i>	532
Engels to Franz Mehring, <i>July 14, 1893</i>	534
Engels to W. Borgius, <i>January 25, 1894</i>	539
Engels to Conrad Schmidt, <i>March 12, 1895</i>	543
Engels to Paul Lafargue, <i>April 3, 1895</i>	543
Engels to Karl Kautsky, <i>May 21, 1895</i>	544
Notes	547
Name Index	567
Index of Literary and Mythological Names	583
Subject Index	585

PREFACE

History, as a branch of knowledge, began in remote antiquity; but it did not become a science in the true sense of the word until comparatively recently, that is, during the 1840s, when the objective nature of the laws governing the historical process was ascertained and the material nature of the motive forces of history was understood. The credit for discovering the materialist conception of history belongs to Marx and Engels, and it was not a sudden moment of illumination or chance find. It was the result of a highly intensive, even explosive process. Three years were to pass between the birth of the new world outlook in 1843 and its first comprehensive formulation in a joint work by Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*. Since then, the Marxist world outlook has steadily developed further, achieving ever greater depth and maturity.

The discovery of the materialist conception of history was of truly epoch-making significance. "At best, pre-Marxist 'sociology' and historiography," wrote Lenin, "brought forth an accumulation of raw facts collected at random, and a description of individual aspects of the historical process."^{*} Marx "indicated the way to a scientific study of history as a single process which, with all

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 56-57.

its immense variety and contradictoriness, is governed by definite laws".*

During their lifetime, the teaching of Marx and Engels underwent three major stages of formation and development, separated from one another by such events of world historical significance as the 1848-49 revolutions in Europe and the Paris Commune of 1871. At the turn of the century, with the onset of a qualitatively new period in the development of capitalism, the imperialist period, and the era of proletarian revolutions, a new stage began in the development of Marxism—the Leninist stage. In our times, too, Marxism-Leninism is a living teaching which is developing steadily and which reflects the interests of the working class and all working people the world over.

The development of Marxist teaching was closely connected with the development of society, and this gave rise to stimuli for the further elaboration of the theory. It was not, after all, by chance that revolutionary events provide the landmarks in the history of Marxism. Moreover, this theory could not have been what it is had it not also possessed a definite capacity for independent development. Its tempo, rhythm, nodal points and peaks correspond to, but do not coincide with, the progress of social development as a whole. This divergence becomes particularly noticeable if we consider the history of Marxism in its separate aspects.

In the first stage, up to 1848, when the new world outlook was in process of formation, Marx and Engels were primarily concerned with its philosophical aspect, especially with the materialist conception of history. Furthermore, at this stage they laid the foundation for elaborating two other aspects of the new world outlook: political economy and scientific communism. The most important achievements of this stage were reflected in *The German Ideology*, written in 1845-46.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 57.

During the next stage, from 1848 to 1871, political economy came to the forefront. The materialist conception of history, which had been evolved in the previous stage, served as the methodological basis for research into political economy. The first great discovery—the materialist conception of history—became the prerequisite for Marx's second great discovery, the secret of surplus value and the specific laws of capitalism. The most important landmark at this stage was the development of the category of social-economic formations, the classic description of which is given in Marx's Preface to his work, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, written in January 1859.

During the third stage, after 1871, on the basis of the theory of formations and the summing-up of the experience of the working-class movement and, in particular, that of the Paris Commune, Marx first defined the basic laws of the future communist formation in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875). At this stage, Marx and Engels were continuing their research into pre-capitalist formations, and their elaboration of the materialist theory of the primitive society was of vital importance to this work. Engels made a number of important additions to the theory of formations, clarifying the relationship between the basis and superstructure, and also the active role of the superstructure in the development of society.

When the category of social-economic formations came into being, the materialist conception of history reached full maturity. On the one hand, the elaboration of this category was the result of investigations into the era of capitalism and, on the other hand, itself was a tool for further research. The methodological significance of this category manifested itself most clearly during work on *Capital*. Here, as Lenin wrote, Marx "took one of the social-economic formations. . . and on the basis of a vast mass of data . . . gave a most detailed analysis of the laws governing the functioning of this formation and its develop-

ment".* Disclosing the nature of Marx's analysis, Lenin further noted: "While *explaining* the structure and development of the given formation of society *exclusively* through production relations, he nevertheless everywhere and incessantly scrutinised the superstructure corresponding to these production relations... and clothed the skeleton in flesh and blood... This book... showed the whole capitalist social formation to the reader as a living thing—with its everyday aspects, with the actual social manifestation of the class antagonism inherent in production relations, with the bourgeois political superstructure that protects the rule of the capitalist class, with the bourgeois ideas of liberty, equality and so forth, with the bourgeois family relationships."**

The category of social-economic formations made it possible to elucidate the functional structure of society at a certain stage. Society could be shown in development, and so could the changes taking place inside it within the limits of the given structure. It became possible to show, for example, as Marx did, the difference between the earlier stage of manufacture and that of large-scale industry in the development of capitalism; or, as was subsequently done by Lenin, to elucidate the characteristic features of the last, imperialist stage of capitalism. It became also possible with the aid of this category to explain the variety of forms in which this or that formation occurred under the specific conditions of each country.

Finally, this category furnished the key to an understanding of the qualitative stages of the historical process as a whole and provided a basis for the truly scientific periodisation of history.

The concept of social-economic formations is central to the system of categories in historical materialism. It is a kind of focal point for the laws of the historical process.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 141.

** *Ibid.*, pp. 141-42.

Other concepts and categories of historical materialism converge on and combine in it: mode of production, productive forces and production relations, basis and superstructure. The connection and interaction of the phenomena represented by these categories reveal its content.

Each formation is based on a definite mode of production—the specific combination of productive forces and production relations which constitutes the economic foundation of the formation. The determining role in this combination is played by productive forces. The level of their development reflects the degree of the given society's control over nature and, at the same time, determines the production relations which emerge on the basis of them independently of people's consciousness. The sum total of these production relations is the skeleton of the social organism.

The dialectics of productive forces and production relations is the motive force behind social development. The production relations taking shape at a certain historical stage leave a certain amount of room for the further growth of productive forces. But when these rise to a new level and the existing production relations no longer correspond to them, reconstruction begins, bringing in its train the transformation of the entire social structure.

Production relations are extremely important, but they are not the only kind of social relations. They are the load-bearing structure, as it were, of the social edifice, the foundation on which the superstructure is built. In the system of categories of historical materialism, they are considered to be the basis determining the political superstructure and forms of social consciousness. Production relations become manifest in the division of society into classes, while property relations are the legal expression of production relations. The nature and development of the political superstructure—the state and its institutions, and also the development of the forms of social consciousness (ideology, law, morality, religion, science, philosophy

and art)—are determined in the final analysis by the movement of production relations. But this takes place only in the final analysis. The superstructure as a whole and each of the above-mentioned superstructural forms enter into vigorous interaction with the basis. Cause and effect frequently change places, although “unequal” forces are interacting. Historical necessity asserts itself through a chain of chance events.

The content of the category of social-economic formations can be summed up as follows: productive forces—production relations—political superstructure—forms of social consciousness. That is how the structure of society presents itself to us; and, in the series just mentioned, each link determines the next. Seen thus, the applicability of this category for the analysis of the state of society at any historical stage becomes still more obvious and its nature is confirmed as a category which, on the one hand, discloses the structure of society and, on the other, is the criterion for the periodisation of the world historical process.

This brief description of the concept of formations enables us to find our bearings among the specific statements made by Marx and Engels on this or that stage in the development of society, especially in their earlier writings. We shall try below, by quoting from material included in the present volume, to examine in greater detail the developing views of Marx and Engels on the structure of society and on the periodisation of history.

* * *

The collection begins with an excerpt from Marx's work, *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* (1843), in which there are terms unusual for advanced Marxism: “the political state” and “the material state” (present collection, p. 28.). Arriving at a conclusion directly opposite to that drawn by Hegel, Marx saw that the material state has engendered the political one, not

the converse. Put in Marxist terms, this means that society came before the state, in opposition to Hegel's idealist view that society is determined by the state. In the series productive forces—production relations—political superstructure—forms of social consciousness Marx, for the time being, only explains the connection between the first two links ("the material state") and the last two ("the political state"). It is this connection that serves as a criterion for the periodisation of history. In conformity with the type of connection between society and the state, distinctions are drawn between antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the modern era. For the time being, Marx describes the future society as a democracy.

The next excerpt deals with the historical inevitability of the transition from feudal landed property to capitalist. However, the abolition of feudal monopoly and the division of the land among direct producers do not solve the problem. As a result of competition, monopoly is inevitably revived in a still more cruel, capitalist form. The only solution, as Marx sees it, is to establish association. "Association, applied to land, shares the economic advantage of large-scale landed property, and first brings to realisation the original tendency inherent in [land] division, namely, equality. In the same way association also re-establishes, now on a rational basis, no longer mediated by serfdom . . . the intimate ties of man with the earth, since the earth ceases to be an object of huckstering, and through free labour and free enjoyment becomes once more a true personal property of man" (p. 33). And so, in this extract, Marx examines not only the transition from feudalism to capitalism, but also that from capitalism to the future communist system, to "association". True, the argument adduced only refers to landed property. It is "free labour" that Marx regards as the distinguishing feature of the future "association". The meaning of this becomes clearer if we remember that in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, from which this excerpt

has been taken, Marx took another step forward in elucidating the structure of society, coming to the conclusion that it is entirely determined by production. Property is nothing other than alienated labour. This last criterion is made the basis for the periodisation of history. It is subdivided by Marx into the period before the emergence of alienated labour and private property, the period when these phenomena existed, and the period after their disappearance. This periodisation has an obvious resemblance to the later division of the history of society into pre-class, class and classless.

The next stage in understanding the structure of society and the periodisation of history was achieved during the first comprehensive elaboration of the materialist conception of history in *The German Ideology*, 1845-46. This time, Marx and Engels came very close to the concept of formations. The structure of society is presented in *The German Ideology* as follows: productive forces—forms of intercourse—the political superstructure—forms of social consciousness. Form of intercourse meant social relations, and, above all, production relations.

That is how this structure of society is represented in Marx's letter, written in 1846, to the Russian critic Pavel Annenkov. "What is society, whatever its form may be? The product of men's reciprocal action. Are men free to choose this or that form of society? By no means. Assume a particular level of development of men's productive forces and you will get a particular form of commerce and consumption. Assume particular stages of development in production, commerce and consumption and you will have a corresponding social system, a corresponding organisation of the family, of social estates or of classes, in a word, a corresponding civil society. Assume such a civil society and you will get a political system appropriate to it, a system which is only the official expression of civil society. . . . It is superfluous to add that men are not free to choose *their productive forces*—which are the basis of all

their history—for every productive force is an acquired force, the product of former activity" (pp. 490-91).

The periodisation of history at that time was being worked out by Marx and Engels on the basis of the forms of property, taking this term to mean the economic foundation of society. They distinguished between tribal, ancient, feudal and bourgeois forms of property: the consecutive replacement of these forms was ultimately to lead to communism. This is the periodisation also meant in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.

At the next stage in the development of the materialist conception of history the category of formations was put forward in the Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* in 1859. This was the first time that Marx used the term "economic formation of society".* A modified form of the term, "social-economic formation", was applied by Lenin in his writings, and has since been universally adopted. We see further that the term "economic formation of society" is used in the Preface in a double sense: at first it covers society throughout its existence, and then it applies to a definite historical stage in the development of society. It is in this second sense that the term went into the theory of historical materialism. The periodisation of history is presented as follows: Asiatic, ancient, feudal and bourgeois mode of production. Apart from these, primitive society and the future communist formation are taken for granted. Here, then, the criterion for the periodisation of history is furnished by the mode of production which is the basis of the formation. The stage of the Asiatic mode of production is introduced for the first time, having been substantiated by Marx in the 1850s (pp. 71-76, 138-39, 85-88, 107, 111; 113-14).

The most substantial results of the further elaboration of the theory of formations and the periodisation of history can be seen in a draft reply, written by Marx in Feb-

* Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 13, Berlin, 1969, S. 9.

ruary-March 1881, to a letter from the Russian revolutionary Vera Zasulich (pp. 294-97). In this new periodisation, Marx enlarges the historical eras and introduces the concept of inner formational periods. He singles out the archaic, or primitive social formation which developed through a series of stages based on communities of various kinds; the last phase of this formation was founded on what is known as the agricultural community. Then follows a second formation, comprising societies based on slavery and servitude; to this formation belong all the societies based on private property, and consequently so does capitalist society. A third formation, or communist society, is understood.

Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* was of considerable importance for the periodisation of history. Engels placed primitive society outside the bounds of the history of class societies. As a result of this, he also introduced certain modifications into earlier texts, especially the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (p. 50).

Finally, an important step in elucidating the functional structure of society was the description of the active role of the superstructure as given by Engels in a series of letters in the 1890s. Here is an example: "The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—political forms of the class struggle and its results, such as constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and especially the reflections of all these real struggles in the brains of the participants . . . also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases determine their *form* in particular" (p. 522).

Marx and Engels illustrated in detail these general propositions of the theory of social-economic formations as they examined each of the formations and described the features distinguishing it from earlier and later formations.

There is, however, a certain uniformity in the approach

adopted by Marx and Engels to the analysis of pre-capitalist formations. Since the immediate object of their research in the economic writings was capitalism, the preceding formations were frequently treated here in their totality and, above all, general features were ascertained distinguishing them from the capitalist formation (natural economy, the weak development of exchange, etc.). Only after this did they note the difference between the various pre-capitalist formations, concentrating mainly on the mode of production. The very concept of pre-capitalist formations evidently arose as a result of their being contrasted with capitalism in the course of research. The position is otherwise in the writings and letters dealing with the problems of historical materialism, where social-economic formations are seen as successive eras of history. Marx and Engels not only noted the qualitative distinctions between the successive stages in the development of human society before capitalism, but singled out those features which would be revived in the future communist society at a higher level. These notes refer to primitive communism, the remnants of which were preserved in the community and in subsequent stages of society's development.

In the historical works or the historical sections of the economic writings, various forms are described which the same formation assumed in different countries. These comments refer, for the most part, to superstructural phenomena. This variety of forms is most graphically illustrated by the feudal formation.

Finally, it should be noted that since Marx and Engels, when studying pre-capitalist formations, began with the feudal formation as directly preceding capitalism and delved deeper and deeper into the past, going back to the origins of human society, it is advisable to study their comments in the same sequence.

When Marx and Engels began their revolutionary activity, elements of feudalism in Germany were still a rea-

lity. Bourgeois industry was opposed by private landownership on the part of the nobility. This combination of two economic systems, this clash of two epochs, was the focal point of Marx's attention. Already in 1844, in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, he had, on the one hand, established the difference between the two systems and, on the other, had defined the historical connection between them and the inevitability of the victory of capitalism in the sphere of landed property too. The feudal lord differs from the bourgeois in that he "does not try to extract the utmost advantage from his land. Rather, he consumes what is there and calmly leaves the worry of producing to the serfs and the tenants". Feudal exploitation differs from capitalist in a certain patriarchy, landed estates are personified and the proprietor is surrounded with "a romantic glory". When landed property becomes an object of trade, this semblance vanishes, the relationship between the private owner and the labourer emerges in undisguised form as that between exploiter and exploited (p. 31).

In 1845-46, Marx and Engels gave in *The German Ideology* a detailed description of the feudal system, seeing it as a definite historical stage. Feudal property (and property was taken to mean the sum total of economic social relations) covered not only landed property, but also the town with its craft industry, regulated by guilds. However, the centre of gravity of the whole medieval feudal system was the countryside. And the organisation of town industry was determined, in essence, by the general structure of feudalism, which was founded on "landed property with serf labour chained to it".* All the big uprisings in the Middle Ages originated in the country. These peasant uprisings, along with the struggle of the guild journeymen in the towns, undermined the feudal system. But these class conflicts did not lead to the de-

* Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 34.

struction of feudalism, within whose framework society continued to develop. At the same time, however, serious changes were taking place in the structure of society: a bourgeoisie was gradually emerging from the class of urban citizens and a pre-proletariat was forming from fugitive-serfs and other déclassé elements. The towns were acquiring steadily growing importance and the monarchy relied on them increasingly in the struggle with the old feudal nobility. In the 15th century, on the threshold of the first bourgeois movements, feudal society was very different from what it had been on its emergence.

The German Ideology also contains many separate comments on various aspects of the feudal superstructure: the state, law, religion and so on. Observations are made on the rise and early stages of feudalism and the transplanting of already existing forms of the feudal system into conquered countries (for instance, during the conquest of England by the Normans), where feudal organisation became more sophisticated.

The ideas about the feudal system expressed in general form in *The German Ideology* were subsequently to be developed and illustrated by Marx and Engels in other writings. For example, the section of the *Economic Manuscripts of 1857-1859* which is reproduced in full here, deals with the forms preceding capitalist production and clearly echoes the corresponding parts of *The German Ideology*. But the analysis of feudalism is made from the viewpoint of political economy this time, and so the serf, like the slave, is studied here as "an inorganic condition of production" (p. 103). A characterisation of the social position of serfs and slaves is to be found in the *Principles of Communism*.

The most refined and advanced definitions of feudalism are to be found in *Capital*. The basis of the feudal society, as Marx points out, consists of the relations of personal dependence. "Personal dependence here characterises the social relations of production just as much as it does the

other spheres of life organised on the basis of that production." Labour here consequently figures in natural form and the relations of people do not acquire the mystifying forms, inherent in capitalism, of the relations of the products of their labour, the relations of commodities. Whatever external variety may distinguish the relations of feudal society, in which "serfs and lords, vassals and suzerains, laymen and clergy" are in opposition to one another, these relations become manifest as "personal relations and are not disguised under the shape of social relations between the products of labour"*.

Substantial additions are made in *Capital* to the description of the agrarian system of feudalism: big estates exist alongside a multitude of peasant allotments, "feudal production is characterised by division of the soil amongst the greatest possible number of subfeudatories" (p. 148), for these are the foundation of feudal states.

The difference between feudalism and other formations based on natural economy consists, in particular, in the fact that such economic factors as merchant and money-lending capital (in *Capital* these factors are described in detail) obtain more scope for development under feudalism; they also penetrate into the sphere of production and take it over, undermining the foundations of feudalism. But the development of a truly capitalist system only becomes possible after the formation of a class of wage-labourers deprived of the means of labour. The emergence of this class has a dual nature: on the one hand, it meant the release of the producers from feudal obligations and guild compulsion; on the other hand, it meant the expropriation of the peasants from the land. Discussing the destruction of feudalism with England as the classic example (p. 146), Marx lays bare, as it were, all the strata of the feudal formation.

The history of feudalism, needless to say, is not exhaust-

* Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 81, 82.

ed by the example of England. To quote Marx, in different countries it "assumes different aspects, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession" (p. 146). Substantial additions to the description of the feudal system are contained in Engels' works on the history of Germany and France and also in the correspondence between Marx and Engels. The range of questions touched on here is extremely wide and varied. The emergence of feudalism in the Kingdom of the Franks, the peasant uprising in Germany and medieval culture are analysed on a specifically historical plane.

Certain comments made by Engels while engaged in this research are of very considerable importance. For instance, in a letter to Franz Mehring, a prominent member of the German working-class movement and a distinguished historian, Engels, indicating the "rare objective logic" discernible in the formation of the national state in France, wrote: "In studying German history . . . only a comparison with the corresponding French periods produces a correct idea of proportions" (p. 538). Here we find the same methodological approach which Marx used for the history of capitalism, choosing as his yardstick for this purpose the development of England, the model capitalist country in the 19th century. Also of importance is the new and broader approach to the history of serfdom; we find Engels using it in the 1880s, when he came to the conclusion that serfdom is not solely a "peculiarly medieval-feudal form" (p. 517). It follows from this that only the sum total of the features of the basis and the superstructure produced that specific whole—the feudal social-economic formation.

Alongside feudalism, Marx and Engels also gave considerable attention to an analysis of the slave-owning society and slavery itself as a form of the subjugation and exploitation of producers. They traced the emergence of slavery to remote antiquity, assuming that it began in the primitive society. Slave labour became the basis of pro-

duction in Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome. This mode of production and the social-economic formation based on it were therefore called ancient by Marx. The term "slave-owning formation" does not appear in Marxist science until later.

In *The German Ideology* and the *Economic Manuscripts of 1857-1859*, the starting point for the development of ancient society is seen as the city, arising as a result of the unification of tribes; but the history of the emergence of the ancient city-states themselves is not examined in these works. This process was investigated considerably later in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, after the characteristics of the primitive society had been revealed. The ancient period was a special phenomenon; its basis was agriculture, and yet the city was the centre for the military organisation of the people.

As in the Middle Ages, agriculture in antiquity was the determining form of production. But another social structure grew up on this basis, one that differs sharply from the feudal. Slavery did not immediately become the basis of production in the ancient countries. In Rome, for example, the intensive development of slave-ownership began as a result of the victory of big landed property over small. As Marx assumed, it was this struggle that underlay Rome's internal history. Slave-ownership warped the very foundations of Roman society. The proletariat of Rome, although it existed, did not develop into an independent class precisely owing to the establishment of slavery.

In this way, Roman society, by virtue of its agrarian basis, has points of resemblance to the medieval, but in class structure it is reminiscent of capitalist society. The essential difference from capitalism, however, is that in Rome the struggle of the classes could not have decisive results. The externally similar phenomena in the history of the ancient and bourgeois states, as Marx showed, stemmed from directly opposite causes. Thus, emigration and

the foundation of the ancient colonies was caused by the insufficient development of productive forces in the ancient states. "The whole system of those states was founded on certain limits to the numbers of the population. . . . Otherwise they would have had to submit to the bodily drudgery which transformed the free citizen into a slave" (p. 67). Meanwhile, in the new era, overpopulation and emigration proved to be caused not by the lack, but by the growth of productive forces (p. 68).

Slavery existed in the ancient East as well as in ancient Greece and Rome. There, however, it did not become the basis of production and, as Engels supposed, did not go beyond the limits of domestic slavery (p. 269). Once it had arisen, this ancient form of exploitation was revived in various epochs and in various countries, depending on the state of their productive forces. Marx devoted many pages to research into slavery in America. He came to the conclusion that under the conditions of the capitalist market, to which the plantation economy was geared, the exploitation of slaves was more cruel than in ancient times, for "the civilised horrors of over-work are grafted on the barbaric horrors of slavery, serfdom, etc."*

In the Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, the Asiatic mode of production is the first one Marx names among the modes of production forming the basis of social-economic formations. On a world-historical scale, this mode of production preceded the ancient and was the basis of the ancient Oriental states. Although the term "Asiatic mode of production" first appeared in 1859, the social structure to which it relates had already been discovered and described by Marx and Engels at the beginning of the 1850s. Its surviving forms, in Marx's opinion, were preserved in India and in certain other Asian countries. Similar structures formerly existed in other regions as well (p. 104).

* Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 226.

In the *Economic Manuscripts of 1857-1859*, Marx examined, on a theoretical level, the community which was the foundation of the Asiatic mode of production (pp. 85-88). Later, in *Capital*, *Anti-Dühring* and certain other works, Marx and Engels made substantial additions to the characterisation of ancient Oriental society (pp. 141, 230-32).

It may be summed up as follows. The community which was the foundation of this society differed from later ancient and European forms in its greater antiquity and in the particular stability of its internal ties. Thanks to the combination of agriculture and domestic industry, this type of community was very little dependent on external ties and was what Marx called a "localised microcosm". A despotic state arose over the totality of such communities directly exploiting them by means of its bureaucratic apparatus. The state monopolised foreign trade and military functions and, in some cases, according to the natural and historical conditions, undertook the organisation of irrigation works. A brief description of the surviving forms of Oriental despotism is also given by Lenin in his *On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination*: "...this kind of state system possesses great stability whenever completely patriarchal and pre-capitalist features predominate in the economic system and where commodity production and class differentiation are scarcely developed".*

The stability of this system in antiquity, according to Marx and Engels, was due to the stability of its basis—the community. Independent in the economic sense, it was capable of surviving and was often preserved even after the destruction of the state of which it had been a component part. At the same time, as Marx and Engels noted, by virtue of its internal structure this community barred the way to further development and only where it had been destroyed was progress in social development achieved.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 403.

The Asiatic mode of production is at the present time an object of close study and controversy in Marxist science. Some historians dispute the existence of such a category, classifying the ancient Asiatic societies as either slave-owning or feudal. This point of view, however, fails to explain many facts of ancient history. Furthermore, it contradicts the theory of political economy in the form in which it was formulated in Marx's *Capital*. A vast amount of material accumulated over the last few decades will have to be mastered before the concept of the Asiatic mode of production can be elaborated further.

Marx and Engels worked intensively on the history of the primitive society during the last period of their lives. This can be explained by the fact that, until the second half of the 1870s, the science of primitive man was in the formative stage. Only Morgan's discovery of the gens system, a discovery appreciated very highly by Marx and Engels, made further research into this field possible. The present collection gives in full many chapters of Engels' book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, in which the Marxist theory of the primitive society is developed on the basis of Morgan's data and Engels' own research. Many of the ideas formulated by Marx and Engels in earlier writings went into this theory. In the main, these ideas applied to the primitive economy, as embodied in the primitive community, whose structure Marx and Engels were able to disclose in spite of enormous subsequent accretions.

Having discovered the laws of world history, Marx and Engels also laid the foundations for the further elaboration of the history of the most important periods from the primitive era to their own times. In our day, too, their theory of social-economic formations provides a reliable basis for the further study of the historical process.

Norire Ter-Akopyan

KARL MARX

From CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRITIQUE
OF HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF LAW

In the Middle Ages there were serfs, feudal estates, merchant and trade guilds, corporations of scholars, etc.: that is to say, in the Middle Ages property, trade, society, man are *political*; the material content of the state is given by its form; every private sphere has a political character or is a political sphere; that is, politics is a characteristic of the private spheres too. In the Middle Ages the political constitution is the constitution of private property, but only because the constitution of private property is a political constitution. In the Middle Ages the life of the nation and the life of the state are identical. Man is the actual principle of the state—but *unfree* man. It is thus the *democracy of unfreedom*—estrangement carried to completion. The abstract reflected antithesis belongs only to the modern world. The Middle Ages are the period of *actual* dualism; modern times, one of *abstract* dualism.

"We have already noted the stage at which the division of constitutions into democracy, aristocracy and monarchy has been made—the standpoint, that is, of that unity which is still *substantial, which still remains within itself and has not yet come to its process of infinite differentiation and inner deepening*: at that stage, the clement of the *final self-determining resolution of the will* does not emerge explicitly into its *own proper actuality* as an *immanent* organic factor in the state."¹

In the spontaneously evolved monarchy, democracy and aristocracy there is as yet no political constitution as dis-

tinct from the actual, material state or the other content of the life of the nation. The political state does not yet appear as the *form* of the material state. Either, as in Greece, the *res publica** is the real private affair of the citizens, their real content, and the private individual is a slave; the political state, *qua* political state, being the true and only content of the life and will of the citizens; or, as in an Asiatic despotism, the political state is nothing but the personal caprice of a single individual; or the political state, like the material state, is a slave. What distinguishes the modern state from these states characterised by the substantial unity between people and state is not, as Hegel would have it, that the various elements of the constitution have been developed into *particular* actuality, but that the constitution itself has been developed into a *particular* actuality alongside the actual life of the people—that the political state has become the *constitution* of the rest of the state.

Written in the summer of 1843

Marx and Engels,
Collected Works, Vol. 3.
Moscow, 1975, pp. 32-33

* I. e., state, republic; etymologically, "public affairs".—Ed.

KARL MARX
ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHIC MANUSCRIPTS
OF 1844

[FIRST MANUSCRIPT]
From RENT OF LAND

This huckstering with landed property, the transformation of landed property into a commodity, constitutes the final overthrow of the old and the final establishment of the money aristocracy.

(1) We will not join in the sentimental tears wept over this by romanticism.² Romanticism always confuses the shamefulness of *huckstering the land*³ with the perfectly rational consequence, inevitable and desirable within the realm of private property, of the *huckstering of private property* in land. In the first place, feudal landed property is already by its very nature huckstered land—the earth which is estranged from man and hence confronts him in the shape of a few great lords.

The domination of the land as an alien power over men is already inherent in feudal landed property. The serf is the adjunct of the land. Likewise, the lord of an entailed estate, the first-born son, belongs to the land. It inherits him. Indeed, the dominion of private property begins with property in land—that is its basis. But in feudal landed property the lord at least *appears* as the king of the estate. Similarly, there still exists the semblance of a more intimate connection between the proprietor and the land than that of mere *material* wealth. The estate is individualised with its lord: it has his rank, is baronial or ducal with him, has his privileges, his jurisdiction, his political

position, etc. It appears as the inorganic body of its lord. Hence the proverb *nulle terre sans maître*, which expresses the fusion of nobility and landed property. Similarly, the rule of landed property does not appear directly as the rule of mere capital. For those belonging to it, the estate is more like their fatherland. It is a constricted sort of nationality.

[|XVIII,2| In the same way, feudal landed property gives its name to its lord, as does a kingdom to its king. His family history, the history of his house, etc.—all this individualises the estate for him and makes it literally his house, personifies it. Similarly those working on the estate have not the position of *day-labourers*; but they are in part themselves his property, as are serfs; and in part they are bound to him by ties of respect, allegiance, and duty. His relation to them is therefore directly political, and has likewise a human, *intimate* side. Customs, character, etc., vary from one estate to another and seem to be one with the land to which they belong; whereas later, it is only his purse and not his character, his individuality, which connects a man with an estate. Finally, the feudal lord does not try to extract the utmost advantage from his land. Rather, he consumes what is there and calmly leaves the worry of producing to the serfs and the tenants. Such is *nobility's* relationship to landed property, which casts a romantic glory on its lords.

It is necessary that this appearance be abolished—that landed property, the root of private property, be dragged completely into the movement of private property and that it become a commodity; that the rule of the proprietor appear as the undisguised rule of private property, of capital, freed of all political tincture; that the relationship between proprietor and worker be reduced to the economic relationship of exploiter and exploited; that all [. . .]*

* A word in the manuscript cannot be deciphered.—Ed.

personal relationship between the proprietor and his property cease, property becoming merely *objective*, material wealth; that the marriage of convenience should take the place of the marriage of honour with the land; and that the land should likewise sink to the status of a commercial value, like man. It is essential that that which is the root of landed property—filthy self-interest—make its appearance, too, in its cynical form. It is essential that the immovable monopoly turn into the mobile and restless monopoly, into competition; and that the idle enjoyment of the products of other people's blood and sweat turn into a bustling commerce in the same commodity. Lastly, it is essential that in this competition landed property, in the form of capital, manifest its dominion over both the working class and the proprietors themselves who are either being ruined or raised by the laws governing the movement of capital. The medieval proverb *nulle terre sans seigneur* is thereby replaced by that other proverb, *l'argent n'a pas de maître*, wherein is expressed the complete domination of dead matter over man.

||XIX,2| (2) Concerning the argument of division or non-division of landed property, the following is to be observed.

The *division of landed property* negates the *large-scale monopoly* of property in land—abolishes it; but only by *generalising* this monopoly. It does not abolish the source of monopoly, private property. It attacks the existing form, but not the essence, of monopoly. The consequence is that it falls victim to the laws of private property. For the division of landed property corresponds to the movement of competition in the sphere of industry. In addition to the economic disadvantages of such a dividing-up of the instruments of labour, and the dispersal of labour (to be clearly distinguished from the division of labour: in separated labour the work is not shared out amongst many, but each carries on the same work by himself, it is a multiplication of the same work), this division [of land], like

that competition [in industry], necessarily turns again into accumulation.

Therefore, where the division of landed property takes place, there remains nothing for it but to return to monopoly in a still more malignant form, or to negate, to abolish the division of landed property itself. To do that, however, is not to return to feudal ownership, but to abolish private property in the soil altogether. The first abolition of monopoly is always its generalisation, the broadening of its existence. The abolition of monopoly, once it has come to exist in its utmost breadth and inclusiveness, is its total annihilation. Association, applied to land, shares the economic advantage of large-scale landed property, and first* brings to realisation the original tendency inherent in [land] division, namely, equality. In the same way association also re-establishes, now on a rational basis, no longer mediated by serfdom, overlordship and the silly mysticism of property, the intimate ties of man with the earth, since the earth ceases to be an object of huckstering, and through free labour and free enjoyment becomes once more a true personal property of man. A great advantage of the division of landed property is that the masses, which can no longer resign themselves to servitude, perish through property in a different way than in industry.

As for large landed property, its defenders have always, sophistically, identified the economic advantages offered by large-scale agriculture with large-scale landed property, as if it were not precisely as a result of the abolition of property that this advantage, for one thing, would receive its ||XX,2| greatest possible extension, and, for another, only then would be of social benefit. In the same way, they have attacked the huckstering spirit of small landed property, as if large landed property did not contain huckstering latent within it, even in its feudal form—not to

* In the manuscript the word "first" (*erst*) cannot be clearly deciphered.—*Ed.*

speak of the modern English form, which combines the landlord's feudalism with the tenant farmer's huckstering and industry.

Just as large landed property can return the reproach of monopoly levelled against it by partitioned land, since partitioned land is also based on the monopoly of private property, so can partitioned landed property likewise return to large landed property the reproach of partition, since partition also prevails there, though in a rigid and frozen form. Indeed, private property rests altogether on partitioning. Moreover, just as division of the land leads back to large landed property as a form of capital wealth, so must feudal landed property necessarily lead to partitioning or at least fall into the hands of the capitalists, turn and twist as it may.

For large landed property, as in England, drives the overwhelming majority of the population into the arms of industry and reduces its own workers to utter wretchedness. Thus, it engenders and enlarges the power of its enemy, capital, industry, by throwing poor people and an entire activity of the country on to the other side. It makes the majority of the people of the country industrial and thus opponents of large landed property. Where industry has attained to great power, as in England at the present time, it progressively forces from large landed property its monopoly against foreign countries* and throws it into competition with landed property abroad. For under the sway of industry landed property could keep its feudal grandeur secure only by means of monopolies against foreign countries, thereby protecting itself against the general laws of trade, which are incompatible with its feudal character. Once thrown into competition, landed property obeys the laws of competition, like every other commodity subjected to competition. It begins thus to fluctuate,

* Originally it was "against the monopoly of foreign countries", then Marx crossed out "the monopoly of".—Ed.

to decrease and to increase, to fly from one hand to another; and no law can keep it any longer in a few predestined hands. ||XXI,2| The immediate consequence is the splitting up of the land amongst many hands, and in any case subjection to the power of industrial capitals.

Finally, large landed property which has been forcibly preserved in this way and which has begotten by its side a tremendous industry leads to crisis even more quickly than the partitioning of land, in comparison with which the power of industry remains constantly of second rank.

Large landed property, as we see in England, has already cast off its feudal character and adopted an industrial character insofar as it is aiming to make as much money as possible. To the owner it yields the utmost possible rent, to the tenant farmer the utmost possible profit on his capital. The workers on the land, in consequence, have already been reduced to the minimum, and the class of tenant farmers already represents within landed property the power of industry and capital. As a result of foreign competition, rent in most cases can no longer form an independent income. A large number of landowners are forced to displace tenant farmers, some of whom in this way [. . .]* sink into the proletariat. On the other hand, many tenant farmers will take over landed property; for the big proprietors, who with their comfortable incomes have mostly given themselves over to extravagance and for the most part are not competent to conduct large-scale agriculture, often possess neither the capital nor the ability for the exploitation of the land. Hence a section of this class, too, is completely ruined. Eventually wages, which have already been reduced to a minimum, must be reduced yet further, to meet the new competition. This then necessarily leads to revolution.

Landed property had to develop in each of these two ways so as to experience in both its necessary downfall,

* Here one word in the manuscript cannot be deciphered.—*Ed.*

just as industry both in the form of monopoly and in that of competition had to ruin itself so as to learn to believe in man. |XXI||

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Marx and Engels,
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KARL MARX AND FREDERICK ENGELS
THE GERMAN IDEOLOGY

From CHAPTER ONE

FEUERBACH

**OPPOSITION OF THE MATERIALIST AND IDEALIST
OUTLOOKS**

[PRODUCTION AND INTERCOURSE.
DIVISION OF LABOUR AND FORMS OF PROPERTY—
TRIBAL, ANCIENT, FEUDAL]

[sh. 3] The relations of different nations among themselves depend upon the extent to which each has developed its productive forces, the division of labour and internal intercourse. This proposition is generally recognised. But not only the relation of one nation to others, but also the whole internal structure of the nation itself depends on the stage of development reached by its production and its internal and external intercourse. How far the productive forces of a nation are developed is shown most manifestly by the degree to which the division of labour has been carried. Each new productive force, insofar as it is not merely a quantitative extension of productive forces already known (for instance, the bringing into cultivation of fresh land), causes a further development of the division of labour.

The division of labour inside a nation leads at first to the separation of industrial and commercial from agricultural labour, and hence to the separation of *town* and *country* and to the conflict of their interests. Its further development leads to the separation of commercial from industrial labour. At the same time through the division of labour inside these various branches there develop various divisions among the individuals co-operating in definite kinds of labour. The relative position of these individual groups is determined by the way work is organised in agriculture, industry and commerce (patriarchalism,

slavery, estates, classes). These same conditions are to be seen (given a more developed intercourse) in the relations of different nations to one another.

The various stages of development in the division of labour are just so many different forms of property, i.e., the existing stage in the division of labour determines also the relations of individuals to one another with reference to the material, instrument and product of labour.

The first form of property is tribal property [*Stamm-eigentum*].⁴ It corresponds to the undeveloped stage of production, at which a people lives by hunting and fishing, by cattle-raising or, at most, by agriculture. In the latter case it presupposes a great mass of uncultivated stretches of land. The division of labour is at this stage still very elementary and is confined to a further extension of the natural division of labour existing in the family. The social structure is, therefore, limited to an extension of the family: patriarchal chieftains, below them the members of the tribe, finally slaves. The slavery latent in the family only develops gradually with the increase of population, the growth of wants, and with the extension of external intercourse, both of war and of barter.

The second form is the ancient communal and state property, which proceeds especially from the union of several tribes into a *city* by agreement or by conquest, and which is still accompanied by slavery. Beside communal property we already find movable, and later also immovable, private property developing, but as an abnormal form subordinate to communal property. The citizens hold power over their labouring slaves only in their community and even on this account alone they are bound to the form of communal property. It constitutes the communal private property of the active citizens who, in relation to their slaves, are compelled to remain in this spontaneously derived form of association. For this reason the whole structure of society based on this communal property, and with it the power of the people, decays in the same mea-

sure in which immovable private property evolves. The division of labour is already more developed. We already find the opposition of town and country; later the opposition between those states which represent town interests and those which represent country interests, and inside the towns themselves the opposition between industry and maritime commerce. The class relations between citizens and slaves are now completely developed.

With the development of private property, we find here for the first time the same relations which we shall find again, only on a more extensive scale, with modern private property. On the one hand, the concentration of private property, which began very early in Rome (as the Licinian agrarian law⁵ proves) and proceeded very rapidly from the time of the civil wars and especially under the emperors; on the other hand, coupled with this, the transformation of the plebeian small peasantry into a proletariat, which, however, owing to its intermediate position between propertied citizens and slaves, never achieved an independent development.

The third form is feudal or estate property. If antiquity started out from the *town* and its small territory, the Middle Ages started out from the *country*. This different starting-point was determined by the sparseness of the population at that time, which was scattered over a large area and which received no large increases from the conquerors. In contrast to Greece and Rome, feudal development, therefore, begins over a much wider territory, prepared by the Roman conquests and the spread of agriculture at first associated with them. The last centuries of the declining Roman Empire and its conquest by the barbarians destroyed a considerable part of the productive forces; agriculture had declined, industry had decayed for want of a market, trade had died out or been violently interrupted, the rural and urban population had decreased. These conditions and the mode of organisation of the conquest determined by them, together with the influence of

the Germanic military constitution, led to the development of feudal property. Like tribal and communal property, it is also based on a community; but the directly producing class standing over against it is not, as in the case of the ancient community, the slaves, but the enserfed small peasantry. As soon as feudalism is fully developed, there also arises antagonism to the towns. The hierarchical structure of landownership, and the armed bodies of retainers associated with it, gave the nobility power over the serfs. This feudal organisation was, just as much as the ancient communal property, an association against a subjected producing class; but the form of association and the relation to the direct producers were different because of the different conditions of production.

This feudal structure of landownership had its counterpart in the *towns* in the shape of corporative property, the feudal organisation of trades. Here property consisted [sh.4] chiefly in the labour of each individual. The necessity for associating against the association of the robber-nobility, the need for communal covered markets in an age when the industrialist was at the same time a merchant, the growing competition of the escaped serfs swarming into the rising towns, the feudal structure of the whole country: these combined to bring about the *guilds*. The gradually accumulated small capital of individual craftsmen and their stable numbers, as against the growing population, evolved the relation of journeyman and apprentice, which brought into being in the towns a hierarchy similar to that in the country.

Thus property during the feudal epoch primarily consisted on the one hand of landed property with serf labour chained to it, and on the other of the personal labour of the individual who with his small capital commands the labour of journeymen. The organisation of both was determined by the restricted conditions of production—the scanty and primitive cultivation of the land, and the craft

type of industry. There was little division of labour in the heyday of feudalism. Each country bore in itself the antithesis of town and country; the division into estates was certainly strongly marked; but apart from the differentiation of princes, nobility, clergy and peasants in the country, and masters, journeymen, apprentices and soon also the rabble of casual labourers in the towns, there was no important division. In agriculture it was rendered difficult by the strip-system, beside which the cottage industry of the peasants themselves emerged. In industry there was no division of labour in the individual trades and very little between them. The separation of industry and commerce was found already in existence in older towns; in the newer it only developed later, when the towns entered into mutual relations.

The grouping of larger territories into feudal kingdoms was a necessity for the landed nobility as for the towns. The organisation of the ruling class, the nobility, had, therefore, everywhere a monarch at its head.

[THE DIVISION OF MATERIAL AND MENTAL LABOUR.
SEPARATION OF TOWN AND COUNTRY.
THE GUILD-SYSTEM]

The most important division of material and mental labour is the separation of town and country. The contradiction between town and country begins with the transition from barbarism to civilisation, from tribe to state, from locality to nation, and runs through the whole history of civilisation to the present day (the Anti-Corn Law League⁶).

The advent of the town implies, at the same time, the necessity of administration, police, taxes, etc., in short, of the municipality [*des Gemeindewesens*], and thus of politics in general. Here first became manifest the division of the population into two great classes, which is directly based on the division of labour and on the instruments of

production. The town is in actual fact already the concentration of the population, of the instruments of production, of capital, of pleasures, of needs, while the country demonstrates just the opposite fact, isolation and separation. The contradiction between town and country can only exist within the framework of private property. It is the most crass expression of the subjection of the individual under the division of labour, under a definite activity forced upon him—a subjection which makes one man into a restricted town-animal, another into a restricted country-animal, and daily creates anew the conflict between their interests. Labour is here again the chief thing, power *over* individuals, and as long as this power exists, private property must exist. The abolition of the contradiction between town and country is one of the first conditions [42] of communal life, a condition which again depends on a mass of material premises and which cannot be fulfilled by the mere will, as anyone can see at the first glance. (These conditions have still to be set forth.) The separation of town and country can also be understood as the separation of capital and landed property, as the beginning of the existence and development of capital independent of landed property—the beginning of property having its basis only in labour and exchange.

In the towns which, in the Middle Ages, did not derive ready-made from an earlier period but were formed anew by the serfs who had become free, the particular labour of each man was his only property apart from the small capital he brought with him, consisting almost solely of the most necessary tools of his craft. The competition of serfs constantly escaping into the town, the constant war of the country against the towns and thus the necessity of an organised municipal military force, the bond of common ownership in a particular kind of labour, the necessity of common buildings for the sale of their wares at a time when craftsmen were also traders, and the consequent exclusion of the unauthorised from these buildings, the

conflict among the interests of the various crafts, the necessity of protecting their laboriously acquired skill, and the feudal organisation of the whole of the country: these were the causes of the union of the workers of each craft in guilds. In this context we do not have to go further into the manifold modifications of the guild-system, which arise through later historical developments. The flight of the serfs into the towns went on without interruption right through the Middle Ages. These serfs, persecuted by their lords in the country, came separately into the towns, where they found an organised community, against which they were powerless and in which they had to subject themselves to the station assigned to them by the demand for their labour and the interest of their organised urban competitors. These workers, entering separately, were never able to attain to any power, since, if their labour was of the guild type which had to be learned, the guild-masters bent them to their will and organised them according to their interest; or if their labour was not such as had to be learned, and therefore not of the guild type, they were day-labourers, never managed to organise, but remained an unorganised rabble. The need for day-labourers in the towns created the rabble.

These towns were true "unions",⁷ called forth by the direct [43] need of providing for the protection of property, and of multiplying the means of production and defence of the separate members. The rabble of these towns was devoid of any power, composed as it was of individuals strange to one another who had entered separately, and who stood unorganised over against an organised power, armed for war, and jealously watching over them. The journeymen and apprentices were organised in each craft as it best suited the interest of the masters. The patriarchal relations existing between them and their masters gave the latter a double power—on the one hand because of the direct influence they exerted on the whole life of the journeymen, and on the other because, for the

journeymen who worked with the same master, it was a real bond which held them together against the journeymen of other masters and separated them from these. And finally, the journeymen were bound to the existing order even by their interest in becoming masters themselves. While, therefore, the rabble at least carried out revolts against the whole municipal order, revolts which remained completely ineffective because of its powerlessness, the journeymen never got further than small acts of insubordination within separate guilds, such as belong to the very nature of the guild-system. The great risings of the Middle Ages all radiated from the country, but equally remained totally ineffective because of the isolation and consequent crudity of the peasants.—

Capital in these towns was a naturally evolved capital, consisting of a house, the tools of the craft, and the natural, hereditary customers; and not being realisable, on account of the backwardness of intercourse and the lack of circulation, it had to be handed down from father to son. Unlike modern capital, which can be assessed in money and which may be indifferently invested in this thing or that, this capital was directly connected with the particular work of the owner, inseparable from it and to this extent *estate* capital.—

In the towns, the division of labour between the [44] individual guilds was as yet very little developed and, in the guilds themselves, it did not exist at all between the individual workers. Every workman had to be versed in a whole round of tasks, had to be able to make everything that was to be made with his tools. The limited intercourse and the weak ties between the individual towns, the lack of population and the narrow needs did not allow of a more advanced division of labour, and therefore every man who wished to become a master had to be proficient in the whole of this craft. Medieval craftsmen therefore had an interest in their special work and in proficiency in it, which was capable of rising to a limited

artistic sense. For this very reason, however, every medieval craftsman was completely absorbed in his work, to which he had a complacent servile relationship, and in which he was involved to a far greater extent than the modern worker, whose work is a matter of indifference to him.—

[THE ROLE OF VIOLENCE (CONQUEST) IN HISTORY]

This whole conception of history appears to be contradicted by the fact of conquest. Up till now violence, war, pillage, murder and robbery, etc., have been accepted as the driving force of history. Here we must limit ourselves to the chief points and take, therefore, only the most striking example—the destruction of an old civilisation by a barbarous people and the resulting formation of an entirely new organisation of society. (Rome and the barbarians; feudalism and Gaul; the Byzantine Empire and the Turks.⁸)

[63] With the conquering barbarian people war itself is still, as indicated above, a regular form of intercourse, which is the more eagerly exploited as the increase in population together with the traditional and, for it, the only possible crude mode of production gives rise to the need for new means of production. In Italy, on the other hand, the concentration of landed property (caused not only by buying-up and indebtedness but also by inheritance, since loose living being rife and marriage rare, the old families gradually died out and their possessions fell into the hands of a few) and its conversion into grazing-land (caused not only by the usual economic factors still operative today but by the importation of plundered and tribute corn and the resultant lack of demand for Italian corn) brought about the almost total disappearance of the free population; the slaves died out again and again, and had constantly to be replaced by new ones. Slavery remained the basis of the entire production process. The

plebeians, midway between freemen and slaves, never succeeded in becoming more than a proletarian rabble. Rome indeed never became more than a city; its connection with the provinces was almost exclusively political and could, therefore, easily be broken again by political events.

Nothing is more common than the notion that in history up till now it has only been a question of *taking*. The barbarians *take* the Roman Empire, and this fact of taking is made to explain the transition from the old world to the feudal system. In this taking by barbarians, however, the question is whether the nation which is conquered has evolved industrial productive forces, as is the case with modern peoples, or whether its productive forces are based for the most part merely on their concentration and on the community. Taking is further determined by the object taken. A banker's fortune, consisting of paper, cannot be taken at all without the taker's submitting to the conditions of production and intercourse of the country taken. Similarly the total industrial capital of a modern industrial country. And finally, everywhere there is very soon an end to taking, and when there is nothing more to take, you have to set about producing. From this necessity of producing, which very soon asserts itself, it follows [64] that the form of community adopted by the settling conquerors must correspond to the stage of development of the productive forces they find in existence; or, if this is not the case from the start, it must change according to the productive forces. This, too, explains the fact, which people profess to have noticed everywhere in the period following the migration of the peoples, namely that the servant was master, and that the conquerors very soon took over language, culture and manners from the conquered.

The feudal system was by no means brought complete

from Germany, but had its origin, as far as the conquerors were concerned, in the martial organisation of the army during the actual conquest, and this evolved only after the conquest into the feudal system proper through the action of the productive forces found in the conquered countries. To what an extent this form was determined by the productive forces is shown by the abortive attempts to realise other forms derived from reminiscences of ancient Rome (Charlemagne, etc.).

Written between November 1845
and August 1846

Marx and Engels,
Collected Works, Vol. 5,
Moscow, 1976, pp. 32-35,
64-66, 84-85

FREDERICK ENGELS
From PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNISM

Question 6: What working classes existed before the industrial revolution?

Answer: Depending on the different stages of the development of society, the working classes lived in different conditions and stood in different relations to the possessing and ruling classes. In ancient times the working people were the *slaves* of their 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, just as they still are in Hungary, Poland, and Russia. In the Middle Ages and up to the industrial revolution there were in the towns also journeymen in the service of petty-bourgeois craftsmen, and with the development of manufacture there gradually emerged manufactory workers, who were already employed by the bigger capitalists.

Question 7: In what way does the proletariat differ from the slave?

Answer: The slave is sold once and for all, the proletariat has to sell himself by the ~~day~~ and by the hour. Being the property of *one* master, the individual slave has, since it is in the interest of this master, a guaranteed subsistence, however wretched it may be; the individual proletariat, the property, so to speak, of the whole bourgeois *class*, whose labour is only bought from him when somebody needs it, has no guaranteed subsistence. This

subsistence is guaranteed only to the proletarian *class* as a whole. The slave stands outside competition, the proletarian stands within it and feels all its fluctuations. The slave is accounted a thing, not a member of civil society; the proletarian is recognised as a person, as a member of civil society. Thus, the slave may have a better subsistence than the proletarian, but the proletarian belongs to a higher stage of development of society and himself stands at a higher stage than the slave. The slave frees himself by abolishing, among all the private property relationships, only the relationship of slavery and thereby only then himself becomes a proletarian; the proletarian can free himself only by abolishing private property in general.

Question 8: In what way does the proletarian differ from the serf?

Answer: The serf has the possession and use of an instrument of production, a piece of land, in return for handing over a portion of the yield or for the performance of work. The proletarian works with instruments of production belonging to another person for the benefit of this other person in return for receiving a portion of the yield. The serf gives, to the proletarian is given. The serf has a guaranteed subsistence, the proletarian has not. The serf stands outside competition, the proletarian stands within it. The serf frees himself either by running away to the town and there becoming a handicraftsman or by giving his landlord money instead of labour and products and becoming a free tenant; or by driving out his feudal lord and himself becoming a proprietor, in short, by entering in one way or another into the possessing class and competition. The proletarian frees himself by doing away with competition, private property and all class distinctions.

Written at the end of
October-November 1847

Marx and Engels,
Collected Works, Vol. 6,
Moscow, 1976, pp. 343-44

KARL MARX AND FREDERICK ENGELS
MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

From I. BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIANS

The history of all hitherto existing society* is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master** 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 re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

* 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, Haxthausen discovered common ownership of land in Russia, 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 Morgan's crowning discovery of the true nature of the gens and its relation to the *tribe*. With the dissolution of these primeval communities society begins to be differentiated into separate and finally antagonistic classes. I have attempted to retrace this process of dissolution in *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats*, 2nd edition, Stuttgart, 1886. [Note by Engels to the English edition of 1888, and—less the last sentence—to the German edition of 1890.]

** Guild-master, that is, a full member of a guild, a master within, not a head of a guild. [Note by Engels to the English edition of 1888.]

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.

Written in December 1847-
January 1848

Marx and Engels,
Collected Works, Vol. 6,
Moscow, 1976, pp. 482-85

FREDERICK ENGELS

From THE PEASANT WAR IN GERMANY

To begin with, let us briefly review the situation in Germany at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

German industry had made considerable progress in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The local village industry of the feudal type was superseded by the guild system of industry in the towns, which produced for wider circles, and even for remoter markets. The weaving of coarse woollen fabrics and linens had become a permanent and widespread branch of industry, and even finer woollen and linen fabrics and silks were manufactured in Augsburg. Along with the art of weaving especial growth was witnessed in industries which were nurtured by the ecclesiastic and secular luxury of the late medieval epoch and verged on the fine arts: those of the gold- and silver-smith, the sculptor and engraver, etcher and wood-carver, armourer, engraver of medals, woodturner, etc. A succession of more or less important discoveries, the most prominent of which were the invention of gunpowder* and printing, had contributed substantially to the development of the crafts. Commerce kept pace with industry.

* As has now been shown beyond doubt, gunpowder came to the Arabs through India from China, and they brought it through Spain to Europe along with fire-arms. [*Note by Engels to the 1875 edition.*]

By its century-long monopoly of sea navigation the Hanseatic League⁹ ensured the elevation of all Northern Germany from medieval barbarism. Even though since the end of the fifteenth century the League had quickly begun to succumb to the competition of the English and Dutch, the great trade route from India to the north still lay through Germany, Vasco da Gama's discoveries notwithstanding, and Augsburg still remained the great market of Italian silks, Indian spices, and all Levantine products. The towns of Upper Germany, particularly Augsburg and Nuremberg, were centres of an opulence and luxury quite remarkable for that time. The production of raw materials had also considerably increased. The German miners of the fifteenth century were the most skilful in the world and the flowering of the towns had also elevated agriculture from its early medieval crudity. Not only had large stretches of land been put to the plough but dye crops and other imported plants were introduced, whose careful cultivation had favourable influence on farming in general.

Still, the progress of Germany's national production had not kept pace with the progress in other countries. Agriculture lagged far behind that of England and the Netherlands, and industry far behind that of Italy, Flanders and England, while the English, and especially the Dutch, had already begun ousting the Germans from the sea trade. The population was still very sparse. Civilisation existed only here and there, concentrated round the several centres of industry and commerce; but the interests of even these centres were highly divergent, with hardly any point of contact. The trade relations and export markets of the South differed totally from those of the North; the East and the West stood outside almost all traffic. Not a single city was in a position to be the industrial and commercial centre of the whole country, such, for instance, as London had already become for England. All internal communications were almost exclusively confined to coastal and river

navigation and to the few large trade routes from Augsburg and Nuremberg via Cologne to the Netherlands, and via Erfurt to the North. Away from the rivers and trade routes there was a number of smaller towns which lay outside the major traffic and continued to vegetate undisturbed in the conditions of the late Middle Ages, needing only few foreign goods and providing few products for export. Of the rural population only the nobility came in contact with wider circles and with new needs; in their relations, the peasant masses never went beyond their immediate locality and its horizons.

While in England and France the rise of commerce and industry had the effect of intertwining the interests of the entire country and thereby brought about political centralisation, Germany had not got any further than grouping interests by provinces, around merely local centres, which led to political division, a division that was soon made all the more final by Germany's exclusion from world commerce. In step with the disintegration of the *purely feudal* Empire, the bonds of imperial unity became completely dissolved, the major vassals of the Empire became almost independent sovereigns, and the cities of the Empire, on the one hand, and the knights of the Empire, on the other, began entering into alliances either against each other or against the princes or the Emperor. Uncertain of its own position, the imperial government vacillated between the various elements comprising the Empire, and thereby lost more and more authority; in spite of all its intrigues and violence, the attempt at centralisation in the manner of Louis XI was only just able to hold together the Austrian hereditary lands. Who finally won and were bound to win in this confusion, in these countless and interrelated conflicts, were the bearers of centralisation amidst the disunity, the bearers of local and provincial centralisation—the *princes*, at whose side the Emperor himself became more and more of a prince like the others.

In these circumstances, the position of the classes inherited from the Middle Ages had changed considerably, and new classes had emerged beside the old.

The *princes* came from the high nobility. They were already almost independent of the Emperor and possessed most of the sovereign rights. They made war and peace on their own, maintained standing armies, convened Diets, and levied taxes. They had brought a large part of the lesser nobility and most of the towns under their sway, and resorted continuously to all possible means of incorporating in their dominion all the remaining imperial towns and baronial estates. They were centralisers in respect to these towns and estates, while acting as a decentralising force in respect to the imperial power. Internally, their government was already highly autocratic. They convened the estates only when they could not do without them. They imposed taxes and borrowed money whenever it suited them; the right of the estates to ratify taxes was seldom recognised and still more seldom practised. And even when practised, the prince usually had the majority by virtue of the knights and prelates, the two tax-exempted estates that participated in the benefits enjoyed from taxes. The princes' need for money grew with their taste for luxury, the expansion of their courts, the standing armies, and the mounting costs of government. The taxes became ever more oppressive. The towns were mostly protected from them by their privileges, and the full impact of the tax burden fell upon the peasants, the subjects of the princes, as well as upon the serfs, bondsmen and tithing peasants [Zinsbauern] of their vassal knights. Where direct taxation proved insufficient, indirect taxes were introduced. The most refined devices of the art of finance were called into play to fill the anaemic treasury. When nothing availed, when there was nothing to pawn and no free imperial city was willing to grant any more credit, the princes resorted to currency operations of the basest kind, coined depreciated money,

and set high or low compulsory exchange rates at the convenience of their treasuries. Furthermore, trade in urban and other privileges, later forcibly withdrawn only to be resold at a high price, and the use of every attempt at opposition as an excuse for all kinds of extortion and robbery, etc., etc., were common and lucrative sources of income for the princes of the day. Justice, too, was a perpetual and not unimportant merchandise. In brief, the subjects of that time, who, in addition, had to satisfy the private avarice of the princely bailiffs and officials, had a full taste of all the blessings of the "paternal" system of government.

The middle nobility of the medieval feudal hierarchy had almost entirely disappeared; it had either risen to acquire the independence of petty princes, or sunk into the ranks of the lesser nobility. The *lesser nobility*, or *knighthood*, was fast moving towards extinction. Much of it was already totally impoverished and lived in the service of the princes, holding military or civil offices; another part of it was in the vassalage and under the sway of the princes; and a small part was directly subject to the Emperor. The development of military science, the growing importance of the infantry, and the improvement of fire-arms dwarfed the knighthood's military merits as heavy cavalry, and also put an end to the invincibility of its castles. Like the Nuremberg artisans, the knights were made redundant by the progress of industry. The knights' need for money considerably hastened their ruin. The luxury of their palaces, rivalry in the magnificence of tournaments and feasts, the price of armaments and horses—all increased with the development of society, while the sources of income of the knights and barons increased but little, if at all. As time went on, feuds with their attendant plunder and extortion, highway robbery and similar noble occupations became too dangerous. The payments and services of their subjects yielded the knights hardly more than before. To satisfy their growing requirements, the gracious knights had to resort to the same means as the

princes. The peasantry was plundered by the nobility with a dexterity that increased every year. The serfs were sucked dry, and the bondsmen were burdened with ever new payments and services on a great variety of pretexts and on all possible occasions. Statute labour, tributes, rents, land-sale taxes, death taxes,¹⁰ protection moneys,¹¹ etc., were raised at will, in spite of all the old agreements. Justice was denied or sold for money, and when the knight could not get at the peasants' money in any other way, he threw him into the tower without further ado and forced him to pay a ransom.

The relations between the lesser nobility and the other estates were also anything but friendly. The knights bound by vassalage to the princes strove to become vassals of the Empire, the imperial knights strove to retain their independence; this led to incessant conflicts with the princes. The knight regarded the arrogant clergy of those days as an entirely superfluous estate, and envied them their large possessions and the wealth held secure by their celibacy and the church statutes. He was continually at loggerheads with the towns, he was always in debt to them, he made his living by plundering their territory, robbing their merchants, and by holding for ransom prisoners captured in the feuds. And the knights' struggle with all these estates became the more violent the more the money question became to them as well a question of life.

The *clergy*, that bearer of the medieval feudal ideology, felt the influence of historic change just as acutely. Book-printing and the claims of growing commerce robbed it of its monopoly not only in reading and writing, but also in higher education. The division of labour also made inroads into the intellectual realm. The newly rising juridical estate drove the clergy from a number of the most influential offices. The clergy was also on its way to becoming largely superfluous, and demonstrated this by its ever greater laziness and ignorance. But the more superfluous it became, the more it grew in numbers, due to the

enormous riches that it still continuously augmented by all possible means.

There were two entirely distinct classes among the clergy. The clerical feudal hierarchy formed the *aristocratic* class: the bishops and archbishops, abbots, priors, and other prelates. These high church dignitaries were either imperial princes or reigned as feudal lords under the sovereignty of other princes over extensive lands with numerous serfs and bondsmen. They exploited their dependants as ruthlessly as the knights and princes, and went at it even more wantonly. In addition to brute force they applied all the subterfuges of religion; in addition to the fear of the rack they applied the fear of ex-communication and denial of absolution; they made use of all the intrigues of the confessional to wring the last penny from their subjects or to augment the portion of the church. Forgery of documents was for these worthies a common and favourite means of swindling. But although they received tithes from their subjects in addition to the usual feudal services and quitrents, these incomes were not enough for them. They fabricated miracle-working sacred images and relics, set up sanctifying prayer-houses, and traded in indulgences in order to squeeze more money out of the people, and for quite some time with eminent success.

It was these prelates and their numerous *gendarmerie* of monks, which grew constantly with the spread of political and religious witch-hunts, on whom the priest-hatred not only of the people, but also of the nobility, was concentrated. Being directly subject to the Emperor, they were a nuisance for the princes. The life of luxurious pleasure led by the corpulent bishops and abbots, and their army of monks excited the envy of the nobility, and the more flagrantly it contradicted their preaching, the more it inflamed the people, who had to bear its cost.

The *plebeian* part of the clergy consisted of rural and urban preachers. These stood outside the feudal church

hierarchy and had no part in its riches. Their work was less controlled, and, important though it was for the church, it was for the moment far less indispensable than the police services of the barracked monks. They were, therefore, the worse paid by far, and their prebends were mostly very meagre. Of burgher or plebeian origin, they were close enough to the life of the masses to retain their burgher and plebeian sympathies in spite of their clerical status. For them participation in the movements of the time was the rule, whereas for monks it was an exception. They provided the movement with theorists and ideologists, and many of them, representatives of the plebeians and peasants, died on the scaffold as a result. The people's hatred of the clergy turned against them only in isolated cases.

What the Emperor was to the princes and nobility, the Pope was to the higher and lower clergy. Where the Emperor received the "general pfennig"¹² or the imperial taxes, the Pope received the universal church taxes, out of which he paid for the luxury of the Roman court. And in no country were these church taxes collected more conscientiously and exactingly than in Germany—thanks to the power and number of the clergy. Particularly the annates,¹³ collected on the bestowal of bishoprics. The growing needs led to the invention of new means of raising revenues, such as trade in relics and indulgences, jubilee collections, etc. Large sums of money flowed yearly from Germany to Rome in this way, and the consequent increased oppression not only heightened the hatred for the clergy, but also roused the national sentiments, particularly of the nobility, the then most nationalistic estate.

In the medieval *towns* three distinct groups developed from the original citizenry with the growth of commerce and the handicrafts.

The urban society was headed by the *patriciate*, the so-called *honourables*. They were the richest families.

They alone sat in the town council, and held all town offices. Hence, they not only administered but also consumed all the town revenues. Strong by virtue of their wealth and time-honoured aristocratic status recognised by Emperor and Empire, they exploited the town community and the peasants belonging to the town in every possible way. They practised usury in grain and money, seized monopolies of all kinds, gradually deprived the community of all rights to communal use of town forests and meadows and used them exclusively for their own private benefit, exacted arbitrary road-, bridge- and gate-tolls and other imposts, and trafficked in trade, guild, and burgher privileges, and in justice. They treated the peasants of the town precincts with no more consideration than did the nobility and clergy. On the contrary, town bailiffs and village officials, patricians all, added a certain bureaucratic punctiliousness to aristocratic rigidity and avarice in collecting imposts. The town revenues thus collected were administered in a most arbitrary fashion; the accounts in the town books, a mere formality, were neglected and confused in the extreme; embezzlement and deficit were the order of the day. How easy it was at that time for a comparatively small, privileged caste bound by family ties and common interests, to enrich itself enormously out of the town revenues, is easily seen from the many embezzlements and swindles which 1848 brought to light in so many town administrations.

The patricians took pains everywhere to let the rights of the town community fall into disuse, particularly in matters of finance. Only later, when their machinations transcended all bounds, the communities came into motion again to at least gain control over the town administration. In most towns they actually regained their rights, but due to the eternal squabbles between the guilds, the tenacity of the patricians, and the protection the latter enjoyed from the Empire and the governments of the allied towns, the patrician council members soon in effect

regained their former undivided dominance, be it by cunning or force. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the communities in all the towns were again in the opposition.

The town opposition to the patricians broke up into two factions which took quite distinct stands in the Peasant War.

The *burgher opposition*, forerunners of our present-day liberals, included the richer and middle burghers, and, depending on local conditions, a more or less appreciable section of the petty burghers. Their demands did not overstep purely constitutional limits. They wanted control over the town administration and a share in legislative power, to be exercised either by an assembly of the community itself or by its representatives (big council, community committee); further restriction of the patrician nepotism and the oligarchy of a few families which was coming to the fore ever more distinctly within the patriciate itself. At best, they also demanded several council seats for burghers from their own midst. This party, joined here and there by the dissatisfied and impoverished part of the patriciate, had a large majority in all the ordinary community assemblies and in the guilds. The adherents of the council and the more radical part of the opposition together formed only a small minority among the real *burghers*.

We shall see how this "moderate", "law-abiding", "well-to-do" and "intelligent" opposition played exactly the same role, with exactly the same effect, in the movement of the sixteenth century, as its successor, the constitutional party, played in the movement of 1848 and 1849.¹⁴

Beyond that, the burgher opposition declaimed zealously against the clergy, whose idle luxury and loose morals roused its bitter scorn. It urged measures against the scandalous life of those worthy men. It demanded the abolition of the clergy's special jurisdiction and tax exemption, and particularly a reduction in the number of monks.

The *plebeian opposition* consisted of ruined burghers and the mass of townsmen without civic rights—journeymen, day labourers, and the numerous precursors of the lumpenproletariat, who existed even in the lowest stages of urban development. The lumpenproletariat is, generally speaking, a phenomenon that occurs in a more or less developed form in all the so far known phases of society. The number of people without a definite occupation and permanent domicile increased greatly at that time due to the decay of feudalism in a society in which every occupation, every sphere of life, was still fenced in by countless privileges. In all the developed countries vagabonds had never been so numerous as in the first half of the sixteenth century. In war time some of these tramps joined the armies, others begged their way across the countryside, and still others eked out a meagre living in the towns as day labourers or from whatever other occupation that was not under guild jurisdiction. All three groups played a part in the Peasant War—the first in the armies of princes which overpowered the peasants, the second in the peasant conspiracies and in peasant gangs where its demoralising influence was felt at all times, and the third in the clashes of the urban parties. It will be recalled, however, that a great many, namely those living in the towns, still had a substantial share of sound peasant nature and had not as yet been possessed by the venality and depravity of the present “civilised” lumpenproletariat.

As we see, the plebeian opposition in the towns of that day was a very mixed lot. It brought together the depraved parts of the old feudal and guild society with the undeveloped, budding proletarian elements of the germinating modern bourgeois society. There were impoverished guild burghers, on the one hand, who still clung to the existing burgher system by virtue of their privileges, and the dispossessed peasants and discharged vassals as yet unable to become proletarians, on the other. Between these two groups were the journeymen, who still stood

outside official society and whose condition was as close to that of the proletariat as this could be with the contemporary state of industry and the guild privileges; but due to these privileges they were, at the same time, almost all prospective burgher artisans. The party affiliation of this conglomeration was therefore highly uncertain, and varied from locality to locality. Before the Peasant War the plebeian opposition took part in the political struggles not as a party, but as a noisy marauding tagtail of the burgher opposition, a mob that could be bought and sold for a few barrels of wine. The peasant revolts turned it into a party, and even then it remained almost everywhere dependent on the peasants in its demands and actions—a striking proof of how much the town of that time still depended on the countryside. In their independent actions, the plebeians demanded extension of the monopoly in urban handicrafts to the countryside, and had no wish to see a curtailment of town revenues come about through the abolition of feudal burdens within the town precincts, etc.; in brief, they were reactionary in their independent actions, and delivered themselves up to their own petty-bourgeois elements—a typical prelude to the tragicomedy staged in the past three years by the modern petty bourgeoisie under the trade mark of democracy.

Only in Thuringia under the direct influence of Münzer, and in a few other localities under that of his pupils, was the plebeian faction of the towns carried away by the general storm to such an extent that the embryonic proletarian element in it gained the upper hand for a time over all the other factions of the movement. This episode grouped round the magnificent figure of *Thomas Münzer*, was the culmination point and also the briefest episode, of the Peasant War. It stands to reason that the plebeian factions were the quickest to collapse, that they had a predominantly fantastic outlook, and that the expression of their demands was necessarily extremely uncertain; in

the existing conditions they found the least firm ground to stand on.

Beneath all these classes, save the last one, was the exploited bulk of the nation, the *peasants*. It was on the peasant that the whole arrangement of social strata reposed: princes, officials, nobles, clergymen, patricians and burghers. No matter whose subject the peasant was—a prince's, an imperial baron's, a bishop's, a monastery's or a town's—he was treated by all as a thing, a beast of burden, and worse. If a serf, he was entirely at the mercy of his master. If a bondsman, the legal levies stipulated in the agreement were enough to crush him; yet they were daily increased. He had to work on his lord's estate most of his time; out of what he earned in his few free hours he had to pay tithes, tributes, the quitrent, princely levies [*Bede*], road (war) tolls, and local and imperial taxes. He could neither marry nor die without paying something to the lord. Besides his statute labour he had to gather litter, pick strawberries and bilberries, collect snail-shells, drive the game in the hunt, and chop wood, etc., for his gracious lord. The right to fish and hunt belonged to the master; the peasant had to look on quietly as his crop was destroyed by wild game. The common pastures and woods of the peasants were almost everywhere forcibly appropriated by the lords. The lord did as he pleased with the peasant's own person, his wife and daughters, just as he did with the peasant's property. He had the right of the first night. He threw the peasant into the tower when he wished, and the rack awaited the peasant there just as surely as the investigating attorney awaits the arrested in our day. He killed the peasant or had him beheaded when he pleased. There was none out of the edifying chapters of the *Carolina*¹⁵ dealing with "ear clipping", "nose cutting", "eye gouging", "chopping of fingers and hands", "beheading", "breaking on the wheel", "burning", "hot irons", "quartering", etc., that the gracious lord and patron would not apply at will. Who would

defend the peasant? It was the barons, clergymen, patri-
cians or jurists who sat in the courts, and they knew
perfectly well what they were being paid for. After all,
every official estate of the Empire lived by sucking the
peasants dry.

Though gnashing their teeth under the terrible burden,
the peasants were still difficult to rouse to revolt. They
were scattered over large areas, and this made collusion
between them extremely difficult. The old habit of sub-
mission inherited by generation from generation, lack of
practice in the use of arms in many regions, and the vary-
ing degree of exploitation depending on the personality
of the lord, all combined to keep the peasant quiet. For
this reason we find so many local peasant insurrections in
the Middle Ages but, prior to the Peasant War, not a
single general national peasant revolt, at least in Ger-
many. Moreover, the peasants were unable to make revo-
lution on their own as long as they were confronted by
the united and organised power of the princes, the nobil-
ity and the towns. Their only chance of winning lay in
an alliance with other estates. But how could they join
with other estates if they were exploited to the same de-
gree by all of them?

As we see, in the early sixteenth century the various
estates of the Empire—princes, nobles, prelates, patricians,
burghers, plebeians and peasants—formed an extremely
confusing mass with their varied and highly conflicting
needs. The estates stood in each other's way, and each
was continually in overt or covert conflict with all the
others. The division of the nation into two large camps,
as seen in France at the outbreak of the first Revolution¹⁶
and as witnessed today on a higher level of development
in the most advanced countries, was thus a rank impossi-
bility. Anything like it could only come about if the low-
est stratum of the nation, the one exploited by all the
other estates, the peasants and plebeians, would rise up.
The entanglement of interests, views and aspirations of

that time will be easily understood from the confusion brought about in the last two years by the present far less complicated structure of the German nation, consisting of the feudal nobility, the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, the peasants and the proletariat.

Written in the summer
of 1850

Marx and Engels,
Collected Works, Vol. 10,
Moscow, 1978, pp. 400-10

KARL MARX

From FORCED EMIGRATION

In the ancient states, in Greece and Rome, compulsory emigration assuming the shape of the periodical establishment of colonies, formed a regular link in the structure of society. The whole system of those states was founded on certain limits to the numbers of the population, which could not be surpassed without endangering the condition of antique civilization itself. But why was it so? Because the application of science to material production was utterly unknown to them. To remain civilized they were forced to remain few. Otherwise they would have had to submit to the bodily drudgery which transformed the free citizen into a slave. The want of productive power made citizenship dependent on a certain proportion in numbers not to be disturbed. Forced emigration was the only remedy.

It was the same pressure of population on the powers of production, that drove the barbarians from the high plains of Asia to invade the Old World. The same cause acted there, although under a different form. To remain barbarians they were forced to remain few. They were pastoral, hunting, war-waging tribes, whose manner of production required a large space for every individual, as is now the case with the Indian tribes in North America. By augmenting in numbers they curtailed each other's

field of production. Thus the surplus population was forced to undertake those great adventurous migratory movements which laid the foundation of the peoples of ancient and modern Europe.

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1853

Marx and Engels,
Collected Works, Vol. 11,
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KARL MARX

THE BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

London, June 10, 1853

Telegraphic dispatches from Vienna announce that the pacific solution of the Turkish, Sardinian and Swiss questions, is regarded there as a certainty.

Last night the debate on India was continued in the House of Commons in the usual dull manner. Mr. Blakett charged the statements of Sir Charles Wood and Sir J. Hogg with bearing the stamp of optimist falsehood. A lot of Ministerial and Directorial advocates rebuked the charge as well as they could, and the inevitable Mr. Hume summed up by calling on Ministers to withdraw their bill. Debate adjourned.

Hindustan is an Italy of Asiatic dimensions, the Himalayas for the Alps, the Plains of Bengal for the Plains of Lombardy, the Deccan for the Apennines, and the Isle of Ceylon for the Island of Sicily. The same rich variety in the products of the soil, and the same dismemberment in the political configuration. Just as Italy has, from time to time, been compressed by the conqueror's sword into different national masses, so do we find Hindostan, when not under the pressure of the Mohammedan, or the Mogul, or the Briton, dissolved into as many independent and conflicting States as it numbered towns, or even villages. Yet, in a social point of view, Hindostan is not the Italy, but the Ireland of the East. And this strange combination of Italy and of Ireland, of a world of voluptuousness and of a world of woes, is anticipated in

the ancient traditions of the religion of Hindostan. That religion is at once a religion of sensualist exuberance, and a religion of self-torturing asceticism; a religion of the Lingam and of the Juggernaut¹⁷; the religion of the Monk, and of the Bayadere.

I share not the opinion of those who believe in a golden age of Hindostan, without recurring, however, like Sir Charles Wood, for the confirmation of my view, to the authority of Khuli-Khan. But take, for example, the times of Aurung-Zebe; or the epoch, when the Mogul¹⁸ appeared in the North, and the Portuguese in the South; or the age of Mohammedan invasion, and of the Hep-tarchy in Southern India¹⁹; or, if you will, go still more back to antiquity, take the mythological chronology of the Brahman himself, who places the commencement of Indian misery in an epoch even more remote than the Christian creation of the world.

There cannot, however, remain any doubt but that the misery inflicted by the British on Hindostan is of an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindostan had to suffer before. I do not allude to European despotism, planted upon Asiatic despotism, by the British East India Company,²⁰ forming a more monstrous combination than any of the divine monsters startling us in the Temple of Salsette.²¹ This is no distinctive feature of British Colonial rule, but only an imitation of the Dutch, and so much so that in order to characterize the working of the British East India Company, it is sufficient to literally repeat what Sir Stamford Raffles, the *English* Governor of Java, said of the old Dutch East India Company.

"The Dutch Company, actuated solely by the spirit of gain, and viewing their subjects, with less regard or consideration than a West-India planter formerly viewed the gang upon his estate, because the latter had paid the purchase money of human property, which the other had not, employed all the existing machinery of despotism to squeeze from the people their utmost mite of contri-

bution, the last dregs of their labor, and thus aggravated the evils of a capricious and semi-barbarous government, by working it with all the practised ingenuity of politicians, and all the monopolizing selfishness of traders."

All the civil wars, invasions, revolutions, conquests, famines, strangely complex, rapid, and destructive as the successive action in Hindostan may appear, did not go deeper than its surface. England has broken down the entire framework of Indian society, without any symptoms of reconstitution yet appearing. This loss of his old world, with no gain of a new one, imparts a particular kind of melancholy to the present misery of the Hindoo, and separates Hindostan, ruled by Britain, from all its ancient traditions, and from the whole of its past history.

There have been in Asia, generally, from immemorial times, but three departments of Government; that of Finance, or the plunder of the interior; that of War, or the plunder of the exterior; and, finally, the department of Public Works. Climate and territorial conditions, especially the vast tracts of desert, extending from the Sahara, through Arabia, Persia, India, and Tartary,²² to the most elevated Asiatic highlands, constituted artificial irrigation by canals and water-works the basis of Oriental agriculture. As in Egypt and India, inundations are used for fertilizing the soil in Mesopotamia, Persia, etc.; advantage is taken of a high level for feeding irrigative canals. This prime necessity of an economical and common use of water, which, in the Occident, drove private enterprise to voluntary association, as in Flanders and Italy, necessitated, in the Orient where civilization was too low and the territorial extent too vast to call into life voluntary association, the interference of the centralizing power of Government. Hence an economical function devolved upon all Asiatic Governments, the function of providing public works. This artificial fertilization of the soil, dependent on a Central Government, and immediately decaying with the neglect of irrigation and drainage, explains the other-

wise strange fact that we now find whole territories barren and desert that were once brilliantly cultivated, as Palmyra, Petra, the ruins in Yemen, and large provinces of Egypt, Persia and Hindostan; it also explains how a single war of devastation has been able to depopulate a country for centuries, and to strip it of all its civilization.

Now, the British in East India accepted from their predecessors the department of finance and of war, but they have neglected entirely that of public works. Hence the deterioration of an agriculture which is not capable of being conducted on the British principle of free competition, of *laissez-faire* and *laissez-aller*.²³ But in Asiatic empires we are quite accustomed to see agriculture deteriorating under one government and reviving again under some other government. There the harvests correspond to good or bad government, as they change in Europe with good or bad seasons. Thus the oppression and neglect of agriculture, bad as it is, could not be looked upon as the final blow dealt to Indian society by the British intruder, had it not been attended by a circumstance of quite different importance, a novelty in the annals of the whole Asiatic world. However changing the political aspect of India's past must appear, its social condition has remained unaltered since its remotest antiquity, until the first decennium of the 19th century. The hand-loom and the spinning-wheel, producing their regular myriads of spinners and weavers, were the pivots of the structure of that society. From immemorial times, Europe received the admirable textures of Indian labor, sending in return for them her precious metals, and furnishing thereby his material to the goldsmith, that indispensable member of Indian society, whose love of finery is so great that even the lowest class, those who go about nearly naked, have commonly a pair of golden ear-rings and a gold ornament of some kind hung round their necks. Rings on the fingers and toes have also been common. Women as well as children frequently wore massive bracelets and anklets of

gold or silver, and statuettes of divinities in gold and silver were met with in the households. It was the British intruder who broke up the Indian hand-loom and destroyed the spinning-wheel. England began with driving the Indian cottons from the European market; it then introduced twist into Hindostan and in the end inundated the very mother country of cotton with cottons. From 1818 to 1836 the export of twist from Great Britain to India rose in the proportion of 1 to 5,200. In 1824 the export of British muslins to India hardly amounted to 1,000,000 yards, while in 1837 it surpassed 64,000,000 of yards. But at the same time the population of Dacca decreased from 150,000 inhabitants to 20,000. This decline of Indian towns celebrated for their fabrics was by no means the worst consequence. British steam and science uprooted, over the whole surface of Hindostan, the union between agriculture and manufacturing industry.

These two circumstances—the Hindoo, on the one hand, leaving, like all Oriental peoples, to the central government the care of the great public works, the prime condition of his agriculture and commerce, dispersed, on the other hand, over the surface of the country, and agglomerated in small centers by the domestic union of agricultural and manufacturing pursuits—these two circumstances had brought about, since the remotest times, a social system of particular features—the so-called *village system*, which gave to each of these small unions their independent organization and distinct life. The peculiar character of this system may be judged from the following description, contained in an old official report of the British House of Commons on Indian affairs:

“A village, geographically considered, is a tract of country comprising some hundred or thousand acres of arable and waste lands; politically viewed it resembles a corporation or township. Its proper establishment of officers and servants consists of the following descriptions: The *Potail*, or head inhabitant, who has generally the superintendence of the affairs of the village, settles the disputes of the inhabitants, attends to the police, and performs the duty of

collecting the revenue within his village, a duty which his personal influence and minute acquaintance with the situation and concerns of the people render him the best qualified for this charge. The *Kurnum* keeps the accounts of cultivation, and registers everything connected with it. The *Tallier* and the *Totie*, the duty of the former of which consists in gaining information of crimes and offenses, and in escorting and protecting persons travelling from one village to another; the province of the latter appearing to be more immediately confined to the village, consisting, among other duties, in guarding the crops and assisting in measuring them. The *boundary-man*, who preserves the limits of the village, or gives evidence respecting them in cases of dispute. The Superintendent of tanks and watercourses distributes the water for the purposes of agriculture. The Brahmin, who performs the village worship. The schoolmaster, who is seen teaching the children in a village to read and write in the sand. The calendar-Brahmin, or astrologer, etc.

These officers and servants generally constitute the establishment of a village; but in some parts of the country it is of less extent; some of the duties and functions above described being united in the same person; in others it exceeds the above-named number of individuals. Under this simple form of municipal government, the inhabitants of the country have lived from time immemorial. The boundaries of the villages have been but seldom altered; and though the villages themselves have been sometimes injured, and even desolated by war, famine or disease, the same name, the same limits, the same interests, and even the same families have continued for ages. The inhabitants gave themselves no trouble about the breaking up and divisions of kingdoms; while the village remains entire, they care not to what power it is transferred, or to what sovereign it devolves; its internal economy remains unchanged. The potail is still the head inhabitant, and still acts as the petty judge or magistrate, and collector or rentor of the village."²⁴

These small stereotype forms of social organism have been to the greater part dissolved, and are disappearing, not so much through the brutal interference of the British tax-gatherer and the British soldier, as to the working of English steam and English Free Trade. Those family-communities were based on domestic industry, in that peculiar combination of hand-weaving, hand-spinning and hand-tilling agriculture which gave them self-supporting

power. English interference having placed the spinner in Lancashire and the weaver in Bengal, or sweeping away both Hindoo spinner and weaver, dissolved these small semi-barbarian, semi-civilized communities, by blowing up their economical basis, and thus produced the greatest, and to speak the truth, the only *social* revolution ever heard of in Asia.

Now, sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness those myriads of industrious patriarchal and inoffensive social organizations disorganized and dissolved into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilization, and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village-communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. We must not forget the barbarian egotism which, concentrating on some miserable patch of land, had quietly witnessed the ruin of empires, the perpetration of unspeakable cruelties, the massacre of the population of large towns, with no other consideration bestowed upon them than on natural events, itself the helpless prey of any aggressor who deigned to notice it at all. We must not forget that this undignified, stagnatory, and vegetative life, that this passive sort of existence evoked on the other part, in contradistinction, wild, aimless, unbounded forces of destruction and rendered murder itself a religious rite in Hindostan. We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalizing worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the

sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Kanuman, the monkey, and Sabbala, the cow.

England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindostan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution.

Then, whatever bitterness the spectacle of the crumbling of an ancient world may have for our personal feelings, we have the right, in point of history, to exclaim with Goethe:

"Sollte diese Qual uns quälen,
Da sie unsre Lust vermehrt,
Hat nicht myriaden Seelen
Timur's Herrschaft aufgezehrt?"*

Written on June 10,
1853

Marx and Engels,
Collected Works, Vol. 12,
Moscow, 1978, pp. 125-33

* Should this torture then torment us
Since it brings us greater pleasure?
Were not through the rule of Timur
Souls devoured without measure?

From Goethe's *An Suleika*, *Westöstlicher Diwan*.—Ed.

KARL MARX

From REVOLUTIONARY SPAIN

Insurrectionary risings are as old in Spain as that sway of court favorites against which they are usually directed. Thus in the middle of the fifteenth century the aristocracy revolted against King Juan II and his favorite, Don Alvaro de Luna. In the fifteenth century still more serious commotions took place against King Henry IV and the head of his camarilla, Don Juan de Pacheco, Marquis de Villena. In the seventeenth century the people at Lisbon tore to pieces Vasconcellos, the Sartorius of the Spanish Viceroy in Portugal, as they did at Catalonia with Santa Coloma, the favorite of Philip IV. At the end of the same century, under the reign of Carlos II, the people of Madrid rose against the Queen's camarilla, composed of the Countess de Berlepsch and the Counts Oropesa and Melgar, who had imposed on all provisions entering the capital an oppressive duty, which they shared among themselves. The people marched to the royal palace, forced the King to appear on the balcony, and himself to denounce the Queen's camarilla. They then marched to the palaces of the Counts Oropesa and Melgar, plundered them, destroyed them by fire, and tried to lay hold of their owners, who, however, had the good luck to escape, at the cost of perpetual exile. The event which occasioned the insurrectionary rising in the fifteenth century was the treacherous treaty which the favorite of Henry IV, the Marquis de Villena, had concluded with the King of France, according to which Catalonia was to be surrendered to Louis XI.

Three centuries later, the treaty of Fontainebleau, concluded on October 27, 1807, by which the favorite of Carlos IV and the minion of his Queen,* Don Manuel Godoy, the Prince of Peace, contracted with Bonaparte for the partition of Portugal and the entrance of the French armies into Spain, caused a popular insurrection at Madrid against Godoy, the abdication of Carlos IV, the assumption of the throne by Ferdinand VII, his son, the entrance of the French army into Spain, and the following war of independence. Thus the Spanish war of independence commenced with a popular insurrection against the camarilla, then personified in Don Manuel Godoy, just as the civil war of the fifteenth century commenced with the rising against the camarilla, then personified in the Marquis de Villena. So, too, the revolution of 1854, commenced with the rising against the camarilla, personified in the Count San Luis.

Notwithstanding these over-recurring insurrections, there has been in Spain, up to the present century, no serious revolution, except the war of the Holy League²⁵ in the times of Carlos I, or Charles V, as the Germans call him. The immediate pretext, as usual, was then furnished by the clique who, under the auspices of Cardinal Adrian, the Viceroy, himself a Fleming, exasperated the Castilians by their rapacious insolence, by selling the public offices to the highest bidder, and by open traffic in law-suits. The opposition against the Flemish camarilla was only at the surface of the movement. At its bottom was the defense of the liberties of medieval Spain against the encroachments of modern absolutism.

The material basis of the Spanish monarchy having been laid by the union of Aragon, Castile and Granada, under Ferdinand the Catholic, and Isabella I, Charles I attempted to transform that still feudal monarchy into an absolute one. Simultaneously he attacked the two pillars of Spanish

* Maria Luisa of Parma.—Ed.

liberty, the Cortes and the *Ayuntamientos*²⁶—the former a modification of the ancient Gothic *conclia*, and the latter transmitted almost without interruption from the Roman times, the *Ayuntamientos* exhibiting the mixture of the hereditary and elective character proper to the Roman municipalities. As to municipal self-government, the towns of Italy, of Provence, Northern Gaul, Great Britain, and part of Germany, offer a fair similitude to the then state of the Spanish towns; but neither the French States General, nor the British Parliaments of the Middle Ages, are to be compared with the Spanish Cortes. There were circumstances in the formation of the Spanish kingdom peculiarly favorable to the limitation of royal power. On the one side, small parts of the Peninsula were recovered at a time, and formed into separate kingdoms, during the long struggles with the Arabs. Popular laws and customs were engendered in these struggles. The successive conquests, being principally effected by the nobles, rendered their power excessive, while they diminished the royal power. On the other hand, the inland towns and cities rose to great consequence, from the necessity people found themselves under of residing together in places of strength, as a security against the continual irruptions of the Moors; while the peninsular formation of the country, and constant intercourse with Provence and Italy, created first-rate commercial and maritime cities on the coast. As early as the fourteenth century, the cities formed the most powerful part in the Cortes, which were composed of their representatives, with those of the clergy and the nobility. It is also worthy of remark, that the slow recovery from Moorish dominion through an obstinate struggle of almost eight hundred years, gave the Peninsula, when wholly emancipated, a character altogether different from that of contemporaneous Europe, Spain finding itself, at the epoch of European resurrection, with the manners of the Goths and the Vandals in the North, and with those of the Arabs in the South.

Charles I having returned from Germany, where the imperial dignity had been bestowed upon him, the Cortes assembled at Valladolid, in order to receive his oath to the ancient laws and to invest him with the crown.²⁷ Charles, declining to appear, sent commissioners who, he pretended, were to receive the oath of allegiance on the part of the Cortes. The Cortes refused to admit these commissioners to their presence, notifying the monarch that, if he did not appear and swear to the laws of the country, he should never be acknowledged as King of Spain. Charles thereupon yielded; he appeared before the Cortes and took the oath—as historians say, with a very bad grace. The Cortes on this occasion told him: “You must know, Señor, that the King is but the paid servant of the nation.” Such was the beginning of the hostilities between Charles I and the towns. In consequence of his intrigues, numerous insurrections broke out in Castile, the Holy League of Avila was formed, and the united towns convoked the assembly of the Cortes at Tordesillas, whence, on October 20, 1520, a “protest against the abuses” was addressed to the King, in return for which he deprived all the deputies assembled at Tordesillas of their personal rights. Thus civil war had become inevitable; the commoners appealed to arms; their soldiers under the command of Padilla seized the fortress of Torre Lobaton, but were ultimately defeated by superior forces at the battle of Villalar on April 23, 1521. The heads of the principal “conspirators” rolled on the scaffold, and the ancient liberties of Spain disappeared.

Several circumstances conspired in favor of the rising power of absolutism. The want of union between the different provinces deprived their efforts of the necessary strength; but it was, above all, the bitter antagonism between the classes of the nobles and the citizens of the towns which Charles employed for the degradation of both. We have already mentioned that since the fourteenth century the influence of the towns was prominent in the Cor-

tes, and since Ferdinand the Catholic, the Holy Brotherhood (Santa Hermandad)²⁸ had proved a powerful instrument in the hands of the towns against the Castilian nobles, who accused them of encroachments on their ancient privileges and jurisdiction. The nobility, therefore, were eager to assist Carlos I in his project of suppressing the Holy League. Having crushed their armed resistance, Carlos occupied himself with the reduction of the municipal privileges of the towns, which, rapidly declining in population, wealth and importance, soon lost their influence in the Cortes. Carlos now turned round upon the nobles, who had assisted him in putting down the liberties of the towns, but who themselves retained a considerable political importance. Mutiny in his army for want of pay obliged him, in 1539, to assemble the Cortes, in order to obtain a grant of money. Indignant at the misapplication of former subsidies to operations foreign to the interests of Spain, the Cortes refused all supplies. Carlos dismissed them in a rage; and, the nobles having insisted on a privilege of exemption from taxes, he declared that those who claimed such a right could have no claim to appear in the Cortes, and consequently excluded them from that assembly. This was the death-blow of the Cortes, and their meetings were henceforth reduced to the performance of a mere court ceremony. The third element in the ancient constitution of the Cortes, viz.: the clergy, enlisted since Ferdinand the Catholic under the banner of the Inquisition, had long ceased to identify its interests with those of feudal Spain. On the contrary, by the Inquisition, the Church was transformed into the most formidable tool of absolutism.

If after the reign of Carlos I the decline of Spain, both in a political and social aspect, exhibited all those symptoms of inglorious and protracted putrefaction so repulsive in the worst times of the Turkish Empire, under the Emperor at least the ancient liberties were buried in a magnificent tomb. This was the time when Vasco Núñez

de Balboa planted the banner of Castile upon the shores of Darien, Cortés in Mexico, and Pizarro in Peru; when Spanish influence reigned supreme in Europe, and the Southern imagination of the Iberians was bewildered with visions of Eldorados, chivalrous adventures, and universal monarchy. Then Spanish liberty disappeared under the clash of arms, showers of gold, and the terrible illuminations of the auto-da-fe.

But how are we to account for the singular phenomenon that, after almost three centuries of a Habsburg dynasty, followed by a Bourbon dynasty—either of them quite sufficient to crush a people—the municipal liberties of Spain more or less survive? that in the very country where of all the feudal states absolute monarchy first arose in its most unmitigated form, centralization has never succeeded in taking root? The answer is not difficult. It was in the sixteenth century that were formed the great monarchies which established themselves everywhere on the downfall of the conflicting feudal classes—the aristocracy and the towns. But in the other great States of Europe absolute monarchy presents itself as a civilizing center, as the initiator of social unity. There it was the laboratory in which the various elements of society were so mixed and worked, as to allow the towns to change the local independence and sovereignty of the Middle Ages for the general rule of the middle classes, and the common sway of civil society. In Spain, on the contrary, while the aristocracy sunk into degradation without losing their worst privilege, the towns lost their medieval power without gaining modern importance.

Written in August-
November 1854

Marx and Engels,
Collected Works, Vol. 13,
Moscow, 1979, pp. 391-96

KARL MARX
ECONOMIC MANUSCRIPTS OF 1857-1859

From INTRODUCTION

Just as in general when examining any historical or social science, so also in the case of the development of economic categories is it always necessary to remember that the subject, in this context contemporary bourgeois society, is presupposed both in reality and in the mind, and that therefore categories express forms of existence and conditions of existence—and sometimes merely separate aspects—of this particular society, the subject; thus the category, *even from the scientific standpoint*, by no means begins at the moment when it is discussed *as such*. This has to be remembered because it provides important criteria for the arrangement of the material. For example, nothing seems more natural than to begin with rent, *i.e.*, with landed property, since it is associated with the earth, the source of all production and all life, and with agriculture, the first form of production in all societies that have attained a measure of stability. But nothing would be more erroneous. There is in every social formation a particular branch of production which determines the position and importance of all the others, and the relations obtaining in this branch accordingly determine the relations of all other branches as well. It is as though light of a particular hue were cast upon everything, tingeing all other colours and modifying their specific features; or as if a special ether determined the specific gravity of everything found in it. Let us take as an example pastoral

tribes. (Tribes living exclusively on hunting or fishing are beyond the boundary line from which real development begins.) A certain type of agricultural activity occurs among them and this determines land ownership. It is communal ownership and retains this form in a larger or smaller measure, according to the degree to which these people maintain their traditions, *e.g.*, communal ownership among the Slavs. Among settled agricultural people—settled already to a large extent—where agriculture predominates as in the societies of antiquity and the feudal period, even manufacture, its structure and the forms of property corresponding thereto, have, in some measure, specifically agrarian features. Manufacture is either completely dependent on agriculture, as in the earlier Roman period, or as in the Middle Ages, it copies in the town and in its conditions the organisation of the countryside. In the Middle Ages even capital—unless it was solely money capital—consisted of the traditional tools, etc., and retained a specifically agrarian character.

Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Moscow, 1970, pp. 212-13

PRE-CAPITALIST ECONOMIC FORMATIONS

While one of the prerequisites of wage-labour and one of the historical conditions for capital is free labour, and the exchange of free labour against money, in order to reproduce money and to convert it into values, in order to be consumed by money, not as use value for enjoyment, but as use value for money; another prerequisite is the separation of free labour from the objective conditions of its realisation—from the means and material of labour.

This means first of all the separation of the worker from the land, which is his natural laboratory, and thus the dissolution both of free small landed property and of communal landed property that is based on the oriental commune.

The worker treats the objective conditions of his labour in both these forms as his property: this is the natural unity of labour with its material prerequisites. Hence the worker has an objective existence independent of his labour. The individual regards himself as the proprietor, as master of the conditions of his reality. The same relation exists between him and the other individuals. Where this *prerequisite* derives from the community, he regards the others as his co-owners, so many incarnations of the common property. Where it derives from the individual families which jointly constitute the community, he regards them as independent owners coexisting with him, independent private proprietors. The common property which formerly absorbed everything and embraced them all, then subsists as a distinct *ager publicus* separate from the numerous private landowners.

In both cases individuals behave not as workers but as owners—and members of a community who also work. The purpose of this work is not the *creation of value*, although they may perform surplus work in order to exchange it for that of *others*, i.e., for surplus-products. Its purpose is the maintenance of the individual owner and his family as well as of the communal body as a whole. The concept of the individual as a *worker*, stripped of all qualities except this one, is itself a product of *history*.

In the beginning, the first form of landed property has a naturally evolved community as its first prerequisite: the family, the family expanded into a tribe,²⁹ or created by the inter-marriage of families, or a combination of tribes. We may take it for granted that *pastoralism*, or more generally a *migratory life*, is the first form of [maintaining] existence, the tribe not settling in a fixed place but using

up what it finds locally and then passing on. Men are not sedentary by nature (unless they happen to be in such a fertile environment that they could subsist on a single tree like monkeys; otherwise they would roam, like the wild animals). Hence the *tribal community*, the natural commonalty, appears not as the *consequence*, but as the *precondition of the joint* (temporary) *appropriation and use of the soil*.

Once men finally settle down, the extent to which this original community is modified will depend on various external, climatic, geographical, physical, etc., conditions as well as on their special natural make-up—their tribal character. The spontaneously evolved tribal community, or, if you will, the herd—the common ties of blood, language, custom, etc.—is the first precondition of the *appropriation of the objective conditions* of life, and of their reproducing and objectifying activity (activity as herds-men, hunters, agriculturalists, etc.).

The earth is the great laboratory, the arsenal which provides both the means and the materials of labour, and also the location, the *basis* of the community. Men's relation to it is naive: they regard it as the *property of the community*, the community which produces and reproduces itself by living labour. Only in so far as the individual is a member of this community, does he regard himself as an *owner* or *possessor*.

The real *appropriation* in the process of labour takes place under these *preconditions*, which are not the *product* of labour but appear as its natural or *divine* preconditions. Where the fundamental relationship is the same, this form can realise itself in a variety of ways. For instance, as is the case in most *Asiatic* fundamental forms, it is quite compatible with the fact that the *integrating entity* which stands above all these small communities may appear as the *superior* or *sole proprietor*, and the real communities therefore only as *hereditary* possessors. Since the *entity* is the real owner, and the real precondition of

common ownership, it can appear as something *distinct* and superior to the numerous real, separate communities. The individual is then in fact propertyless, or propertyless—i.e., the attitude of the individual to the *natural* conditions of labour and reproduction as belonging to him, finding the objective body of his subjectivity in inorganic nature—seems to be mediated for him by a grant made by the total entity (represented by the despot as the father of the numerous communities) to the individual through the intermediary of the particular community. It is therefore self-evident that the surplus product (which, incidentally, is legally determined as a result of the real appropriation through labour) belongs to this supreme entity.

Oriental despotism therefore with its apparent legal absence of property is in fact, however, based on tribal or communal property, in most cases created through a combination of manufacture and agriculture within the small community, which thus becomes entirely self-sustaining and contains within itself all conditions of reproduction and surplus-production. Part of its surplus labour belongs to the higher community, which ultimately appears as a *person*. This surplus-labour is rendered both as tribute, etc., and as common labour for the glory of the whole community, partly of the real despot, partly of the imagined tribal entity, the god.

In so far as this type of communal property is actually realised in labour, it can appear in two ways. Either the small communities may vegetate independently side by side, and within each the individual labours independently with his family on the plot allotted to him,* or the unity

* [Marx has inserted the following passage in parenthesis at this point:] (A certain amount of labour is required for the *common store*—for *insurance* as it were—on the one hand; and on the other for *detracting the costs of the community as such*, i.e., for war, religious worship, etc. The dominion of lords, in its most primitive sense, arises only at this point, e.g., in the Slavonic and Rumanian communities, etc. Here lies the possibility of a transition to *corvée*, etc.).

can involve a common organisation of labour itself, which can constitute a veritable system, as in Mexico, and especially Peru, among the ancient Celts, and some tribes of India.

Furthermore, the communality within the tribal organisation may tend to appear either in such a way that the unity is represented in the head of the tribal family or as a mutual relationship of the heads of families. Accordingly the community will have either a more despotic or a more democratic form. The communal conditions for real appropriation through labour, such as *irrigation systems* (very important among the Asian peoples), means of communication, etc., will then appear as the work of the superior entity—the despotic government which is poised above the small communities. Cities in the proper sense arise by the side of these villages only where the location is particularly favourable to external trade, or where the head of the state and his satraps exchange their revenue (the surplus-product) against labour, where they expend it as labour-funds.

The second form which, like the first, has given rise to substantial variations, local, historical, etc., is the product of a more dynamic historical life, of the fates and modifications of the original tribes. The *community* is here also the first precondition, but unlike our first case, it is not here the substance of which the individuals are mere adjuncts or of which they merely form spontaneously evolved parts. The basis of this form is not the land, but the city as an already created seat (centre) of the rural population (landowners). The arable land appears as the territory of the city; not [as in the other case] the village as a mere appendage to the land.

There is no difficulty in treating the land itself—whatever difficulties those who till it and really appropriate it may encounter—as the inorganic nature of the living individual, as his workshop, his means of labour, the object of his labour and the means of subsistence of the subject. The

difficulties encountered by the community can arise only from other communities which have either already occupied the land or disturb the community in its occupation of it. War is therefore the great collective task, the great communal labour, which is required either for the occupation of the objective conditions of existence or for the protection and perpetuation of such occupation. The community, consisting of families, is therefore in the first instance organised on military lines, as a warlike, military force, and this is one of the conditions of its existence as a proprietor. Concentration of settlement in the city is the foundation of this warlike organisation.

The nature of tribal structure leads to higher and lower kinship groups, and this differentiation is developed further as a result of the mixture with subjugated tribes, etc.

Communal property—as state property, *ager publicus*—is here separate from private property. The property of the individual is here not direct communal property, as it is in the first case, where accordingly it is not the property of the individual who is separated from the community, but property which he merely possesses.

The less communal labour (such as the irrigation systems of the Orient) is in fact required to make use of the property of the individual; the more the purely spontaneous character of the tribe is broken by the movement of history or migration; the more the tribe moves away from its original place of settlement and occupies *alien* land, thus entering substantially new conditions of labour and the energies of the individual further developing—hence the communal character seems, and must seem, rather as a negative unity in relation to the outside world—the more do conditions arise which cause the individual to become a *private proprietor* of land—of a particular plot—whose separate cultivation devolves on him and his family.

The community—as a state—is, on the one hand, the relationship of these free and equal private owners to each

other, their association against the outside world—and at the same time their safeguard. This community is based on the fact that its members consist of working owners of land, small peasant cultivators; but in the same measure the independence of the latter depends on their mutual relation as members of the community, on the safeguarding of the *ager publicus* for common needs and common glory, etc. To be a member of the community remains the precondition for the appropriation of land, but in his capacity as member of the community the individual is a private owner. His relation to his private property is both a relation to the land and to his existence as a member of the community, and his maintenance as a member is the maintenance of the community and vice versa, etc. The community, though it is here already a *product of history* not only *de facto* but perceived as such, and accordingly something which *must have come into being*, is here the prerequisite of *property* in land—i.e., of the relation of the working subject to the natural conditions of his labour as belonging to him, this “belonging” however is mediated through his existence as a member of the state, through the existence of the state, thus through a *prerequisite* which is regarded as divine, etc.

There is concentration in the city, with the land as its territory; small-scale agriculture producing for immediate consumption; manufacture as domestic subsidiary work of wives and daughters (spinning and weaving) or carried on as an independent occupation only in a few crafts (*fabri*, etc.).

The prerequisite of the continued existence of this community is the maintenance of equality among its free self-sustaining peasants, and their individual labour as the condition of the continued existence of their property. They treat the natural conditions of their labour as their property; but personal labour must still continuously set up these conditions as real conditions and objective elements of the personality of the individual, of his personal labour.

On the other hand the tendency of this small warlike community drives it beyond these limits, etc. (Rome, Greece, Jews, etc.).

As Niebuhr says: "When the augurs had assured Numa of the divine approval for his election, the first preoccupation of the pious king was not the worship of the gods, but a human one. He distributed the land conquered in war by Romulus and left to be occupied; he set up the cult of Terminus. All the ancient law-givers, and above all Moses, founded the success of their instructions for virtue, justice and good morals upon landed property, or at least on secure hereditary possession of land, for the greatest possible number of citizens" (Vol. I, p. 245, 2nd ed., *Römische Geschichte*).

The individual is placed in such conditions of gaining his life as to make not the acquiring of wealth his object, but self-sustenance, his own reproduction as a member of the community; the reproduction of himself as proprietor of the parcel of ground and, in that quality, as a member of the commune.*

The continued existence of the commune is the reproduction of all its members as self-sustaining peasants, whose surplus-time belongs precisely to the commune, the labour of war, etc. Ownership of one's own labour is mediated through the ownership of the conditions of labour—the plot of land, which is itself guaranteed by the existence of the community, which in turn is safeguarded by the surplus-labour of its members in the form of military service, etc. The member of the community reproduces himself not by taking part in wealth-producing labour, but by taking part in labour for the (imaginary or real) communal interests aimed at sustaining the association externally and internally. Property is quiritary,³⁰ belonging to the Roman citizen, the private landowner is such because he is a Roman, but as a Roman he is a private landowner.

A third form of the property of working individuals—self-sustaining members of the community—in the natural

* Marx wrote this sentence in English.—Ed.

conditions of their labour, is the *Germanic* form. Here the member of the community is neither co-owner of the communal property, by virtue of being its member, as in the specifically oriental form,* nor is the situation similar to that in the Roman, Greek (in brief, the ancient classical) form where the land occupied by the community is Roman land. A part of it, *ager publicus* in its various forms, remains with the community as such, as distinct from its members, the remainder is distributed, each plot of land being Roman by virtue of the fact that it is the private property, the domain, of a Roman, his share of the laboratory; on the other hand, he is Roman only in so far as he possesses this sovereign right over part of the Roman soil.

{In antiquity urban crafts and commerce were held in low, but agriculture in high, esteem; in the Middle Ages their status was reversed. [Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 418.]} {The right of *use* of common land by *possession* originally belonged to the patricians, who then granted it to their clients; the *assignment of property* out of the *ager publicus* belonged exclusively to the plebeians; all assignments were made in favour of plebeians and compensation for a share in the communal land. *Landed property in the strict sense*, if we except the area near the city wall, was originally in the hands only of the plebeians (rural communities incorporated later). [Op. cit., pp. 435-36.]} Essence of the Roman plebs as a totality of agriculturalists, as expressed in their quiritarian property.

* [Marx has inserted the following passage in parenthesis at this point:] (Where property exists *only* as communal property, the individual member as such is only the *possessor* of a particular part of it, hereditary or not, for any fraction of the property does not belong to any member for himself, but only belongs to him as a direct member of the community, that is as someone who is a direct part of the community and not distinct from it. The individual is therefore only a possessor. Only *communal* property exists and *private possession*. The character of this possession in relation to the communal property can be historically and locally, etc., modified in very different ways, depending on whether labour is performed in isolation by the private possessor or is in turn determined by the community, or by the entity standing above the particular community.)

The ancients unanimously regarded farming as the *activity proper* to freemen, the school for soldiers. The ancient stock of the nation is preserved in it; the nation changes in the cities, where foreign merchants and artisans settle, just as the native ones move to the places where returns seem promising. Wherever there is slavery, the freedman seeks his subsistence in such activities, often accumulating wealth: in antiquity such occupations were therefore mostly in their hands and thus unsuitable for the citizen: hence the view that it was questionable whether craftsmen should be admitted to full citizenship (the early Greeks, as a rule, excluded them from it). Οσδενι ἐξήν 'Ρωμαίων ουτε κάπηλον ουτε χειροτέχνην βίον ἔχειν.*³¹ The ancients had no notion that there could be a guild system worthy of respect, such as that existing in mediæval urban history; and even there the military spirit declined as the guilds got the better of the patrician families, and was finally extinguished; and consequently also the respect in which the city was held outside and its freedom. [Op. cit., pp. 614-15.] {The tribes of the ancient states were set up in two ways, either according to *kinship* or according to *territory*. *Kinship tribes* historically precede territorial tribes, and are almost everywhere ousted by them. Their most extreme and rigid form is the institution of castes, separated from one another, without the right of inter-marriage, with quite different status; each with its exclusive, unalterable occupation.

The *territorial tribes* originally corresponded to a division of the territory into districts and villages; so that at the time it was introduced—in Attica under Cleisthenes—anyone living in a village was registered as a *demotes* of that village, and as a member of the *phyle*³² of the area to which that village belonged. However, as a rule his descendants, regardless of place of domicile, remained in the same *phyle* and the same *deme*, thereby giving to this division too an appearance of ancestral descent.

The Roman *gentes* did not consist of blood-relatives; in addition to the common name Cicero mentions descent from freemen as a characteristic feature. The members of the Roman *gens* had common *sacra*, but this ceased later—already in Cicero's time. Inheritance from fellow-kinsmen who died without relatives and intestate was retained longest of all. In the oldest period, members of the *gens* had the obligation to assist fellow-kinsmen in distress to bear unusual burdens. (This originally the case among the Germans everywhere, and persisted longest in the Dithmarschen.³³) The *gentes* a

* No Roman was permitted to lead the life of a petty trader or craftsman.—Ed.

sort of guild. A more general organisation than that of kin groups did not exist in the ancient world. Thus among the Gaels,³⁴ the aristocratic Campbells and their vassals constitute a clan. [Op cit., pp. 317-35.]}

Since the patrician represents the community to a higher degree, he is the *possessor* of the *ager publicus*, and uses it through the intermediary of his clients, etc. (he gradually appropriates it as well).

The Germanic community is not concentrated in the city; simply as a result of such a concentration—of the city as the centre of rural life, the domicile of the agricultural workers, and also the centre of warfare—the community as such acquires an external existence, distinct from that of the individual. Ancient classical history is the history of cities, but cities based on landownership and agriculture; Asian history is a kind of neutral unity of town and country (really large cities must be regarded merely as princely camps, superimposed on the real economic structure); the Middle Ages (Germanic period) starts with the countryside as the seat of history, whose further development then proceeds through the opposition of town and country; modern [history] is the urbanisation of the countryside, not, as among the ancients, the ruralisation of the city.

The concentration in the city provides the community as such with an economic existence; the mere *presence* of the town as such is different from a mere multitude of separate houses. Here the whole does not simply consist of its parts. It is a form of independent organism. Among the Germans, where the various heads of families settle in the forests, separated by long distances, even considered *superficially* the community exists merely because its members periodically get together, although their *intrinsic* unity is embodied in descent, language, common past and history, etc.

The *community* therefore appears as an *association*, not as a *union*, as a unification, whose independent subjects

are the landowners, and not as a unity. In fact, therefore, the community does not exist as a *state*, a *political entity*, as among the ancients, because it does not exist as a *city*. If the community is to enter upon real existence, the free landowners must hold an *assembly*, whereas, e.g., in Rome it *exists* apart from such assemblies, in the actuality of the *city itself* and the officials placed at its head, etc.

True, the *ager publicus*, the communal land or people's land, occurs among the Germans also, as distinct from the property of individuals. It consists of hunting grounds, pastures or woodlands, etc., that part of the land which cannot be partitioned if it is to serve as a means of production in this specific form. However, unlike the Roman case, the *ager publicus* does not appear as the particular economic being of the state, by the side of the private owners—who are properly speaking *private* owners as such in so far as they have been *excluded* from or deprived of the use of the *ager publicus*, like the plebeians.

The *ager publicus* appears rather as a mere supplement to individual property among the Germans, and figures as property only in so far as it is defended against hostile tribes as the common property of one tribe. The property of the individual does not appear mediated through the community, but the existence of the community and of communal property appears as mediated, i.e., as a relation of the independent subjects to each other. The entire economy is essentially contained in every individual household, which forms an independent centre of production (manufacture is simply the domestic subsidiary work of the women, etc.).

In classical antiquity the city with its attached territory formed the economic whole; in the Germanic world, it is the individual home, which itself appears merely as a point in the land belonging to it; there is no concentration of a multiplicity of proprietors, but the family as an independent unit. In the Asiatic form (at least in the predominant form) the individual has no property, but only

possession; the community is properly speaking the real proprietor—hence property only as *communal property* in land.

In antiquity (Romans as the classic example, the thing in its purest and most characteristic form), there is a contradictory form of state ownership of land and private ownership of land, so that the latter is mediated through the former, or the former exists in this dual form. The private landowner is therefore simultaneously an urban citizen. Economically citizenship may be reduced to the simple formula that the agriculturalist lives in a city.

In the Germanic form the agriculturalist is not a citizen, i.e., not an inhabitant of a city; but its foundation is the isolated, independent family dwelling, guaranteed by means of association with other such dwellings of the same tribe, and their occasional meetings to support one another when required for purposes of war, religion, the settlement of legal disputes, etc. Individual landed property does not here appear as a contradictory form of communal landed property, nor as mediated by the community, but the other way round. The community exists only in the mutual relation of the individual landowners as such. Communal property as such appears only as a communal accessory to the individual ancestral seats and land appropriations.

The community is neither the substance, of which the individual appears merely as the accident, nor is it the general, which *exists and has being* as such both in men's minds and in the reality of the city and its urban requirements, as distinct from those of the individual, or exists in the urban land which is distinct from the separate economic sphere of the member of the community. But the community is, on the one hand, the common element in language, blood, etc., which is antecedent to the individual owner; but on the other hand it has real being only in its *actual assembly* for communal purposes; and, in so far

as it has a separate economic existence in the communally used hunting-grounds, pastures, etc., it is used by every individual owner as such, and not in his capacity as the representative of the state (as in Rome). It is genuinely the common property of the individual owners, and not of the association of these owners, an association which has an existence of its own in the city, distinct from that of the individual members.

The crucial point here is this: in all these forms, where landed property and agriculture are the basis of the economic order and where the economic object is therefore the production of use-values, i.e., the *reproduction of the individual* in certain definite relationships to his community, in accordance with which he forms its basis, we find the following elements:

1. Appropriation of the natural conditions of labour, of the *earth* as the original instrument of labour, both laboratory and repository of raw materials; however, appropriation not by means of labour, but as a prerequisite of labour. The individual simply regards the objective conditions of labour as his own, as the inorganic nature of his subjectivity, which realises itself through them. The chief objective condition of labour does not itself appear as a *product* of labour, but exists as *nature*. There is on the one hand the living individual, on the other the earth, as the objective condition of his reproduction.

2. This *attitude* to the land, to the earth as the property of the working individual, means that a man appears from the start as something more than the abstraction of the working individual, but has an *objective mode of existence* in his ownership of the earth, which is *antecedent* to his activity and does not appear as its mere consequence, and is as much a prerequisite of his activity as his skin, his sense-organs, and though these are also reproduced and developed, etc., in the process of life, they are on the other hand antecedent to the reproduction process. This attitude to the land is immediately mediated by the

natural, more or less historically developed and modified, existence of the individual as *a member of a community*—his spontaneously evolved existence as part of a tribe, etc.

An isolated individual could no more own land than he could speak. Though he could live off its resources, like the animals. The relation to the soil as property is always brought about through the occupation of the land, peaceful or violent, by the tribe or the community in some more or less primitive or already historically developed form. The individual here can never appear in the isolation of the mere free labourer. If the objective conditions of his labour are presupposed to belong to him, he himself is subjectively presupposed to be a member of a community which mediates his relationship to the land. His relation to the objective conditions of his labour is mediated by his being a member of the community; on the other hand, the real existence of the community is determined by the specific form of his ownership of the objective conditions of labour. Whether the property mediated by his life in the community appears as *communal property*, where the individual merely possesses it and there is no private ownership of land; or it appears in the dual form of state and private property which coexist side by side, in such a way however that the former is the precondition of the latter, and hence only the citizen is and must be a private owner but on the other hand his property *qua* citizen has a separate existence at the same time, or lastly, communal property appears merely as a supplement to individual property, which in this case however forms the basis, while the community as such has no existence except in the *assembly* of its members and in their association for common purposes—these different forms of relationship of communal or tribal members to the land of the tribe, to the earth upon which it has settled, depend partly on the natural characteristics of the tribe, partly on the economic conditions in which the tribe actually exer-

cises its ownership of the land, i.e., appropriates its fruits by means of labour. And this in turn will depend on the climate, the physical properties of the soil, the physically determined mode of its utilisation, the attitude to hostile or neighbouring tribes, and the modifications introduced by migrations, historical events, etc.

If the community as such is to continue in the old way, the reproduction of its members is necessary under the given objective conditions. Production itself, the advancing population (which also falls under the head of production), is bound to eliminate these conditions gradually, destroying them instead of reproducing them, etc., and this spells the ruin of the community, together with the property relations on which it was based.

The Asiatic form necessarily survives most stubbornly and for the longest time. This is due to its presupposition—that the individual does not become independent of the community; that there is a self-sustaining cycle of production, unity of agriculture and the handicrafts, etc.

If the individual changes his relations to the community, he thereby changes and undermines both the community and its economic presupposition; on the other hand, changes in this economic presupposition brought about by its own dialectic, impoverishment, etc. Especially the influence of warfare and conquest, which, e.g., in Rome is an essential part of the economic conditions of the community itself, destroys the effective bond on which the community rests.

In all these forms the basis of development is the *reproduction* of the *presupposed* relations between individual and community—whether these relations have come about more or less spontaneously, or in the course of history, but have become traditional—and a *definite, objective* existence of the individual, which is *predetermined* for him both as regards his attitude to the conditions of labour and to his co-workers, fellow-tribesmen, etc. This development

is therefore from the outset *limited*, but once the limits are transcended, decay and disintegration ensue. Thus among the Romans the evolution of slavery, concentration of landed property, exchange, a monetary system, conquest, etc., although all these appeared up to a point to be compatible with the basis, and merely innocent extensions of it, or else mere abuses arising from it. Considerable developments are thus possible within a particular sphere. Individuals may appear to be great. But free and full development of individual or society is inconceivable here, for such development stands in contradiction to the original relationship.

Among the ancients we find not a single enquiry about which form of landed property, etc., is the most productive, creates maximum wealth. Wealth does not appear as the aim of production, although Cato may well investigate the most profitable cultivation of fields, or Brutus may even lend money at the highest rate of interest. The enquiry is always about what kind of property creates the best citizens. Wealth as an end in itself appears only among the few trading peoples—monopolists of the carrying trade—who live in the pores of the ancient world like the Jews in medieval society. Wealth is on the one hand a thing, realised in things, in material products, over against which stands man as subject; on the other hand, wealth regarded as value is simply the right to command other people's labour, not for the purpose of domination, but of private enjoyment, etc. In all its forms it appears in a material shape, whether of objects or of relations by means of objects, which lie outside of, and as it were accidentally beside, the individual.

Thus the ancient conception, in which man (however narrowly defined in national, religious or political terms) appears as the aim of production, seems greatly superior to that of the modern world, in which production appears as the aim of man and wealth as the aim of production. In fact, however, when divested of the narrow bourgeois

form, what is wealth, if not the universality of the individuals' needs, capacities, enjoyments, productive powers, etc., produced in the course of universal exchange? If not the full development of human control over the forces of nature—both those of what is known as nature and those of his own nature? If not the full elaboration of all his creative abilities, without any preconditions other than antecedent historical evolution which makes the totality of this development—i.e., the development of all human faculties as such, not measured by any *previously established* yardstick—an end in itself? A situation where man does not reproduce himself in any predetermined form, but produces his totality? Where he does not seek to remain something already formed, but is in the absolute movement of becoming?

In bourgeois economics—and in the epoch of production to which it corresponds—this complete elaboration of the human essence appears as its complete emptying, the universal objectification as total estrangement, and the demolition of all fixed, one-sided aims as the sacrifice of the end in itself to a wholly external aim. Hence the childlike world of the ancients appears on the one hand to be superior; and on the other hand it is so, wherever one looks for self-contained structure, form and accepted limits. The ancient world is satisfying from a narrow point of view, whereas the modern world leaves us unsatisfied, or, where it appears to be satisfied with itself, it is *vulgar*.

What M. Proudhon calls the *extra-economic* origin of property—by which he means landed property³⁵—is the *pre-bourgeois* relationship of the individual to the objective conditions of labour, and in the first instance to the *natural* objective conditions of labour. For, just as the working subject is a natural individual, a natural being, so the first objective condition of his labour appears as nature, earth, as his inorganic body. He himself is not only the organic body, but also this inorganic nature as a subject. This condition is not something he has produced, but

something he finds to hand; it is antecedent to him and has a natural existence apart from him.

Before proceeding in our analysis, a further point: the worthy Proudhon not only could, but should have also accused *capital* and *wage-labour*—as forms of property—of *extra-economic* origin. For the fact that the worker finds the objective conditions of his labour as something separate from him, as *capital*, and that the capitalist finds the propertyless *worker*, as an abstract worker—the exchange as it takes place between value and living labour—presupposes a *historical process*, however much capital and wage-labour themselves reproduce this relationship and elaborate its objective scope, as well as its depth. And this historical process, as we have seen, is the evolutionary history of capital and wage-labour.

In other words, the *extra-economic origin* of property simply means the *historical origin* of the bourgeois economy, of the forms of production to which the categories of political economy give theoretical or ideal expression. But the statement that pre-bourgeois history, and each phase of it, has its own *economy* and its movement an *economic basis*, is at bottom merely the tautology that human life has always rested on production, in some way or other *social* production, whose relations are precisely what we call economic relations.

The original conditions of production cannot initially be *themselves produced*—they cannot be the results of production. (This applies equally to the original conditions of the reproduction of a growing number of human beings brought about by the natural process of the two sexes, for if this reproduction appears on one hand as the appropriation of the objects by the subjects, it appears on the other likewise as the forming, the subordination, of the objects by and to a subjective purpose; the transformation of the objects into results and repositories of subjective activity.) It is not the *unity* of living and active human beings with the natural, inorganic conditions of their

metabolism with nature, and therefore their appropriation of nature which requires explanation or is the result of a historical process, but the *separation* of these inorganic conditions of human existence from this active existence, a separation which is only completely carried through in the relation between wage-labour and capital.

There is no such separation under the conditions of slavery and serfdom; what happens is that one part of society is treated by another as a merely *inorganic and natural* condition of its own reproduction. The slave stands in no relation at all to the objective conditions of his labour. It is rather *labour* itself, both in the form of the slave as of the serf, which *as an inorganic condition* of production is placed among the other natural creatures [*Naturwesen*] alongside the cattle or as an appendage of the land.

In other words: the original conditions of production appear as natural prerequisites, *natural conditions of existence of the producer*, just as his living body, although he reproduces and develops it, is not originally posited by himself, but appears as his *prerequisite*; his own (physical) being is a natural prerequisite, which he has not posited. These *natural conditions of existence*, which he regards as an inorganic body belonging to himself, have a dual character: they are (1) subjective and (2) objective. The producer is a member of a family, a tribe, a clan, etc.—which acquire historically differing shapes as the result of mixture and conflict with others, and as such a member he relates to a distinct part of nature (let us still call it earth, land) as his own inorganic being, the condition of his production and reproduction. As a natural member of the community he participates in the communal property and possesses a separate part of it; just as being a Roman citizen by birth, he has (at least) a nominal claim to the *ager publicus* and a real claim to so and so many *juggera* of land, etc.

His *property*, i.e., his relation to the natural prerequisites of his production as belonging to him, as *his own*,

is mediated by his natural membership of a community. (The abstraction of a community whose members have nothing in common but perhaps language, etc., and barely even that, is plainly the product of much later historical circumstances.) It is, for instance, evident that the individual is related to his language as *his own* only as the natural member of a human community. Language as the product of an individual is an absurdity. But the same applies to property.

Language itself is just as much the product of a community, as in another respect it is the existence of the community; it is, so to speak, its self-evident existence.

{Communal production and communal ownership, as found, e.g., in Peru, is evidently a *secondary* form introduced and transmitted by conquering tribes, who had themselves been familiar with communal ownership and communal production in the older and simpler form, such as occurs in India and among the Slavs. Similarly, the form found, e.g., among the Celts in Wales seems to have been transmitted to them, a *secondary* form, introduced by more advanced conquerors. The completeness and systematic elaboration of these systems by a *supreme authority* demonstrate their later origins. Just as the system of feudalism introduced into England was more perfect than the feudalism which had naturally arisen in France.}

{Among migratory pastoral tribes—and all pastoral peoples are originally migratory—the earth, like all other conditions of nature, appears in its elementary boundlessness, e.g., in the Asian steppes and the Asian high plateaux. It is grazed, etc., consumed by the herds, which provide the pastoral peoples with their subsistence. They treat it as their property, though they never establish this ownership. This is the case with the hunting grounds of the savage Indian tribes of America; the tribe considers a certain region as its hunting territory and maintains it by force against other tribes, or seeks to expel other tribes from the territory they claim. Among the migratory

pastoral tribes the community is in fact always united, a travelling party, caravan, horde, and the forms of higher and lower position develop out of the conditions of this mode of life. What is *appropriated* and *reproduced* is here only the herd and not the soil, whose temporary use is always *communal* wherever the tribe chooses to stay.

Let us pass on to the consideration of settled peoples. The only barrier which the community can encounter in its relations to the natural conditions of production—to the land—as *belonging to it*, is some *other community*, which has already laid claim to them as its inorganic body. War is therefore one of the earliest tasks of every primitive community of this kind, both for the defence of property and for its acquisition.

(It will be sufficient here to speak of original property in land, for among pastoral peoples property in naturally existing products of the earth, e.g., sheep, is at the same time property in the pastures they pass through. In general, property in land includes property in its organic products.)

{Where man himself is captured together with the land as an organic accessory of it, he is captured as one of the conditions of production, and thus slavery and serfdom arise, which soon debase and modify the original forms of all communities, and themselves become their foundation. The simple structure is thereby unfavourably influenced.}

Thus originally *property* means no more than man's attitude to his natural conditions of production as belonging to him, as his, as *prerequisites of his own existence*; his attitude to them as *natural prerequisites* of himself, which constitute, as it were, a prolongation of his body. Strictly speaking he has no relation to his conditions of production, but exists in two forms, subjectively as himself and objectively in these natural inorganic conditions of his existence.

These *natural conditions of production* have two forms: (1) his existence as a member of a community, and therefore the existence of this community, which in its original form is a *tribal community*, more or less modified; (2) his relation to the *land* as to *his own*, in virtue of the community, communal landed property, at the same time *individual possession* for the individual, or in such a manner that the soil and its cultivation remain in common and only its products are divided. (However, *dwellings*, etc., even if no more than the waggons of the Scythians, nevertheless appear to be always in the possession of individuals.) Membership of a *naturally evolved society*, a tribe, etc., is a natural condition of production for the living individual. Such membership is, e.g., already a condition of his language, etc. His own productive existence is only possible under this condition. His subjective existence as such is conditioned by it as much as it is conditioned by the relationship to the earth as to his laboratory.

(True, property is originally *mobile*, for in the first instance man takes possession of the ready-made fruits of the earth, including animals and especially those capable of domestication. However, even this situation—hunting, fishing, pastoralism, subsistence by collecting the fruit of the trees, etc.—always presupposes the appropriation of the earth, whether as a place of fixed settlement or a territory for roaming, or a pasture for his animals, etc.)

Property therefore means *belonging to a tribe* (community) (to have one's subjective-objective existence within it), and the relationship of this community to the land, to the earth as its inorganic body, mediates the relationship of the individual to the land, to the external primary condition of production—for the earth is at the same time raw material, tool and fruit—as the preconditions belonging to his individuality, its modes of existence. *We reduce this property to his attitude to his conditions of production.* Why not to those of consumption, since originally the in-

dividual's production is confined to the reproduction of his own body through the appropriation of ready-made objects prepared by nature for consumption? But even where it is merely a matter of *finding* and *discovering*, it soon requires effort, work—as in hunting, fishing, the care of flocks—and the production (i.e., the development) of certain capacities by the subject. Moreover, conditions in which man need merely reach for what is already available, without any tools (i.e., without products of labour already intended for production), without changing its form (which already occurs under pastoralism), etc., are very transitory, and can nowhere be regarded as normal; and cannot even be regarded as the normal original conditions. Incidentally, the original conditions of production obviously include matter directly consumable without labour, such as fruit, animals, etc., consequently, the fund of consumption itself appears as a part of the *original fund of production*.

The fundamental condition of property based on tribalism (into which the community originally resolves) is to be a member of the tribe. Consequently a tribe conquered and subjugated by another becomes *propertyless* and is included among the *inorganic conditions* of the conquering tribe's reproduction, which that community regards as its own. Slavery and serfdom are therefore simply further developments of property based on tribalism. They are bound to modify all its forms. They are least able to do this in the Asiatic form. In the self-sustaining unity of manufacture and agriculture on which this form is based, conquest is not so essential a condition as where *landed property, agriculture, predominate exclusively*. On the other hand, since the individual in this form never becomes an owner but only a possessor, he is basically himself the property, the slave of the person who embodies the unity of the community and slavery here neither abolishes the conditions of labour, nor does it modify the essential relationship.

It is now furthermore evident that:

In so far as property is only a conscious attitude to the conditions of production as to *one's own*—an attitude established by the community for the individual, and proclaimed and guaranteed as law—the existence of the producer therefore appearing as an existence within the objective conditions *belonging to him*, it is realised only through production. Actual appropriation only takes place in the course of active, practical association with these conditions, not in the mental association; only thus are they actually established as the conditions of his subjective activity.

But this shows also clearly that *these conditions change*. Only because tribes use a region for hunting does it become a hunting-ground; only as a result of cultivation does land become a prolongation of the body of the individual. After the *city of Rome* had been built and its surrounding land cultivated by its citizens, the conditions of the community were different from what they had been before. The object of all these communities is their preservation, *i.e., the reproduction of the individuals who constitute them, their reproduction as owners, i.e., in the same objective mode of existence, which also forms the relationship of the members to each other, and therefore forms the community itself. But this reproduction is at the same time necessarily new production and the destruction of the old form.* For instance, where each individual is supposed to possess so many acres of land, the mere increase in population constitutes an obstacle. If this is to be overcome, colonisation must be resorted to and this requires wars of conquest. Hence slaves, etc., also, e.g., enlargement of the *ager publicus*, and hence [the rise of] the patricians, who represent the community, etc.

Thus the preservation of the old community implies the destruction of the conditions upon which it rests, and turns into its opposite. If, for instance, it was thought possible to increase output in a given territory by devel-

oping the productive forces, etc. (a development which is especially slow in agriculture, with its traditionalism), this would imply new methods and combinations of labour, using a large part of the day in agriculture, etc., and this again would destroy the old economic conditions of the community. The act of reproduction itself changes not only the objective conditions—e.g., transforming village into town, the wilderness into agricultural clearings, etc.—but the producers themselves change, they evolve new qualities, by producing they develop and transform themselves, acquire new powers and new conceptions, new modes of intercourse, new needs, and new speech.

The more traditional the mode of production itself, i.e., the more the *real process* of appropriation remains the same, the more unchanging will the ancient forms of property be and therefore also the community as a whole. (Note that the traditional mode persists for a long time in agriculture and even longer in the oriental combination of agriculture and manufacture.)

Where a separation of the members of the community as private owners from themselves as urban community and owners of urban territory has already taken place conditions occur already which make it possible for the individual to *lose* his property, i.e., the double relationship which makes him both a full citizen, a member of the community, and a *proprietor*. In the oriental form this *loss* is hardly possible, except as a result of entirely external influences, for the individual member of the community never establishes so independent a relation to the community as to enable him to lose his (objective, economic) tie with it. He is firmly rooted in it. This is also the result of the union of manufacture and agriculture, of town (or village) and country.

Among the ancients manufacture already appears as corruption (an occupation for freedmen, clients and foreigners), etc. This development of productive work (separated from its complete subordination to agriculture,

where it is domestic work, the work of free persons, intended only for agricultural and military purposes or for the requirements of religion and the needs of the community, such as the construction of houses, roads or temples) which is bound to occur as a result of intercourse with foreigners, slaves, the desire to exchange surplus products, etc., dissolves the mode of production upon which the community rests, and with it the *objectively individual man*—i.e., the individual determined as a Greek, a Roman, etc. Exchange has the same effect, and so has indebtedness, etc.

There is originally a unity between a specific form of communal or tribal organisation and the corresponding ownership of nature, or attitude to the objective conditions of production as naturally existing, as the objective being of the individual by means of the community. This unity, which in one sense appears as the particular form of property, has its living reality in a specific *mode of production* itself, and this mode appears equally as the behaviour of the individuals to one another and as their specific active behaviour towards inorganic nature, their specific mode of labour (which is always family labour and often communal labour). The community itself appears as the first great force of production; particular kinds of conditions of production (e.g., animal husbandry, agriculture) give rise to particular modes of production and particular forces of production both objective and subjective, the latter appearing as qualities of the individuals.

In the last instance the community and the property resting upon it can be reduced to a definite stage in the development of the forces of production of the working subjects—to which correspond definite relations of these subjects to each other and to nature. Up to a certain point, reproduction. Thereafter, it turns into dissolution.

Property—and this applies to its Asiatic, Slavonic, ancient classical and Germanic forms—therefore originally

signifies that the working (producing) subject (or the subject reproducing himself) treats the conditions of his production or reproduction as his own. Hence, according to the conditions of production, property will take different forms. The object of production itself is to reproduce the producer in and together with these objective conditions of his existence. This behaviour as a proprietor—which is not the result but the precondition of labour, i.e., of production—presupposes a particular existence of the individual as part of a tribal or communal entity (whose property he is himself up to a certain point).

Slavery, serfdom, etc., where the worker himself appears as one of the natural conditions of production for a third individual or community (this is *not* the case, e.g., with the general slavery of the Orient, which is so considered *only* from the European point of view) and where property therefore is no longer the relationship of the individual who works himself to the objective conditions of work, is always secondary, never primary, although it is the necessary and logical result of property founded upon the community and upon work in the community.

It is of course easy to imagine that a powerful, physically superior person first captures animals and then captures men in order to make them catch animals for him; in brief, that he uses man as a naturally occurring condition for his reproduction like any other living natural thing; and that his own labour merely amounts to the exercise of authority. But such a view is banal, though it may be correct from the point of view of a given tribal or communal entity, for it takes the *isolated* man as its starting-point.

Only in the process of history can man isolate himself. He originally appears as a *generic being*, a *tribal being*, a *herd animal*—though by no means as a ξῶον πολιτικόν* in the political sense. Exchange itself is a major agent of

* Political animal.³⁶—Ed.

this isolation. It makes the herd superfluous and dissolves it, once the situation is such that he as an isolated person relates only to himself, but the means of establishing himself as an isolated individual is to make himself universal and common. In this community the objective existence of the individual as an owner, say a landowner, is presupposed, and moreover under certain conditions which chain him to the community, or rather constitute a link in his chain. In bourgeois society, e.g., the worker is entirely objectiveless, entirely subjective, but the thing which *confronts* him has now become the *true community* which he tries to swallow up and which swallows him.

All the forms (they are more or less naturally evolved, but at the same time also the results of a historical process) in which either the community presupposes that the subjects form a definite objective unity with their conditions of production, or in which a specific subjective existence presupposes the communities themselves as conditions of production, necessarily correspond only to a development of the forces of production which is limited, and limited in principle. The development of the forces of production dissolves them, and their dissolution is itself a development of the human forces of production. Labour is initially undertaken on a certain basis—first naturally evolved—then a historically evolved prerequisite. However, this basis or prerequisite is then itself cancelled, or it is posited as a disappearing prerequisite which has become too narrow for the development of the advancing human mass.

In so far as the landed property of classical antiquity reappears in modern ownership of small plots, it belongs to political economy and we shall deal with it in the section on landed property.

(All this is to be analysed again more deeply and in greater detail later.)

What we are concerned with here first of all is this: the relationship of labour to capital or to the objective

conditions of labour as capital, presupposes a historical process which dissolves the different forms in which the worker is an owner and the owner works. Hence first of all:

(1) *Dissolution* of the relation to the earth—the land—as a natural condition of production which man treats as his own inorganic being, the laboratory of his forces and the domain of his will. All forms in which this property is found presuppose a *community* whose members, though there may be formal distinctions between them, are *owners* by virtue of being its members. Hence the original form of this property is *direct communal property* (the *oriental form*, modified among the Slavs; developed to the point of contradiction in classical and Germanic property, though still remaining the hidden, if antagonistic, foundation).

(2) *Dissolution of the relations* in which man appears as *the owner of the tools*. As the above form of landed property presupposes a *real community*, so this ownership of the tools by the worker presupposes a particular form of development of manufacture—namely, the form of *handicraft production*. The guild and corporative system, etc., is bound up with this. (The manufacturing activities of the ancient Orient can be examined under heading (1) above.) Here work itself is still partly an artistic expression, partly an end in itself, etc. Mastery. The capitalist himself still a master craftsman. Special craft skill itself ensures the ownership of the instrument, etc., etc. The way the work is performed becomes to some extent hereditary, together with the organisation of work and its instrument. Medieval town life. Work is still his own; a definite self-sufficient development of narrowly specialised abilities, etc.

(3) Both imply that prior to production the producer possesses the means of consumption necessary to live as a producer—i.e., during production, *before* its completion. As a landowner, he appears to be directly provided with

the necessary fund for consumption. As a master artisan he has inherited, earned or saved this fund, and as a youngster he is first an *apprentice*, who does not yet appear as an independent worker in the strict sense, but shares the master's food in the patriarchal manner. As a (genuine) journeyman there is a certain common utilisation of the fund of consumption owned by the master. Though it is not the journeyman's *property*, the laws of the guild and its traditions, etc., at least make him a co-possessor, etc. (This point to be elaborated.)

(4) On the other hand likewise *dissolution* of the relations under which the *workers themselves*, the *living units of labour-power* are still a *direct part of the objective conditions of production* and are appropriated as such—and are therefore slaves or serfs. Not the worker, but only work is a condition of production for capital. If it can be performed by machinery, or even by water or air, so much the better. And what capital appropriates is not the worker, but his work—and not directly, but by means of exchange.

These, then, on the one hand, are historical prerequisites required for the worker as a free worker, as objectiveless, purely subjective capacity for working, to be found confronting the objective conditions of production as his *non-property*, as *someone else's property*, as *value* existing for itself, as capital. On the other hand, one has to ask what conditions are necessary if he is to find *capital* confronting him.

{The formula "capital", in which the relation of living labour to raw material, instruments and the means of subsistence required during the period of work is negative, one of non-ownership, *comprises* in the first instance *non-ownership of land*, i.e., the absence of a state in which the working individual regards the land, the soil, as his own, i.e., works, produces as owner of the land. In the most favourable case he stands not only in the relation of worker to the land, but also in the relation of owner of

the land to himself in his capacity as a working subject. Potentially the ownership of land includes ownership of raw material and of the original instrument of labour, the soil itself, as well as its spontaneous fruits. In the most original form, this means that the individual regards the soil as belonging to him, and finds in it raw material, instrument, and means of subsistence not created by labour but by the earth itself. Once this relationship is reproduced, secondary instruments and fruits of the earth produced by labour appear included in the primitive forms of landownership. It is this historical situation which as the more complete ownership relation is in the first instance negated in the worker's relation to the conditions of labour as capital. This is historical situation No. 1 which is negated in this relationship, or assumed to have been dissolved by history.

Secondly however there is a situation where the worker is the *owner of the instrument*, i.e., the relation of the worker to the instrument is one of ownership, where he works as the owner of the instrument (which also presupposes that the instrument is subsumed under his individual work, i.e., it presupposes a particular limited phase of development of the productive forces of labour). Where this form of the *worker as owner* or of the *working owner* exists already as an independent form alongside and apart from *landed property*, that is the artisan and urban development of labour is not, as in the first case, an accident of landed property and subsumed under it; where therefore raw material and means of subsistence are the property of the artisan only *as a result* of his craft, of his ownership of the instrument, a second historical stage exists in addition to and separate from the first, which in turn must appear considerably modified by the mere fact that *this second type of ownership* or of *working owner* has assumed an *independent existence*.

Since the instrument itself is already the product of labour, i.e., the element which constitutes property is

already produced by labour, the community can no longer appear, as it can in the first case, in its primitive form. The community on which this form of property is based already appears as something produced, evolved, secondary, a community produced by the worker himself. It is clear that where ownership of the instrument is the relation of the worker to the conditions of production as his property, in actual labour the instrument appears *merely as a means* of individual labour, and the art of really mastering the instrument, of using it as a means of labour, appears as a special skill of the labourer, which makes him the owner of his tools. In short, the essential character of the guild and corporative system, of artisan labour which makes the producer an owner, can be analysed in terms of the relation to the instrument of production—the tool as property—as opposed to the relation to the earth, to the land (to the raw material as such) as one's own. The fact that his relation to this single element of the conditions of production makes the working subject an owner, makes him a working owner, defines historical situation No. 2, which by its very nature can exist only as contradiction of situation No. 1, or, if you like at the same time as complement of a modified situation No. 1—it is likewise negated in the first formula of capital.

The third *possible form* is that in which the worker relates as owner only to the means of subsistence, which he considers the natural condition of the working subject, but does not treat either the land or the instrument, and hence not even labour as his own. This is essentially the formula of slavery and serfdom, which is also negated, assumed to have been historically dissolved, in the relation of the worker to the conditions of production as capital.

The primitive forms of property necessarily dissolve into regarding the different objective elements conditioning production as one's own; they are the economic basis of different forms of community, and in turn presuppose

specific forms of community. These forms are significantly modified by the transformation of labour itself into one of the *objective conditions of production* (as in slavery and serfdom), as a result of which the simple affirmative character of all forms of property embraced in No. 1 is lost and modified. All of these include slavery as a possibility, and therefore as their own abolition. So far as No. 2 is concerned, in which the particular kind of work—i.e., mastery in it and consequently ownership of the instrument of labour—equals ownership of the conditions of production, this admittedly excludes slavery and serfdom. However, it may lead to an analogous negative development in the form of the caste system.}

{The third form, ownership in the means of subsistence, cannot contain any relationship of the *working* individual to the conditions of production, and therefore of existence, unless it is dissolved into slavery and serfdom. It can only be the relation of the member of the primitive community founded upon ownership of land who happens to have lost his landed property without as yet having advanced to the second type of property, as in the case of the Roman plebs at the time of *panem et circenses*.³⁷}

{The relation of retainers to their lords, or that of personal service, is essentially different. For personal service forms at bottom merely the mode of existence of the landowner himself, who no longer works, but whose property includes the workers themselves as serfs, etc., among the conditions of production. The *relation of domination* is here essentially a relation of appropriation. Appropriation cannot actually establish such a relation to animals, the soil, etc., even though the animal serves its master. The relation of domination presupposes the appropriation of another's *will*. Beings without will, like animals, may indeed render services, but this does not turn their owner into a *lord and master*. However, one can see here that the *relations of domination and servitude* also enter into this formula of the appropriation of the

instruments of production; and they constitute a necessary ferment of the development and decay of all primitive relations of property and production and at the same time they express their limitations. To be sure, they are also reproduced in capital, though in an indirect (mediated) form, and hence they also constitute a ferment of its dissolution, and are the emblems of its limitations.}

{“The right to sell oneself and one’s dependents in times of distress, was unfortunately general; it prevailed in the North, among the Greeks and in Asia. The right of the creditor to take the defaulting debtor into servitude, and to redeem the debt as far as possible either by his labour or by the sale of his person, was almost equally widespread.” (Niebuhr, *Römische Geschichte*, Part I, p. 600.)}

{In another passage, Niebuhr says that the Greek writers of the Augustan period found it difficult to explain and misunderstood the relationship between patricians and plebeians and confused this relationship with that between patrons and clients, because they

“were writing at a time when rich and poor constituted the only real classes of citizens; when the man in need, no matter how noble his origins, required a patron, and the millionaire, even though only a freedman, was sought after as a patron. They could find scarcely a trace of inherited relations of attachment.” (Ibid., p. 620.)}

{“Artisans were to be found in both classes” (*metoikos and freedmen together with their descendants*) “and plebeians who abandoned agriculture were restricted to the limited civic rights which these had. Nor did they lack the honour of *legally recognised corporations*, and these were so highly respected that Numa was regarded as their founder. There were nine guilds; pipers, goldsmiths, carpenters, dyers, harness-makers, tanners, coppersmiths and potters, the ninth guild embracing the rest of the crafts. . . . Some of them were independent citizens with limited rights, or enjoyed isopolity (if such a right existed) and had not acquired a patron; or descendants of bondsmen whose bond had lapsed with the extinction of their patrons’ families: these undoubtedly remained as remote from the quarrels of the patricians and the municipality as the Florentine guilds remained outside the feuds of the Guelph and Ghibelline³⁸ families. It is possible that the popu-

lation in servitude were still as a whole at the disposal of the patricians." (Ibid., p. 623.)

On the one hand we presuppose historical processes which transform a mass of individuals of a nation, etc., if not perhaps immediately into really free workers, then at any rate into potential free workers, whose only property is their labour-power and the possibility of exchanging it for existing values. Such individuals confront all objective conditions of production as *alien property*, as their *non-property*, but at the same time as something which can be exchanged as *values* and therefore to a certain degree appropriated by living labour. Such historical processes of dissolution are the following: the dissolution of the servile relationship which binds the worker to the land, and to the lord of the land, but in fact presupposes that he owns means of subsistence—this is in fact the separation of the worker from the land; the dissolution of relations of landed property which had made the worker a yeoman, a free, working, petty landowner or tenant (*colonus*), a free peasant*; the dissolution of guild relations, which presuppose his ownership of the instrument of production and labour itself, as a distinct form of craft skill, not merely as the source of property but as property itself; also the dissolution of the relation of clientship³⁹ in its different types, in which *non-proprietors* appear as co-consumers of the surplus-produce in the retinue of their lord, and in return wear his livery, take part in his feuds, perform—real or imaginary—personal services, etc.

Closer analysis will show that what is dissolved in all these processes of dissolution are relations of production in which use-value predominates, production for immediate use; exchange-value and its production presuppose the predominance of the other form. Thus in all the above circumstances deliveries in kind and services in kind

* We take for granted the dissolution of the even more ancient forms of communal property and real community. [Note by Marx.]

predominate over money payments and money contributions. But this is only by the way. Closer examination will also reveal that all the dissolved relations were rendered possible only by a certain degree of development of the material (and therefore also of the mental) productive forces.

What concerns us at this point is the following. The process of dissolution which turns a mass of individuals in a nation, etc., into potential free wage-workers—individuals obliged merely by their lack of property to work and to sell their labour—does *not* however presuppose the *disappearance* of the previous sources of income or (in part) of the previous conditions of property of these individuals. On the contrary, it assumes that *only* their use has been altered, that their mode of existence has been transformed, that they have passed into other people's hands as a *free fund*, or perhaps that they have partly remained in the *same hands*. But this much is evident. The process which separated a mass of individuals from their previous—in one way or another—positive relations to the *objective conditions of labour*, the process which negated these relations and thereby transformed these individuals into *free labourers*, is the same process which has liberated these *objective conditions of labour* (i.e., land, raw material, means of subsistence, instruments of labour, money or all of these) potentially from *their previous ties* to the individuals who are now separated from them. These conditions of labour are still *present*, but present in a different form, as a *free fund*, in which all the old political, etc., relations are obliterated, and now they confront those detached, propertyless individuals merely in the form of *values*, firmly established values.

The same process which confronts the masses as free workers to the *objective conditions of labour*, has also counterposed these conditions as *capital* to the free workers. The historical process denoted the separation of hitherto combined elements; its result is therefore not the

disappearance of one of these elements, but a situation in which each of them appears negatively related to the other: the (potentially) free worker on one hand, (potential) capital on the other. The separation of the objective conditions from the classes which are now transformed into free workers, must equally appear at the opposite pole as these very conditions becoming independent.

Let us consider the relationship of capital and wage-labour not as something which is already a determining factor, which dominates production as a whole,* but as something which is still in the process of historical formation, that is the original transformation of money into capital, the process of exchange between capital existing only potentially on one hand, and the free worker existing potentially on the other. Then the simple observation naturally suggests itself, with which the economists make great play, that raw materials, tools and food enough to enable the worker to live during the period of production must, before production is completed, be in the possession of the side which appears as capital.

Moreover, this appears in such a way that accumulation—an accumulation prior to work and not arising from it—must have taken place on the part of the capitalist, which enables him to set the worker to work and to maintain him in activity, as living labour power.** This act

* For in this case capital, presupposed as the condition of wage-labour, is the product of wage-labour, and is presupposed by wage-labour as its condition, created by wage-labour itself as its own prerequisite. [Note by Marx.]

** Once capital and wage-labour have been established as their own prerequisites, i.e., as the basic prerequisite for production, the position at first appears thus: the capitalist must possess not only a fund of raw material and means of production sufficient for the worker to reproduce himself, to produce the necessary means of subsistence, to perform the *necessary labour*; but also a fund of raw material and means of production enabling the worker to perform his surplus-labour, i.e., to create the capitalist's profit. Further analysis shows that the worker is constantly creating a

of capital, which is independent of and not posited by labour, is then transferred from the history of its origin into the present, and transformed into a factor of its reality and effectiveness, of its self-creation. Finally, the eternal right of capital to the fruit of other men's labour is derived from this, or rather its mode of acquisition is derived from the simple and "just" laws of the exchange of equivalents.

Wealth in the form of money can only be converted into the objective conditions of labour because and if these have been separated from labour itself. We have seen that money can in part be accumulated simply by the exchange of equivalents; however, this is so insignificant a source that it is not worth mentioning historically—if one assumes, that is, that the money is obtained by the exchange of one's own labour. It is rather mobile wealth, money accumulated through usury—especially usury on landed property—and through mercantile profits, that is turned into capital in the strict sense, into industrial capital. We will have occasion to deal with both forms below—that is, in so far as they themselves appear not as forms of capital but as earlier forms of wealth, as prerequisites for capital.

As we have seen the concept—and the origin—of capital implies that its starting-point is *money*, and therefore wealth existing in the form of money. It equally implies that, derived from circulation, capital appears as a *product* of circulation. Accordingly capital formation does not arise from landed property (or at most it might arise from the *tenant farmer* in so far as he is also a trader in farm

double fund for the capitalist, or in the form of capital. One part of this fund constantly acts as the conditions of his own existence, the other part, as the conditions of existence of capital. As we have seen, surplus-capital—and surplus-capital regarded in its prehistoric relation to labour—consists entirely of *real, contemporary capital*, and every particle of it without exception is appropriated by capital as materialised *labour of other people, appropriated* without exchange, without supplying an equivalent for it. [Note by Marx.]

products), nor from the guild (though this also provides a possibility) but from mercantile and usurious wealth. But this wealth only encounters the conditions which permit it to purchase free labour, when the latter has been separated from the objective conditions of its existence as a result of a historical process. Only then does it become possible to buy also these *conditions* themselves. Under the guild system, for instance, mere money (unless it is guild money and belongs to a master craftsman) cannot purchase looms in order to put men to work on them; there are regulations determining how many looms a man may employ, etc. In short, the instrument is still so intimately merged with living labour, appearing as the domain of living labour, that it does not truly circulate.

What enables monetary wealth to turn into capital is, on the one hand, that it finds free workers, and on the other, that it finds means of subsistence, materials, etc.—which would otherwise be in one form or another the *property* of the now objectiveless masses—likewise *free* and available for sale.

However, in this preparatory or first period of capital the other condition of labour—a certain degree of skill, the existence of the instrument as a means of labour, etc.—is found *ready to hand* by capital, partly as the result of the urban guild system, partly of domestic industry, or such industry as exists as an accessory to agriculture. The historical process is not the result of capital, but its prerequisite. This process enables the capitalist to insert himself as a middleman (historically) between landed property, or between any kind of property, and labour. The sentimental illusions about capitalist and worker forming an association, etc., do not exist in history, nor is there a trace of such illusions in the development of the concept of capital. Sporadically, *manufacture* may develop locally in a framework still belonging to quite a different period, as in the Italian cities *side by side* with the guilds. But if capital is to be the generally dominant form of an

epoch, its conditions must be developed not merely locally, but on a large scale. (This is compatible with the possibility that during the dissolution of the guilds individual master craftsmen may turn into industrial capitalists; however, it happens rarely and this corresponds to the nature of this phenomenon. On the whole the guild system—both master and journeyman—dies out, where the capitalist and the labourer emerge.)

However, it is evident, and borne out by closer analysis of the historical epoch which we are now discussing, that the *age of dissolution* of the earlier modes of production and relations of the worker to the objective conditions of labour is *simultaneously an age* in which *monetary wealth* on the one hand has already developed to a certain extent, and on the other hand is rapidly growing and expanding, owing to the same circumstances which accelerate that dissolution. It is itself also an agent of that dissolution, just as that dissolution is the condition of its transformation into capital. But the *mere presence of monetary wealth*, even if it gains a sort of supremacy, is by no means sufficient for the *transformation into capital to take place*. Otherwise ancient Rome, Byzantium, etc., would have concluded their history with free labour and capital, or rather, would have entered upon a new history. There too the dissolution of the old relations of property was tied to the development of monetary wealth—of commerce, etc. However, in fact the result of this dissolution was not industry, but the domination of the countryside over the city.

The *original formation of capital* does not proceed, as is often supposed, by capital *accumulating* means of subsistence, tools, raw materials or, in short, the *objective conditions of labour* detached from the soil and already fused with human labour.* Not in such a way that capital creates the objective conditions of labour.

* It is obvious at first sight what an absurd circle it would be if on the one hand the *workers* that capital must employ in

Its *original formation* occurs simply because the historical process of the dissolution of an old mode of production enables value existing in the form of *monetary wealth* to *buy* the objective conditions of labour on one hand, to exchange money for the *living* labour of the now free workers on the other.

All these elements are already present, their separation is a historical process, a process of dissolution, and it is *this process* which enables money to turn into *capital*. In so far as money itself plays a part here, it is only inasmuch as it is itself an extremely powerful agent of decomposition which intervenes in the process, and thus contributes to the creation of the *plucked*, objectiveless, *free workers*, but certainly not by *creating* the objective conditions of their existence, but rather by accelerating the separation of the workers from them, i.e., by accelerating their loss of property.

For instance, when the big English landowners dismissed their retainers, who together with them had consumed the surplus-produce of their land; when in addition their tenants drove out the small cottagers, etc., the result was first that masses of living labour-power were thrown on to the *labour-market*. They were free in two respects, free from the old relations of clientship, villeinage and service, but also free from all goods and chattels, from every objective and material form of existence, *free from all*

order to exist as capital had first to be *created* and called into existence by the accumulation of *capital*, if they had to wait for its "Let there be workers"; while on the other hand capital would be incapable of *accumulating* without the labour of others, or at most could only accumulate *its own labour*, i.e., capital could only exist in the form of *non-capital* and *non-money*, for prior to the existence of capital, labour can only realise itself in such forms as handicraft work, petty agriculture, etc.; in short, only in forms which permit little or *no accumulation*, in forms capable of yielding only a small surplus-produce, and *consuming* the greater part of that. We shall have to examine the concept of *accumulation* more closely later. [Note by Marx.]

property, having to depend on the sale of their labour power or on beggary, vagabondage or robbery as their only source of income. Historical records show that they first tried beggary, vagabondage and robbery, but were driven off this road on to the narrow path which led to the labour market by means of gallows, pillory and whip. (Hence the *governments*, for instance of Henry VII, VIII, etc.,⁴⁰ also appear as conditions of the historical process of dissolution and as creators of the conditions for the existence of capital.)

On the other hand, the means of subsistence, etc., formerly consumed by the lords and their retainers were now available for purchase by money, and money wished to purchase them in order through their instrumentality to purchase labour. Money had neither *created* nor *accumulated* these means of subsistence. They were already present, and were consumed and reproduced, before they were consumed and reproduced through the intervention of money. The only change was that these means of subsistence were now thrown on to the *exchange market*. They had now been detached from their immediate connection with the mouths of the retainers, etc., and transformed from use-values into exchange-values, thus falling into the sphere and under the sovereignty of monetary wealth.

The same applies to the instruments of labour. Spinning wheel and loom were neither invented nor manufactured by monetary wealth. But once spinners and weavers had been separated from their land, they and their wheels and looms came under the sway of monetary wealth, etc. *The action characteristic of capital is nothing but the assembling of the masses of hands and instruments which are already there. It brings them together under its sway.* This is its *real accumulation*; the accumulation of workers and their instruments at definite points. We shall have to go into this more deeply when we come to the so-called accumulation of capital.

Admittedly, monetary wealth in the form of merchants' wealth had helped to accelerate and dissolve the old relations of production, and had, e.g., enabled the landowner—this has already been well described by Adam Smith⁴¹—to exchange his corn, cattle, etc., for imported use-values, instead of squandering his own production with his retainers and displaying his wealth in the mass of retainers who consume it with him. Monetary wealth had given greater significance to the *exchange-value* of his revenue. This was also true of his tenants, who were already semi-capitalists, though still in a rather disguised manner.

The evolution of exchange-value, which is favoured by the existence of *money* in the form of a merchant class, dissolves a mode of production whose main object is immediate use-value, and the forms of property which correspond to such production—the relations of labour to its objective conditions—thus giving an impetus to the creation of a *labour-market* (not to be confused with a slave-market). However, even this effect of money has as its prerequisite *urban craft activity*, which rests *not* on capital and wage-labour, but on the organisation of labour in guilds, etc. Urban labour itself had created means of production for which the guilds became as great an embarrassment as were the old relations of landownership for an improved agriculture, which was in turn partly the consequence of the greater sale of agricultural products to the cities, etc. There were other circumstances which, e.g., in the sixteenth century, increased both the amount of commodities and of currency in circulation, created new needs and consequently increased the exchange-value of domestic products, etc., raising prices, etc. All this was conducive to the dissolution of the old relations of production, accelerated the separation of the worker or the non-worker who was fit for work from the objective conditions of his reproduction, and thus advanced the transformation of money into capital.

Nothing can therefore be more foolish than to think

that the *original formation* of capital proceeded in such a way that capital accumulated and created the *objective conditions of production*—means of subsistence, raw materials, instruments—and then offered them to the workers who were *denuded* of them. On the contrary, monetary wealth partly helped to denude the labour-power of able-bodied individuals of these conditions, and partly this process of separation proceeded without the intervention of monetary wealth. When the original formation of capital had reached a certain level, monetary wealth could insert itself as an intermediary between the objective conditions of life thus liberated and the equally liberated workers, who were however also *rid of everything*, and buy the latter with the former. As to the *formation of monetary wealth* itself, before its transformation into capital: this belongs to the prehistory of the bourgeois economy. Usury, commerce, the cities and the fisc which arises with them, play the chief parts in it. Also *hoarding* by tenant farmers, peasants, etc., though to a smaller extent.

Already here it is evident that the development of exchange and exchange-value, which is everywhere mediated by commerce or whose mediation can be called commerce (just as circulation acquires an independent existence in commerce, so does money in the merchants) brings about both the dissolution of *labour's relations of ownership to its conditions of existence* and also of *labour as something which is itself part of the objective conditions of production*. All these are relations which express both a predominance of use-value and of production directed towards immediate consumption, and also the existence of a real community which is still a direct prerequisite of production.

Production based on exchange-value and a community based on the exchange of these exchange-values—although, as we saw in the last chapter on money, they appear to posit property as deriving solely from *labour*, and to posit private property in the product of one's own labour as

a condition—and also labour as the general condition of wealth—presuppose and produce the separation of labour from its objective conditions. The exchange of equivalents takes place on and is merely the surface layer of a production that rests on the appropriation of other people's labour *without exchange*, but under the *guise of exchange*. This system of exchange has *capital* as its basis and if it is considered in isolation from capital, as it appears on the surface, as an *independent* system, then this is mere *illusion*, though a *necessary illusion*.

It is therefore no longer surprising to find that the system of exchange-values—the exchange of equivalents measured in labour—turns into the *appropriation of other people's labour without exchange*, the total separation of labour and property, or rather that it reveals this appropriation as its concealed background. For the rule of exchange-value and of production producing exchange-values *presupposes* the labour power of other people as an exchange-value. In other words, it presupposes the separation of living labour-power from its objective conditions; a relationship to these—or to its own objectivity—as someone else's property; in a word, a relation to them as *capital*. The golden age of labour emancipating itself occurred only in those periods when feudalism was in decline, but still engaged in internecine conflict, as in England in the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth. If labour is once again to be related to its objective conditions as to its property, another system must replace that of private exchange, for as we have seen the latter exchanges materialised labour against labour-power, and is therefore the appropriation of living labour without exchange.

Historically, money is often transformed into capital in quite simple and obvious ways, for example, the merchant sets to work a number of spinners and weavers, who formerly engaged in weaving and spinning as subsidiary rural occupations, and thus turns their subsidiary occupa-

tion into their principal source of income, after which he has them under his control and sway as wage-workers. The next step is to remove them from their homes and to assemble them for their work in one building. In this simple process it is evident that the merchant has prepared neither raw material nor instruments nor means of subsistence for the weaver or the spinner. All he has done is gradually to confine them to one kind of work, which makes them dependent on sale, on the *buyer*, on the *merchant*, and thus eventually they produce solely *for* and *through* him. Originally he bought their labour by buying their product. As soon as they confine themselves to the production of this exchange-value, and are therefore obliged directly to produce *exchange-values*, and to exchange their labour entirely for money in order to go on living, they come under his domination. Finally, even the illusion of *selling* him their products disappears. He purchases their labour and first deprives them of their ownership of the product, soon also the instrument, unless he leaves them the *illusion of ownership* in order to diminish his costs of production.

The original historical forms in which capital appears at first sporadically or *locally, side by side* with the old modes of production, but gradually bursting them asunder everywhere, make up *manufacture* in the proper sense of the word (not yet the factory). Manufacture arises where there is mass production for export, for the foreign market—hence on the *basis of large-scale maritime and overland trade*, in the centres of such trade, as in the Italian cities, Constantinople, the Flemish, Dutch cities, some Spanish ones such as Barcelona, etc. Initially, manufacture does not develop in what is known as the *urban crafts*, but in the *rural subsidiary occupations*, spinning and weaving, the sort of work which least requires craft skill, artisan training. Apart from those great emporia, in which it finds the basis of an *export* market, and where production is, as it were, *spontaneously* directed towards exchange-

value—i.e., manufactures directly connected with shipping, including shipbuilding itself, etc.—manufacture first establishes itself not in the cities but in the countryside, in villages, etc., where there are no guilds. The rural subsidiary occupations contain the broad basis of manufacture, whereas a high degree of progress in production is required in order to carry on the urban crafts as factory industries. Likewise such branches of production as glassworks, metal factories, sawmills, etc., which from the start require a greater concentration of workers, utilise more natural power, demand mass production and a concentration of the means of production, etc. Similarly paper mills, etc. The other aspect of this process is the appearance of the tenant farmer and the transformation of the agricultural population into free day-labourers. Though the countryside was one of the first places where this change began, it was the last where its final consequences and its purest forms asserted themselves.

The ancients, who never advanced beyond specifically urban craft skill and application, were therefore never able to achieve large-scale industry. For its first prerequisite is the involvement of the entire country in the production, not of use-values, but of exchange-values. Glassworks, paper mills, ironworks, etc., cannot be run on guild principles. They require mass production, sales to a general market, *monetary wealth* on the part of the entrepreneur. Not that he creates the subjective or objective conditions; but under the old relations of property and production these conditions cannot be brought together.

The dissolution of the relations of serfdom and the rise of manufacture then gradually transform all branches of production into branches operated by capital. However, the towns themselves contain an element for the formation of genuine wage-labour—namely, day-labourers outside the guild system, unskilled workers, etc.

We thus see that the transformation of money into capital presupposes a historical process which separates

the objective conditions of labour, and makes them independent of the worker. However, once capital and its process have come into being, they conquer all production and everywhere accentuate and enforce the separation between labour and property, labour and the objective conditions of labour. Further analysis will show that capital destroys artisan labour, small working landowners, etc., and it also destroys itself in those forms in which it is *not* in opposition to labour—i.e., *petty capital* and intermediate or hybrid types between the old modes of production (or as renewed on the basis of capital) and the classic, adequate mode of production of capital itself.

The only accumulation which is a prerequisite for the rise of capital is that of *monetary wealth*, which, when considered in isolation, is entirely unproductive, as it emerges only from circulation and belongs only to circulation. Capital rapidly creates an internal market for itself by destroying all rural subsidiary occupations, i.e., by spinning and weaving for all, providing clothing for all, etc.; in short by turning the commodities formerly produced as immediate use-values into exchange-values. This process is the automatic result of the separation of the workers from the land and from property (even though in the form of serf property) in the conditions of production.

Though urban crafts are based substantially on exchange and the creation of exchange-values, the direct and main object of this kind of production is the *subsistence of the artisan, of the master-craftsman*, and consequently use-value and not *enrichment, not exchange-value as exchange-value*. Production is therefore everywhere subordinate to a presupposed consumption, supply is subordinate to demand, and its expansion is slow.

* * *

The production of capitalists and wage-workers is therefore a major product of the process by which capital turns

itself to account. Ordinary political economy, which concentrates only on the objects produced, forgets this entirely. Since in this process objectified labour is simultaneously the *non-objectification* of the worker, as the objectification of a subjectivity opposed to the worker, as the *property* of someone else's will, capital is necessarily also a *capitalist*, accordingly the idea of some socialists that we need capital but not capitalists is completely false. The concept of capital implies that the objective conditions of labour—and these are the products of labour—acquire a *personality vis-à-vis* labour, or what amounts to the same thing, that they appear as the property of a personality other than the worker's. The capitalist is comprised in the concept of capital.

However, this error is certainly no greater than that of, e.g., all philologists who speak of *capital* in classical antiquity, and of Roman or Greek capitalists. This is merely another way of saying that in Rome and Greece labour was *free*, an assertion which these gentlemen would hardly make. That the plantation-owners in America are now not only called capitalists, but that they *are* capitalists, is due to the fact that they exist as anomalies within a world market based upon free labour.

If it is simply a matter of the word capital which does not actually occur among the ancients*—then the still nomadic hordes with their herds on the steppes of Central Asia would be the biggest capitalists, for the original meaning of the word capital is cattle. Hence the contract of *métairie* [crop-sharing] which is frequently concluded in the South of France, because of capital shortage, is still sometimes called *bail de bestes à Chapitel*** If one wanted to go in for bad Latin, then our capitalists or *Capitales*

* Although the Greeks used the word ἀρχεῖα for what the Romans called the *principalis summa rei creditae* [the principal of a loan].⁴² [Note by Marx.]

** Lease of cattle as capital.—Ed.

Homines [headmen] could be described as those "*qui debent censum de capite*".*

Difficulties arise in the conceptual analysis of capital which one does not encounter in that of money. Capital is essentially a *capitalist*; but at the same time it is also an element of his existence and distinct from the capitalist, or production in general is *capital*. Thus we shall later find that in the term *capital* much is subsumed that does not apparently belong to the concept. E.g., capital is loaned. It is accumulated, etc. In all these expressions it appears to be a mere object, and entirely to coincide with the matter of which it consists. However, further analysis will clarify this and other problems.

(In passing, the following amusing observation: The good Adam Müller, who takes all figurative phrases in a mystical sense, has also heard about *living capital* in ordinary life, as opposed to *dead capital*, and dresses up the notion theosophically.⁴³ King Athelstan could have taught him a thing or two about this: *Reddam de meo proprio decimas Deo tam in Vivente Capitali* (living cattle) *quam in mortuis fructibus terrae* (dead fruits of the soil).**

Money always retains the same form in the same substratum, and is therefore more readily conceived as a mere object. But the same thing, commodity, money, etc., can represent capital or revenue, etc. Thus even the economists recognise that money is nothing tangible, but that the same thing can be subsumed now under the heading capital, now under some other and quite contrary term, and accordingly that it *is* or *is not* capital. It is evidently a *relation* and *can only* be a *relation of production*.

* * *

* Who pay a head tax.—*Ed.*

** I shall give a tenth of my property to God, both in living cattle and in the dead fruits of the soil.—*Ed.*

{ One more observation to be added to the foregoing:

The exchange of equivalents, which seems to take for granted ownership of the products of one's own work—and therefore to treat as identical *appropriation through work*, the actual economic process of taking possession, and *ownership of objectified work*; what appeared earlier as a real process is recognised here as a legal relation, in other words as a general condition of production, and accordingly recognised by law and established as an expression of the general will—turns into its opposite, and through an inevitable dialectical process manifests itself as absolute separation of labour and property, and appropriation of other people's labour without exchange, without equivalent. Production based on exchange-value, on the surface of which this free and equal exchange of equivalents takes place, is basically exchange of *materialised labour* as exchange-value for living labour as use-value, or as one can also express it, the relation of labour to its objective conditions—and therefore to the objectivity created by itself—as other people's property: *alienation of labour*. On the other hand, exchange-value presupposes measurement by labour-time, and accordingly living labour—not its value—is the measure of value. It is a delusion to imagine that production and therefore society was in all modes of production based on the *exchange of mere labour for labour*. In the various forms in which the conditions of production are the property of labour, the reproduction of the worker depends by no means on *mere labour*, for his property is not the result but the prerequisite of his labour. It is evident with regard to landed property, and should also be evident with regard to the guild system that the particular kind of property which labour constitutes is not based on mere labour or exchange of labour, but on the objective connection of the worker with a community and conditions which he finds already in existence and from which he starts as his basis. These are also products of work, of the work of world history, of the work of the community

—of its historical development, a development which does not have as its starting point the work of individuals nor the exchange of their work. Consequently, mere labour is not the prerequisite of the creation of value. A situation in which labour is merely exchanged for labour—whether in the form of direct living labour, or in the form of its product—presupposes the detachment of labour from its original coalescence with its objective conditions, consequently it appears as mere labour on the one hand, and on the other it is confronted by its products which as materialised labour obtain an entirely independent existence as value. *The exchange of labour for labour—apparently the condition of the worker's property—is based on the propertylessness of the worker.* }

(We shall examine later the fact that, within the relationship of capital to wage-labour, the *extreme form of estrangement* of labour, of productive activity, from its own conditions and its own products, is an essential transitional phase, and that consequently it already contains *in itself* the resolution of all *limited prerequisites of production*, though only in an inverted form, upside down, as it were, and that moreover it creates and sets up the unconditional prerequisites of production, and hence the complete material conditions for the total, universal development of the productive forces of the individual.)

Translated from the
German

KARL MARX
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRITIQUE
OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

From PREFACE

The first work which I undertook for a solution of the doubts which assailed me was a critical review of the Hegelian philosophy of right, a work the introduction to which appeared in 1844 in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*,⁴⁴ published in Paris. My investigation led to the result that legal relations as well as forms of state 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, following the example of the Englishmen and Frenchmen of the eighteenth century, combines under the name of "civil society", that, however, the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy. The investigation of the latter, which I began in Paris, I continued in Brussels, whither I had emigrated in consequence of an expulsion order of M. Guizot. The general result at which I arrived and which, once won, served as a guiding thread for my studies, can be briefly formulated as follows: In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.

The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production. No social order ever perishes before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself. Therefore mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the task itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation. In broad outlines Asiatic, ancient, feu-

dal, and modern bourgeois modes of production can be designated as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society. The bourgeois relations of production are the last antagonistic form of the social process of production—antagonistic not in the sense of individual antagonism, but of one arising from the social conditions of life of the individuals; at the same time the productive forces developing in the womb of bourgeois society create the material conditions for the solution of that antagonism. This social formation brings, therefore, the prehistory of human society to a close.

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Marx and Engels,
Selected Works, Vol. 1,
Moscow, 1973, pp. 503-04

KARL MARX
CAPITAL
Volume I

From CHAPTER I
COMMODITIES

Let us now transport ourselves from Robinson's island bathed in light to the European middle ages shrouded in darkness. Here, instead of the independent man, we find everyone dependent, serfs and lords, vassals and suzerains, laymen and clergy. Personal dependence here characterises the social relations of production just as much as it does the other spheres of life organised on the basis of that production. But for the very reason that personal dependence forms the ground-work of society, there is no necessity for labour and its products to assume a fantastic form different from their reality. They take the shape, in the transactions of society, of services in kind and payments in kind. Here the particular and natural form of labour, and not, as in a society based on production of commodities, its general abstract form is the immediate social form of labour. Compulsory labour is just as properly measured by time, as commodity-producing labour; but every serf knows that what he expends in the service of his lord, is a definite quantity of his own personal labour-power. The tithe to be rendered to the priest is more matter of fact than his blessing. No matter, then, what we may think of the parts played by the different classes of people themselves in this society, the social relations between individuals in the performance of their labour, appear at all events as their own mutual personal

relations, and are not disguised under the shape of social relations between the products of labour. . . .

And for a society based upon the production of commodities, in which the producers in general enter into social relations with one another by treating their products as commodities and values, whereby they reduce their individual private labour to the standard of homogeneous human labour—for such a society Christianity with its *cultus* of abstract man, more especially in its bourgeois developments, Protestantism, Deism,⁴⁵ &c., is the most fitting form of religion. In the ancient Asiatic and other ancient modes of production, we find that the conversion of products into commodities, and therefore the conversion of men into producers of commodities, holds a subordinate place, which, however, increases in importance as the primitive communities approach nearer and nearer to their dissolution. Trading nations, properly so called, exist in the ancient world only in its interstices, like the gods of Epicurus in the Intermundia,⁴⁶ or like Jews in the pores of Polish society. Those ancient social organisms of production are, as compared with bourgeois society, extremely simple and transparent. But they are founded either on the immature development of man individually, who has not yet severed the umbilical cord that unites him with his fellowmen in a primitive tribal community, or upon direct relations of subjection. They can arise and exist only when the development of the productive power of labour has not risen beyond a low stage, and when, therefore, the social relations within the sphere of material life, between man and man, and between man and Nature, are correspondingly narrow. . . .

From CHAPTER X

THE WORKING-DAY

Capital has not invented surplus-labour. Wherever a part of society possesses the monopoly of the means of production, the labourer, free or not free, must add to the

working-time necessary for his own maintenance an extra working-time in order to produce the means of subsistence for the owners of the means of production,* whether this proprietor be the Athenian *χαλῶς χαγαθός*,¹ Etruscan theocrat, *civis Romanus*, Norman baron, American slave-owner, Wallachian Boyard, modern landlord or capitalist.** It is, however, clear that in any given economic formation of society, where not the exchange-value but the use-value of the product predominates, surplus-labour will be limited by a given set of wants which may be greater or less, and that here no boundless thirst for surplus-labour arises from the nature of the production itself. Hence in antiquity over-work becomes horrible only when the object is to obtain exchange-value in its specific independent money-form; in the production of gold and silver. Compulsory working to death is here the recognised form of over-work. Only read Diodorus Siculus.*** Still these are exceptions in antiquity. But as soon as people, whose production still moves within the lower forms of slave-labour, *corvée*-labour, &c., are drawn into the whirlpool of an international market dominated by the capitalistic mode of production, the sale of their products for export

* "Those who labour . . . in reality feed both the pensioners . . . [called the rich] and themselves." (Edmund Burke, l. c., p. 2.) [Note by Marx.]

** Niebuhr in his "Roman History" says very naïvely: "It is evident that works like the Etruscan, which in their ruins astound us, pre-suppose in little (!) states lords and vassals." Sismondi says far more to the purpose that "Brussels lace" pre-supposes wage-lords and wage-slaves. [Note by Marx.]

*** "One cannot see these unfortunates (in the gold mines between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Arabia) who cannot even have their bodies clean, or their nakedness clothed, without pitying their miserable lot. There is no indulgence, no forbearance for the sick, the feeble, the aged, for woman's weakness. All must, forced by blows, work on until death puts an end to their sufferings and their distress." ("Diod. Sic. Bibl. Hist.," lib. 2, c. 13.) [Note by Marx.]

becoming their principal interest, the civilised horrors of over-work are grafted on the barbaric horrors of slavery, serfdom, &c.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SECRET OF PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION

We have seen how money is changed into capital; how through capital surplus-value is made, and from surplus-value more capital. But the accumulation of capital pre-supposes surplus-value; surplus-value pre-supposes capitalistic production; capitalistic production pre-supposes the pre-existence of considerable masses of capital and of labour-power in the hands of producers of commodities. The whole movement, therefore, seems to turn in a vicious circle, out of which we can only get by supposing a primitive accumulation (previous accumulation of Adam Smith) preceding capitalistic accumulation; an accumulation not the result of the capitalist mode of production, but its starting-point.

This primitive accumulation plays in Political Economy about the same part as original sin in theology. Adam bit the apple, and thereupon sin fell on the human race. Its origin is supposed to be explained when it is told as an anecdote of the past. In times long gone by there were two sorts of people; one, the diligent, intelligent, and, above all, frugal élite; the other, lazy rascals, spending their substance, and more, in riotous living. The legend of theological original sin tells us certainly how man came to be condemned to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow; but the history of economic original sin reveals to us that there are people to whom this is by no means essential. Never mind! Thus it came to pass that the former sort accumulated wealth, and the latter sort had at last nothing to sell except their own skins. And from this original sin dates the poverty of the great majority that, despite all its labour, has up to now nothing to sell but itself, and the

wealth of the few that increases constantly although they have long ceased to work. Such insipid childishness is every day preached to us in the defence of property. M. Thiers, *e.g.*, had the assurance to repeat it with all the solemnity of a statesman, to the French people, once so *spirituel*. But as soon as the question of property crops up, it becomes a sacred duty to proclaim the intellectual food of the infant as the one thing fit for all ages and for all stages of development. In actual history it is notorious that conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, briefly force, play the great part. In the tender annals of Political Economy, the idyllic reigns from time immemorial. Right and "labour" were from all time the sole means of enrichment, the present year of course always excepted. As a matter of fact, the methods of primitive accumulation are anything but idyllic.

In themselves money and commodities are no more capital than are the means of production and of subsistence. They want transforming into capital. But this transformation itself can only take place under certain circumstances that centre in this, *viz.*, that two very different kinds of commodity-possessors must come face to face and into contact; on the one hand, the owners of money, means of production, means of subsistence, who are eager to increase the sum of values they possess, by buying other people's labour-power; on the other hand, free labourers, the sellers of their own labour-power, and therefore the sellers of labour. Free labourers, in the double sense that neither they themselves form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, &c., nor do the means of production belong to them, as in the case of peasant-proprietors; they are, therefore, free from, unencumbered by, any means of production of their own. With this polarisation of the market for commodities, the fundamental conditions of capitalist production are given. The capitalist system pre-supposes the complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by

which they can realise their labour. As soon as capitalist production is once on its own legs, it not only maintains this separation, but reproduces it on a continually extending scale. The process, therefore, that clears the way for the capitalist system, can be none other than the process which takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production; a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage-labourers. The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production. It appears as primitive, because it forms the pre-historic stage of capital and of the mode of production corresponding with it.

The economic structure of capitalistic society has grown out of the economic structure of feudal society. The dissolution of the latter set free the elements of the former.

The immediate producer, the labourer, could only dispose of his own person after he had ceased to be attached to the soil and ceased to be the slave, serf, or bondman of another. To become a free seller of labour-power, who carries his commodity wherever he finds a market, he must further have escaped from the regime of the guilds, their rules for apprentices and journeymen, and the impediments of their labour regulations. Hence, the historical movement which changes the producers into wage-workers, appears, on the one hand, as their emancipation from serfdom and from the fetters of the guilds, and this side alone exists for our bourgeois historians. But, on the other hand, these new freedmen became sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of all their own means of production, and of all the guarantees of existence afforded by the old feudal arrangements. And the history of this, their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire.

The industrial capitalists, these new potentates, had on their part not only to displace the guild masters of handicrafts, but also the feudal lords, the possessors of the sources of wealth. In this respect their conquest of social power appears as the fruit of a victorious struggle both against feudal lordship and its revolting prerogatives, and against the guilds and the fetters they laid on the free development of production and the free exploitation of man by man. The chevaliers d'industrie, however, only succeeded in supplanting the chevaliers of the sword by making use of events of which they themselves were wholly innocent. They have risen by means as vile as those by which the Roman freedman once on a time made himself the master of his *patronus*.

The starting-point of the development that gave rise to the wage-labourer as well as to the capitalist, was the servitude of the labourer. The advance consisted in a change of form of this servitude, in the transformation of feudal exploitation into capitalist exploitation. To understand its march, we need not go back very far. Although we come across the first beginnings of capitalist production as early as the 14th or 15th century, sporadically, in certain towns of the Mediterranean, the capitalistic era dates from the 16th century. Wherever it appears, the abolition of serfdom has been long effected, and the highest development of the middle ages, the existence of sovereign towns, has been long on the wane.

In the history of primitive accumulation, all revolutions are epoch-making that act as levers for the capitalist class in course of formation; but, above all, those moments when great masses of men are suddenly and forcibly torn from their means of subsistence, and hurled as free and "unattached" proletarians on the labour-market. The expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil, is the basis of the whole process. The history of this expropriation, in different countries, assumes different aspects, and runs through its various phases in different

orders of succession, and at different periods. In England alone, which we take as our example, has it the classic form.*

From CHAPTER XXVII

EXPROPRIATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL POPULATION FROM THE LAND

In England, serfdom had practically disappeared in the last part of the 14th century. The immense majority of the population** consisted then, and to a still larger extent, in the 15th century, of free peasant proprietors, whatever was the feudal title under which their right of property was hidden. In the larger seignorial domains, the old

* In Italy, where capitalistic production developed earliest, the dissolution of serfdom also took place earlier than elsewhere. The serf was emancipated in that country before he had acquired any prescriptive right to the soil. His emancipation at once transformed him into a free proletarian, who, moreover, found his master ready waiting for him in the towns, for the most part handed down as legacies from the Roman time. When the revolution of the world-market, about the end of the 15th century,⁴⁷ annihilated Northern Italy's commercial supremacy, a movement in the reverse direction set in. The labours of the towns were driven *en masse* into the country, and gave an impulse, never before seen, to the *petite culture*, carried on in the form of gardening. [Note by Marx.]

** "The petty proprietors who cultivated their own fields with their own hands, and enjoyed a modest competence . . . then formed a much more important part of the nation than at present. If we may trust the best statistical writers of that age, not less than 160,000 proprietors who, with their families, must have made up more than a seventh of the whole population, derived their subsistence from little freehold estates. The average income of these small landlords . . . was estimated at between £60 and £70 a year. It was computed that the number of persons who tilled their own land was greater than the number of those who farmed the land of others." Macaulay: "History of England," 10th ed., 1854, I. pp. 333, 334. Even in the last third of the 17th century, $\frac{4}{5}$ of the English people were agricultural. (I. c., p. 413.) I quote Macaulay, because as systematic falsifier of history he minimises as much as possible facts of this kind. [Note by Marx.]

bailiff, himself a serf, was displaced by the free farmer. The wage-labourers of agriculture consisted partly of peasants, who utilised their leisure time by working on the large estates, partly of an independent special class of wage-labourers, relatively and absolutely few in numbers. The latter also were practically at the same time peasant farmers, since, besides their wages, they had allotted to them arable land to the extent of 4 or more acres, together with their cottages. Besides they, with the rest of the peasants, enjoyed the usufruct of the common land, which gave pasture to their cattle, furnished them with timber, fire-wood, turf, &c.* In all countries of Europe, feudal production is characterised by division of the soil amongst the greatest possible number of subfeudatories. The might of the feudal lord, like that of the sovereign, depended not on the length of his rent-roll, but on the number of his subjects, and the latter depended on the number of peasant proprietors.** Although, therefore, the English land, after the Norman conquest, was distributed in gigantic baronies, one of which often included some 900 of the old Anglo-Saxon lordships, it was bestrewn with small peasant properties, only here and there interspersed with great seignorial domains. Such conditions, together with the prosperity of the towns so characteristic of the 15th century, allowed of that wealth of the people which Chancellor For-

* We must never forget that even the serf was not only the owner, if but a tribute-paying owner, of the piece of land attached to his house, but also a co-possessor of the common land. "Le paysan (in Silesia, under Frederick II) est serf." Nevertheless, these serfs possess common lands. "On n'a pas pu encore engager les Silésiens au partage des communes, tandis que dans la Nouvelle Marche, il n'y a guère de village où ce partage ne soit exécuté avec le plus grand succès." (Mirabeau: "De la Monarchie Prussienne." Londres, 1788, t. ii. pp. 125, 126.) [Note by Marx.]

** Japan, with its purely feudal organisation of landed property and its developed *petite culture*, gives a much truer picture of the European middle ages than all our history books, dictated as these are, for the most part, by bourgeois prejudices. It is very convenient to be "liberal" at the expense of the middle ages. [Note by Marx.]

tescue so eloquently paints in his "Laudes legum Angliæ"; but it excluded the possibility of capitalistic wealth.

The prelude of the revolution that laid the foundation of the capitalist mode of production, was played in the last third of the 15th, and the first decade of the 16th century. A mass of free proletarians was hurled on the labour-market by the breaking-up of the bands of feudal retainers, who, as Sir James Steuart well says, "everywhere uselessly filled house and castle".⁴⁸ Although the royal power, itself a product of bourgeois development, in its strife after absolute sovereignty forcibly hastened on the dissolution of these bands of retainers, it was by no means the sole cause of it. In insolent conflict with king and parliament, the great feudal lords created an incomparably larger proletariat by the forcible driving of the peasantry from the land, to which the latter had the same feudal right as the lord himself, and by the usurpation of the common lands. The rapid rise of the Flemish wool manufactures, and the corresponding rise in the price of wool in England, gave the direct impulse to these evictions. The old nobility had been devoured by the great feudal wars. The new nobility was the child of its time, for which money was the power of all powers. Transformation of arable land into sheep-walks was, therefore, its cry. Harrison, in his "Description of England, prefixed to Holinshed's Chronicles," describes how the expropriation of small peasants is ruining the country. "What care our great encroachers?" The dwellings of the peasants and the cottages of the labourers were razed to the ground or doomed to decay. "If," says Harrison, "the old records of euerie manour be sought . . . it will soon appear that in some manour seventeene, eighteene, or twentie houses are shrunk . . . that England was neuer less furnished with people than at the present. . . . Of cities and townes either utterly decaied or more than a quarter or half diminished, though some one be a little increased here or there; of townes pulled downe for sheepe-walks, and no more but

the lordships now standing in them. . . . I could saie somewhat." The complaints of these old chroniclers are always exaggerated, but they reflect faithfully the impression made on contemporaries by the revolution in the conditions of production. A comparison of the writings of Chancellor Fortescue and Thomas More reveals the gulf between the 15th and 16th century. As Thornton rightly has it, the English working-class was precipitated without any transition from its golden into its iron age.

Legislation was terrified at this revolution. It did not yet stand on that height of civilisation where the "wealth of the nation" (*i.e.*, the formation of capital, and the reckless exploitation and impoverishing of the mass of the people) figure as the *ultima Thule* of all state-craft. In his history of Henry VII., Bacon says: "Inclosures at that time (1489) began to be more frequent, whereby arable land (which could not be manured without people and families) was turned into pasture, which was easily rid by a few herdsmen; and tenancies for years, lives, and at will (whereupon much of the yeomanry lived) were turned into demesnes. This bred a decay of people, and (by consequence) a decay of towns, churches, tithes, and the like. . . . In remedying of this inconvenience the king's wisdom was admirable, and the parliament's at that time . . . they took a course to take away depopulating inclosures, and depopulating pasturage." An Act of Henry VII., 1489, cap. 19, forbade the destruction of all "houses of husbandry" to which at least 20 acres of land belonged. By an Act, 25 Henry VIII., the same law was renewed. It recites, among other things, that many farms and large flocks of cattle, especially of sheep, are concentrated in the hands of a few men, whereby the rent of land has much risen and tillage has fallen off, churches and houses have been pulled down, and marvellous numbers of people have been deprived of the means wherewith to maintain themselves and their families. The Act, therefore, ordains the rebuilding of the decayed farm-steads, and fixes a

proportion between corn land and pasture land, &c. An Act of 1533 recites that some owners possess 24,000 sheep, and limits the number to be owned to 2,000.* The cry of the people and the legislation directed, for 150 years after Henry VII, against the expropriation of the small farmers and peasants, were alike fruitless. The secret of their inefficiency Bacon, without knowing it, reveals to us. "The device of King Henry VII," says Bacon, in his "Essays, Civil and Moral," Essay 29, "was profound and admirable, in making farms and houses of husbandry of a standard; that is, maintained with such a proportion of land unto them as may breed a subject to live in convenient plenty, and no servile condition, and to keep the plough in the hands of the owners and not mere hirelings."** What the capitalist system demanded was, on the other hand, a degraded and almost servile condition of the mass of the

* In his "Utopia", Thomas More says, that in England "your shepe that were wont to be so meke and tame, and so smal eaters, now, as I heare saye, become so great devourers and so wyld that they eate up, and swallow downe, the very men themselves." "Utopia", transl. by Robinson, ed., Arber, Lond., 1869, p. 41. [Note by Marx.]

** Bacon shows the connexion between a free, well-to-do peasantry and good infantry. "This did wonderfully concern the might and mannerhood of the kingdom to have farms as it were of a standard sufficient to maintain an able body out of penury, and did in effect amortise a great part of the lands of the kingdom unto the hold and occupation of the yeomanry or middle people, of a condition between gentlemen, and cottagers and peasants. . . . For it hath been held by the general opinion of men of best judgment in the wars . . . that the principal strength of an army consisteth in the infantry or foot. And to make good infantry it requireth men bred, not in a servile or indigent fashion, but in some free and plentiful manner. Therefore, if a state run most to noblemen and gentlemen, and that the husbandmen and ploughmen be but as their workfolk and labourers, or else mere cottagers (which are but hous'd beggars), you may have a good cavalry, but never good stable bands of foot. . . . And this is to be seen in France, and Italy, and some other parts abroad, where in effect all is noblesse or peasantry . . . insomuch that they are enforced to employ mercenary bands of Switzers and the like, for their

people, the transformation of them into mercenaries, and of their means of labour into capital. During this transformation period, legislation also strove to retain the 4 acres of land by the cottage of the agricultural wage-labour, and forbade him to take lodgers into his cottage. In the reign of James I., 1627, Roger Crocker of Front Mill, was condemned for having built a cottage on the manor of Front Mill without 4 acres of land attached to the same in perpetuity. As late as Charles I's reign, 1638, a royal commission was appointed to enforce the carrying out of the old laws, especially that referring to the 4 acres of land. Even in Cromwell's time, the building of a house within 4 miles of London was forbidden unless it was endowed with 4 acres of land. As late as the first half of the 18th century complaint is made if the cottage of the agricultural labourer has not an adjunct of one or two acres of land. Nowadays he is lucky if it is furnished with a little garden, or if he may rent, far away from his cottage, a few roods. "Landlords and farmers," says Dr. Hunter, "work here hand in hand. A few acres to the cottage would make the labourers too independent."*

The process of forcible expropriation of the people received in the 16th century a new and frightful impulse from the Reformation, and from the consequent colossal spoliation of the church property. The Catholic church was, at the time of the Reformation, feudal proprietor of a great part of the English land. The suppression of the monasteries, &c., hurled their inmates into the proletariat. The estates of the church were to a large extent given away to rapacious royal favourites, or sold at a nominal price to speculating farmers and citizens, who drove out,

battalions of foot; whereby also it comes to pass that those nations have much people and few soldiers." ("The Reign of Henry VII." Verbatim reprint from Kennet's *England*. Ed. 1719. Lond., 1870, p. 308.) [Note by Marx.]

* Dr. Hunter, 1. c., p. 134. "The quantity of land assigned (in the old laws) would now be judged too great for labourers, and

en masse, the hereditary sub-tenants and threw their holdings into one. The legally guaranteed property of the poorer folk in a part of the church's tithes was tacitly confiscated.* "Pauper ubique jacet,"⁴⁹ cried Queen Elizabeth, after a journey through England. In the 43rd year of her reign the nation was obliged to recognise pauperism officially by the introduction of a poor-rate. "The authors of this law seem to have been ashamed to state the grounds of it, for [contrary to traditional usage] it has no preamble whatever."^{**} By the 16th of Charles I., ch. 4, it was declared perpetual, and in fact only in 1834 did it take a new and harsher form.^{***} These immediate results of the

rather as likely to convert them into small farmers." (George Roberts: "The Social History of the People of the Southern Counties of England in Past Centuries." Lond., 1856, pp. 184-185.) [Note by Marx.]

* The right of the poor to share in the tithe, is established by the tenour of ancient statutes." (Tuckett, l. c., Vol. II, pp. 804-805.) [Note by Marx.]

** William Cobbett: "A History of the Protestant Reformation," § 471. [Note by Marx.]

*** The "spirit" of Protestantism may be seen from the following, among other things. In the south of England certain landed proprietors and well-to-do farmers put their heads together and propounded ten questions as to the right interpretation of the poor-law of Elizabeth. These they laid before a celebrated jurist of that time, Sergeant Snigge (later a judge under James I.) for his opinion. "Question 9—Some of the more wealthy farmers in the parish have devised a skilful mode by which all the trouble of executing this Act (the 43rd of Elizabeth) might be avoided. They have proposed that we shall erect a prison in the parish, and then give notice to the neighbourhood, that if any persons are disposed to farm the poor of this parish, they do give in sealed proposals, on a certain day, of the lowest price at which they will take them off our hands; and that they will be authorised to refuse to any one unless he be shut up in the aforesaid prison. The proposers of this plan conceive that there will be found in the adjoining counties, persons, who, being unwilling to labour and not possessing substance or credit to take a farm or ship, so as to live without labour, may be induced to make a very advantageous offer to the parish. If any of the poor perish under the contractor's care, the

Reformation were not its most lasting ones. The property of the church formed the religious bulwark of the traditional conditions of landed property. With its fall these were no longer tenable.*

Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I,
Moscow, 1974, pp. 81-82,
83-84, 226, 667-76

sin will lie at his door, as the parish will have done its duty by them. We are, however, apprehensive that the present Act (43rd of Elizabeth) will not warrant a prudential measure of this kind; but you are to learn that the rest of the freeholders of the county, and of the adjoining county of B, will very readily join in instructing their members to propose an Act to enable the parish to contract with a person to lock up and work the poor; and to declare that if any person shall refuse to be so locked up and worked, he shall be entitled to no relief. This, it is hoped, will prevent persons in distress from wanting relief, and be the means of keeping down parishers." (R. Blakey: "The History of Political Literature from the Earliest Times." Lond., 1855, Vol. II., pp. 84-85.) In Scotland, the abolition of serfdom took place some centuries later than in England. Even in 1698, Fletcher of Saltoun, declared in the Scotch parliament, "The number of beggars in Scotland is reckoned at not less than 200,000. The only remedy that I, a republican on principle, can suggest, is to restore the old state of serfdom, to make slaves of all those who are unable to provide for their own subsistence." Eden, *l.c.*, Book I., ch. 1, pp. 60-61, says, "The decrease of villenage seems necessarily to have been the era of the origin of the poor. Manufactures and commerce are the two parents of our national poor." Eden, like our Scotch republican on principle, errs only in this: not the abolition of villenage, but the abolition of the property of the agricultural labourer in the soil made him a proletarian, and eventually a pauper. In France, where the expropriation was effected in another way, the ordonnance of Moulins, 1566, and the Edict of 1656, correspond to the English poor-laws. [Note by Marx.]

* Professor Rogers, although formerly Professor of Political Economy in the University of Oxford, the hotbed of Protestant orthodoxy, in his preface to the "History of Agriculture" lays stress on the fact of the pauperisation of the mass of the people by the Reformation. [Note by Marx.]

KARL MARX
CAPITAL
Volume III

From CHAPTER XX

HISTORICAL FACTS ABOUT MERCHANT'S CAPITAL

Hitherto we have considered merchant's capital merely from the standpoint, and within the limits, of the capitalist mode of production. However, not commerce alone, but also merchant's capital, is older than the capitalist mode of production, is, in fact, historically the oldest free state of existence of capital.

Since we have already seen that money-dealing and the capital advanced for it require nothing more for their development than the existence of wholesale commerce, and further of commercial capital, it is only the latter which we must occupy ourselves with here.

Since merchant's capital is penned in the sphere of circulation, and since its function consists exclusively of promoting the exchange of commodities, it requires no other conditions for its existence—aside from the undeveloped forms arising from direct barter—outside those necessary for the simple circulation of commodities and money. Or rather, the latter is the condition of *its* existence. No matter what the basis on which products are produced, which are thrown into circulation as commodities—whether the basis of the primitive community, of slave production, of small peasant and petty bourgeois, or the capitalist basis, the character of products as commodities is not altered, and as commodities they must pass through the process of exchange and its attendant changes of form. The extremes

between which merchant's capital acts as mediator exist for it as given, just as they are given for money and for its movements. The only necessary thing is that these extremes should be on hand as commodities, regardless of whether production is wholly a production of commodities, or whether only the surplus of the independent producers' immediate needs, satisfied by their own production, is thrown on the market. Merchant's capital promotes only the movements of these extremes, of these commodities, which are preconditions of its own existence.

The extent to which products enter trade and go through the merchants' hands depends on the mode of production, and reaches its maximum in the ultimate development of capitalist production, where the product is produced solely as a commodity, and not as a direct means of subsistence. On the other hand, on the basis of every mode of production, trade facilitates the production of surplus-products destined for exchange, in order to increase the enjoyments, or the wealth, of the producers (here meant are the owners of the products). Hence, commerce imparts to production a character directed more and more towards exchange-value.

The metamorphosis of commodities, their movement, consists 1) materially, of the exchange of different commodities for one another, and 2) formally, of the conversion of commodities into money by sale, and of money into commodities by purchase. And the function of merchant's capital resolves itself into these very acts of buying and selling commodities. It therefore merely promotes the exchange of commodities; yet this exchange is not to be conceived at the outset as a bare exchange of commodities between direct producers. Under slavery, feudalism and vassalage (so far as primitive communities are concerned) it is the slave-owner, the feudal lord, the tribute-collecting state, who are the owners, hence sellers, of the products. The merchant buys and sells for many. Purchases

and sales are concentrated in his hands and consequently are no longer bound to the direct requirements of the buyer (as merchant).

But whatever the social organisation of the spheres of production whose commodity exchange the merchant promotes, his wealth exists always in the form of money, and his money always serves as capital. Its form is always $M-C-M'$. Money, the independent form of exchange-value, is the point of departure, and increasing the exchange-value an end in itself. Commodity exchange as such and the operations effecting it—separated from production and performed by non-producers—are just a means of increasing wealth not as mere wealth, but as wealth in its most universal social form, as exchange-value. The compelling motive and determining purpose are the conversion of M into $M+\Delta M$. The transactions $M-C$ and $C-M'$, which promote $M-M'$, appear merely as stages of transition in this conversion of M into $M+\Delta M$. This $M-C-M'$, the characteristic movement of merchant's capital, distinguishes it from $C-M-C$, trade in commodities directly between producers, which has for its ultimate end the exchange of use-values.

The less developed the production, the more wealth in money is concentrated in the hands of merchants or appears in the specific form of merchants' wealth.

Within the capitalist mode of production—i.e., as soon as capital has established its sway over production and imparted to it a wholly changed and specific form—merchant's capital appears merely as a capital with a *specific* function. In all previous modes of production, and all the more, wherever production ministers to the immediate wants of the producer, merchant's capital appears to perform the function *par excellence* of capital.

There is, therefore, not the least difficulty in understanding why merchant's capital appears as the historical form of capital long before capital established its own domination over production. Its existence and development

to a certain level are in themselves historical premises for the development of capitalist production 1) as premises for the concentration of money wealth, and 2) because the capitalist mode of production presupposes production for trade, selling on a large scale, and not to the individual customer, hence also a merchant who does not buy to satisfy his personal wants but concentrates the purchases of many buyers in his one purchase. On the other hand, all development of merchant's capital tends to give production more and more the character of production for exchange-value and to turn products more and more into commodities. Yet its development, as we shall presently see, is incapable by itself of promoting and explaining the transition from one mode of production to another.

CHAPTER XXXVI PRE-CAPITALIST RELATIONSHIPS

Interest-bearing capital, or, as we may call it in its antiquated form, usurer's capital, belongs together with its twin brother, merchant's capital, to the antediluvian forms of capital, which long precede the capitalist mode of production and are to be found in the most diverse economic formations of society.

The existence of usurer's capital merely requires that at least a portion of products should be transformed into commodities, and that money should have developed in its various functions along with trade in commodities.

The development of usurer's capital is bound up with the development of merchant's capital and especially that of money-dealing capital. In ancient Rome, beginning with the last years of the Republic, when manufacturing stood far below its average level of development in the ancient world, merchant's capital, money-dealing capital, and usurer's capital developed to their highest point within the ancient form.

We have seen that hoarding necessarily appears along with money.⁵⁰ But the professional hoarder does not become important until he is transformed into a usurer.

The merchant borrows money in order to make a profit with it, in order to use it as capital, that is, to expend it. Hence in earlier forms of society the money-lender stands in the same relation to him as to the modern capitalist. This specific relation was also experienced by the Catholic universities. "The universities of Alcalá, Salamanca, Ingolstadt, Freiburg in Breisgau, Mayence, Cologne, Trèves, one after another recognised the legality of interest for commercial loans. The first five of these approbations were deposited in the archives of the Consulate of the city of Lyons and published in the appendix to the *Traité de l'usure et des intérêts*, by Bruyset-Ponthus, Lyons." (M. Augier, *Le Crédit public, etc.*, Paris, 1842, p. 206.) In all the forms in which slave economy (not the patriarchal kind, but that of later Grecian and Roman times) serves as a means of amassing wealth, where money therefore is a means of appropriating the labour of others through the purchase of slaves, land, etc., money can be expanded as capital, i.e., bear interest, for the very reason that it can be so invested.

The characteristic forms, however, in which usurer's capital exists in periods antedating capitalist production are of two kinds. I purposely say characteristic forms. The same forms repeat themselves on the basis of capitalist production, but as mere subordinate forms. They are then no longer the forms which determine the character of interest-bearing capital. These two forms are: *first*, usury by lending money to extravagant members of the upper classes, particularly landowners; *secondly*, usury by lending money to small producers who possess their own conditions of labour—this includes the artisan, but mainly the peasant, since particularly under pre-capitalist conditions, in so far as they permit of small independent individual pro-

ducers, the peasant class necessarily constitutes the overwhelming majority of them.

Both the ruin of rich landowners through usury and the impoverishment of the small producers lead to the formation and concentration of large amounts of money-capital. But to what extent this process does away with the old mode of production, as happened in modern Europe, and whether it puts the capitalist mode of production in its stead, depends entirely upon the stage of historical development and the attendant circumstances.

Usurer's capital as the characteristic form of interest-bearing capital corresponds to the predominance of small-scale production of the self-employed peasant and small master craftsman. When the labourer is confronted by the conditions of labour and by the product of labour in the shape of capital, as under the developed capitalist mode of production, he has no occasion to borrow any money as a producer. When he does any money borrowing, he does so, for instance, at the pawnshop to secure personal necessities. But wherever the labourer is the owner, whether actual or nominal, of his conditions of labour and his product, he stands as a producer in relation to the money-lender's capital, which confronts him as usurer's capital. Newman expresses the matter insipidly when he says the banker is respected, while the usurer is hated and despised, because the banker lends to the rich, whereas the usurer lends to the poor. (F. W. Newman, *Lectures on Political Economy*, London, 1851, p. 44.) He overlooks the fact that a difference between two modes of social production and their corresponding social orders lies at the heart of the matter and that the situation cannot be explained by the distinction between rich and poor. Moreover, the usury which sucks dry the small producer goes hand in hand with the usury which sucks dry the rich owner of a large estate. As soon as the usury of the Roman patricians had completely ruined the Roman plebeians, the small peasants, this form of exploitation came

to an end and a pure slave economy replaced the small-peasant economy.

In the form of interest, the entire surplus above the barest means of subsistence (the amount that later becomes wages of the producers) can be consumed by usury (this later assumes the form of profit and ground-rent), and hence it is highly absurd to compare the level of *this* interest, which assimilates *all* the surplus-value excepting the share claimed by the state, with the level of the modern interest rate, where interest constitutes at least normally only a part of the surplus-value. Such a comparison overlooks that the wage-worker produces and gives to the capitalist who employs him, profit, interest and ground-rent, i.e., the entire surplus-value. Carey makes this absurd comparison in order to show how advantageous the development of capital, and the fall in the interest rate that accompanies it, are for the labourer. Furthermore, while the usurer, not content with squeezing the surplus-labour out of his victim, gradually acquires possession even of his very conditions of labour, land, house, etc., and is continually engaged in thus expropriating him, it is again forgotten that, on the other hand, this complete expropriation of the labourer from his conditions of labour is not a result which the capitalist mode of production seeks to achieve, but rather the established condition for its point of departure. The wage-slave, just like the real slave, cannot become a creditor's slave due to his position—at least in his capacity as producer; the wage-slave, it is true, can become a creditor's slave in his capacity as consumer. Usurer's capital in the form whereby it indeed appropriates all of the surplus-labour of the direct producers, without altering the mode of production; whereby the ownership or possession by the producers of the conditions of labour—and small-scale production corresponding to this—is its essential prerequisite; whereby, in other words, capital does not directly subordinate labour to itself, and does not, therefore, confront it as industrial

capital—this usurer's capital impoverishes the mode of production, paralyses the productive forces instead of developing them, and at the same time perpetuates the miserable conditions in which the social productivity of labour is not developed at the expense of labour itself, as in the capitalist mode of production.

Usury thus exerts, on the one hand, an undermining and destructive influence on ancient and feudal wealth and ancient and feudal property. On the other hand, it undermines and ruins small-peasant and small-burgher production, in short, all forms in which the producer still appears as the owner of his means of production. Under the developed capitalist mode of production, the labourer is not the owner of the means of production, i.e., the field which he cultivates, the raw materials which he processes, etc. But under this system separation of the producer from the means of production reflects an actual revolution in the mode of production itself. The isolated labourers are brought together in large workshops for the purpose of carrying out separate but interconnected activities; the tool becomes a machine. The mode of production itself no longer permits the dispersion of the instruments of production associated with small property; nor does it permit the isolation of the labourer himself. Under the capitalist mode of production usury can no longer separate the producer from his means of production, for they have already been separated.

Usury centralises money wealth where the means of production are dispersed. It does not alter the mode of production, but attaches itself firmly to it like a parasite and makes it wretched. It sucks out its blood, enervates it and compels reproduction to proceed under ever more pitiable conditions. Hence the popular hatred against usurers, which was most pronounced in the ancient world where ownership of means of production by the producer himself was at the same time the basis for political status, the independence of the citizen.

To the extent that slavery prevails, or in so far as the surplus-product is consumed by the feudal lord and his retinue, while either the slave-owner or the feudal lord fall into the clutches of the usurer, the mode of production still remains the same; it only becomes harder on the labourer. The indebted slave-holder or feudal lord becomes more oppressive because he is himself more oppressed. Or he finally makes way for the usurer, who becomes a landed proprietor or a slave-holder himself, like the knights⁵¹ in ancient Rome. The place of the old exploiter, whose exploitation was more or less patriarchal because it was largely a means of political power, is taken by a hard, money-mad parvenu. But the mode of production itself is not altered thereby.

Usury has a revolutionary effect in all pre-capitalist modes of production only in so far as it destroys and dissolves those forms of property on whose solid foundation and continual reproduction in the same form the political organisation is based. Under Asian forms, usury can continue a long time, without producing anything more than economic decay and political corruption. Only where and when the other prerequisites of capitalist production are present does usury become one of the means assisting in establishment of the new mode of production by ruining the feudal lord and small-scale producer, on the one hand, and centralising the conditions of labour into capital, on the other.

In the Middle Ages no country had a general rate of interest. The Church forbade, from the outset, all lending at interest. Laws and courts offered little protection for loans. Interest was so much the higher in individual cases. The limited circulation of money, the need to make most payments in cash, compelled people to borrow money, and all the more so when the exchange business was still undeveloped. There were large divergences both in interest rates and the conceptions of usury. In the time of Charlemagne it was considered usurious to charge 100%.

In Lindau on Lake Constance, some local burghers took $216\frac{2}{3}\%$ in 1348. In Zurich, the City Council decreed that $43\frac{1}{3}\%$ should be the legal interest rate. In Italy 40% had to be paid sometimes, although the usual rate from the 12th to the 14th century did not exceed 20% . Verona ordered that $12\frac{1}{2}\%$ be the legal rate. Emperor Friedrich II fixed the rate at 10% , but only for Jews. He did not deign to speak for Christians. In the German Rhine provinces, 10% was the rule as early as the 13th century. (Hüllmann, *Geschichte des Städtewesens*, II, S. 55-57.)

Usurer's capital employs the method of exploitation characteristic of capital yet without the latter's mode of production. This condition also repeats itself within bourgeois economy, in backward branches of industry or in those branches which resist the transition to the modern mode of production. For instance, if we wish to compare the English interest rate with the Indian, we should not take the interest rate of the Bank of England, but rather, e.g., that charged by lenders of small machinery to small producers in domestic industry.

Usury, in contradistinction to consuming wealth, is historically important, inasmuch as it is in itself a process generating capital. Usurer's capital and merchant's wealth promote the formation of moneyed wealth independent of landed property. The less products assume the character of commodities, and the less intensively and extensively exchange-value has taken hold of production, the more does money appear as actual wealth as such, as wealth in general—in contrast to its limited representation in use-values. This is the basis of hoarding. Aside from money as world-money and as hoard, it is, in particular, the form of means of payment whereby it appears as the absolute form of commodities. And it is especially its function as a means of payment which develops interest and thereby money-capital. What squandering and corrupting wealth desires is money as such, money as a means of buying everything (also as a means of paying debts). The small

producer needs money above all for making payments. (The transformation of services and taxes in kind to landlords and the state into money-rent and money-taxes plays a great role here.) In either case, money is needed as such. On the other hand, it is in usury that hoarding first becomes reality and that the hoarder fulfils his dream. What is sought from the owner of a hoard is not capital, but money as such; but by means of interest he transforms this hoard of money into capital, that is, into a means of appropriating surplus-labour in part or in its entirety, and similarly securing a hold on a part of the means of production themselves, even though they may nominally remain the property of others. Usury lives in the pores of production, as it were, just as the gods of Epicurus lived in the space between worlds. Money is so much harder to obtain, the less the commodity-form constitutes the general form of products. Hence the usurer knows no other barrier but the capacity of those who need money to pay or to resist. In small-peasant and small-burgher production money serves as a means of purchase, mainly, whenever the means of production of the labourer (who is still predominantly their owner under these modes of production) are lost to him either by accident or through extraordinary upheavals, or at least are not replaced in the normal course of reproduction. Means of subsistence and raw materials constitute an essential part of these requirements of production. If these become more expensive, it may make it impossible to replace them out of the returns for the product, just as ordinary crop failures may prevent the peasant from replacing his seed in kind. The same wars through which the Roman patricians ruined the plebeians by compelling them to serve as soldiers and which prevented them from reproducing their conditions of labour, and therefore made paupers of them (and pauperisation, the crippling or loss of the prerequisites of reproduction is here the predominant form)—these same wars filled the store-rooms and coffers of the patricians

with looted copper, the money of that time. Instead of directly giving plebeians the necessary commodities, i.e., grain, horses, and cattle, they loaned them this copper for which they had no use themselves, and took advantage of this situation to exact enormous usurious interest, thereby turning the plebeians into their debtor slaves. During the reign of Charlemagne, the Frankish peasants were likewise ruined by wars, so that they faced no choice but to become serfs instead of debtors. In the Roman Empire, as is known, extreme hunger frequently resulted in the sale of children and also in free men selling themselves as slaves to the rich. So much for general turning-points. In individual cases the maintenance or loss of the means of production on the part of small producers depends on a thousand contingencies, and every one of these contingencies or losses signifies impoverishment and becomes a crevice into which a parasitic usurer may creep. The mere death of his cow may render the small peasant incapable of renewing his reproduction on its former scale. He then falls into the clutches of the usurer, and once in the usurer's power he can never extricate himself.

The really important and characteristic domain of the usurer, however, is the function of money as a means of payment. Every payment of money, ground-rent, tribute, tax, etc., which becomes due on a certain date, carries with it the need to secure money for such a purpose. Hence from the days of ancient Rome to those of modern times, wholesale usury relies upon tax-collectors, *fermiers généraux*, *receveurs généraux*. Then, there develops with commerce and the generalisation of commodity-production the separation, in time, of purchase and payment. The money has to be paid on a definite date. How this can lead to circumstances in which the money-capitalist and usurer, even nowadays, merge into one is shown by modern money crises. This same usury, however, becomes one of the principal means of further developing the necessity for money as a means of payment—by driving the pro-

ducer ever more deeply into debt and destroying his usual means of payment, since the burden of interest alone makes his normal reproduction impossible. At this point, usury sprouts up out of money as a means of payment and extends this function of money as its very own domain.

The credit system develops as a reaction against usury. But this should not be misunderstood, nor by any means interpreted in the manner of the ancient writers, the church fathers, Luther or the early socialists. It signifies no more and no less than the subordination of interest-bearing capital to the conditions and requirements of the capitalist mode of production.

On the whole, interest-bearing capital under the modern credit system is adapted to the conditions of the capitalist mode of production. Usury as such does not only continue to exist, but is even freed, among nations with a developed capitalist production, from the fetters imposed upon it by all previous legislation. Interest-bearing capital retains the form of usurer's capital in relation to persons or classes, or in circumstances where borrowing does not, nor can, take place in the sense corresponding to the capitalist mode of production; where borrowing takes place as a result of individual need, as at the pawnshop; where money is borrowed by wealthy spendthrifts for the purpose of squandering; or where the producer is a non-capitalist producer, such as a small farmer or craftsman, who is thus still, as the immediate producer, the owner of his own means of production; finally where the capitalist producer himself operates on such a small scale that he resembles those self-employed producers.

What distinguishes interest-bearing capital—in so far as it is an essential element of the capitalist mode of production—from usurer's capital is by no means the nature or character of this capital itself. It is merely the altered conditions under which it operates, and consequently also the totally transformed character of the borrower who

confronts the money-lender. Even when a man without fortune receives credit in his capacity of industrialist or merchant, it occurs with the expectation that he will function as capitalist and appropriate unpaid labour with the borrowed capital. He receives credit in his capacity of potential capitalist. The circumstance that a man without fortune but possessing energy, solidity, ability and business acumen may become a capitalist in this manner—and the commercial value of each individual is pretty accurately estimated under the capitalist mode of production—is greatly admired by apologists of the capitalist system. Although this circumstance continually brings an unwelcome number of new soldiers of fortune into the field and into competition with the already existing individual capitalists, it also reinforces the supremacy of capital itself, expands its base and enables it to recruit ever new forces for itself out of the substratum of society. In a similar way, the circumstance that the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages formed its hierarchy out of the best brains in the land, regardless of their estate, birth or fortune, was one of the principal means of consolidating ecclesiastical rule and suppressing the laity. The more a ruling class is able to assimilate the foremost minds of a ruled class, the more stable and dangerous becomes its rule.

The initiators of the modern credit system take as their point of departure not an anathema against interest-bearing capital in general, but on the contrary, its explicit recognition.

We are not referring here to such reactions against usury which attempted to protect the poor against it, like the *Monts-de-piété* (1350 in Sarlins in Franche-Comté, later in Perugia and Savona in Italy, 1400 and 1479).⁵² These are noteworthy mainly because they reveal the irony of history, which turns pious wishes into their very opposite during the process of realisation. According to a moderate estimate, the English working-class pays 100% to the

pawnshops, the modern successors of *Monts-de-piété*.* We are also not referring to the credit fantasies of such men as Dr. Hugh Chamberleyne or John Briscoe, who attempted during the last decade of the 17th century to emancipate the English aristocracy from usury by means of a farmers' bank using paper money based on real estate.**

The credit associations established in the 12th and 14th centuries in Venice and Genoa arose from the need for marine commerce and the wholesale trade associated with it to emancipate themselves from the domination of outmoded usury and the monopolisation of the money business. While the actual banks founded in those city-republics assumed simultaneously the shape of public credit institutions from which the state received loans on future tax revenues, it should not be forgotten that the merchants founding those associations were themselves prominent citizens of those states and as much interested in emancipating their government as they were in eman-

* "It is by frequent fluctuations within the month, and by pawning one article to relieve another, where a small sum is obtained, that the premium for money becomes so excessive. There are about 240 licensed pawnbrokers in the metropolis, and nearly 1,450 in the country. The capital employed is supposed somewhat to exceed a million pounds sterling; and this capital is turned round thrice in the course of a year, and yields each time about 33½ per cent on an average; according to which calculation, the inferior orders of society in England pay about one million a year for the use of a temporary loan, exclusive of what they lose by goods being forfeited." (J. D. Tuckett, *A History of the Past and Present State of the Labouring Population*, London, 1846, I, p. 114.) [Note by Marx.]

** Even in the titles of their works they state as their principal purpose "the general good of the landed men, the great increase of the value of land," the exemption of "the nobility, gentry, etc., from taxes, enlarging their yearly estates, etc." Only the usurers would stand to lose, those worst enemies of the nation who had done more injury to the nobility and yeomanry than an army of invasion from France could have done. [Note by Marx.]

icipating themselves from the exactions of usurers,* and at the same time in getting tighter and more secure control over the state. Hence, when the Bank of England was to be established, the Tories also protested: "Banks are republican institutions. Flourishing banks existed in Venice, Genoa, Amsterdam, and Hamburg. But whoever heard of a Bank of France or Spain?"

The Bank of Amsterdam, in 1609, was not epoch-making in the development of the modern credit system any more than that of Hamburg in 1619. It was purely a bank for deposits. The cheques issued by the bank were indeed merely receipts for the deposited coined and uncoined precious metal, and circulated only with the endorsement of the acceptors. But in Holland commercial credit and dealing in money developed hand in hand with commerce and manufacture, and interest-bearing capital was subordinated to industrial and commercial capital by the course of development itself. This could already be seen in the low interest rate. Holland, however, was considered in the 17th century the model of economic development, as England is now. The monopoly of old-style usury, based on poverty, collapsed in that country of its own weight.

During the entire 18th century there is the cry, with

* "The rich goldsmith (the precursor of the banker), for example, made Charles II of England pay twenty and thirty per cent for accommodation. A business so profitable, induced the goldsmith 'more and more to become lender to the King, to anticipate all the revenue, to take every grant of Parliament into pawn as soon as it was given; also to outvie each other in buying and taking to pawn bills, orders, and tallies, so that, in effect, all the revenue passed through their hands.'" (John Francis, *History of the Bank of England*, London, 1848, I, p. 31.) "The erection of a bank had been suggested several times before that. It was at last a necessity" (l.c., p. 38). "The bank was a necessity for the government itself, sucked dry by usurers, in order to obtain money at a reasonable rate, on the security of parliamentary grants" (l. c., pp. 59, 60). [*Note by Marx.*]

Holland referred to as an example, for a compulsory reduction of the rate of interest (and legislation acts accordingly), in order to subordinate interest-bearing capital to commercial and industrial capital, instead of the reverse. The main spokesman for this movement is Sir Josiah Child, the father of ordinary English private banking. He declaims against the monopoly of usurers in much the same way as the wholesale clothing manufacturers, Moses & Son, do when leading the fight against the monopoly of "private tailors". This same Josiah Child is simultaneously the father of English stock-jobbing. Thus, this autocrat of the East India Company defends its monopoly in the name of free trade. Versus Thomas Manley (*Interest of Money Mistaken*)⁵³ he says: "As the champion of the timid and trembling band of usurers he erects his main batteries at that point which I have declared to be the weakest . . . he denies point-blank that the low rate of interest is the cause of wealth and vows that it is merely its effect." (*Traité sur le Commerce, etc.*, 1669, trad. Amsterdam et Berlin, 1754.) "If it is commerce that enriches a country, and if a lowering of interest increases commerce, then a lowering of interest or a restriction of usury is doubtless a fruitful primary cause of the wealth of a nation. It is not at all absurd to say that the same thing may be simultaneously a cause under certain circumstances, and an effect under others" (l.c., p. 155). "The egg is the cause of the hen, and the hen is the cause of the egg. The lowering of interest may cause an increase of wealth, and the increase of wealth may cause a still greater reduction of interest" (l.c., p. 156). "I am the defender of industry and my opponent defends laziness and sloth" (p. 179).

This violent battle against usury, this demand for the subordination of interest-bearing capital to industrial capital, is but the herald of the organic creations that establish these prerequisites of capitalist production in the modern banking system, which on the one hand robs

usurer's capital of its monopoly by concentrating all idle money reserves and throwing them on the money-market, and on the other hand limits the monopoly of the precious metal itself by creating credit-money.

The same opposition to usury, the demand for the emancipation of commerce, industry and the state from usury, which are observed here in the case of Child, will be found in all writings on banking in England during the last third of the 17th and the early 18th centuries. We also find colossal illusions about the miraculous effects of credit, abolition of the monopoly of precious metal, its displacement by paper, etc. The Scotsman William Paterson, founder of the Bank of England and the Bank of Scotland, is by all odds Law the First.⁵⁴

Against the Bank of England "all goldsmiths and pawnbrokers set up a howl of rage." (Macaulay, *History of England*, IV, p. 499.) "During the first ten years the Bank had to struggle with great difficulties; great foreign feuds; its notes were only accepted far below their nominal value . . . the goldsmiths (in whose hands the trade in precious metals served as a basis of a primitive banking business) were jealous of the Bank, because their business was diminished, their discounts were lowered, their transactions with the government had passed to their opponents." (J. Francis, l. c., p. 73.)

Even before the establishment of the Bank of England a plan was proposed in 1683 for a National Bank of Credit, which had for its purpose, among others, "that tradesmen, when they have a considerable quantity of goods, may, by the help of this bank, deposit their goods, by raising a credit on their own dead stock, employ their servants, and increase their trade, till they get a good market instead of selling them at a loss" [J. Francis, l. c., pp. 39-40].⁵⁵ After many endeavours this Bank of Credit was established in Devonshire House on Bishopsgate Street. It made loans to industrialists and merchants on the security of deposited goods to the amount of three-

quarters of their value, in the form of bills of exchange. In order to make these bills of exchange capable of circulating, a number of people in each branch of business were organised into a society, from which every possessor of such bills would be able to obtain goods with the same facility as if he were to offer them cash payment. This bank's business did not flourish. Its machinery was too complicated, and the risk too great in case of a commodity depreciation.

If we go by the actual content of those records which accompany and theoretically promote the formation of the modern credit system in England, we shall not find anything in them but—as one of its conditions—the demand for a subordination of interest-bearing capital and of loanable means of production in general to the capitalist mode of production. On the other hand, if we simply cling to the phraseology, we shall be frequently surprised by the agreement—including the mode of expression—with the illusions of the followers of Saint-Simon about banking and credit.

Just as in the writings of the physiocrats the *cultivateur* does not stand for the actual tiller of the soil, but for the big farmer, so the *travailleur* with Saint-Simon, and continuing on through his disciples, does not stand for the labourer, but for the industrial and commercial capitalist. "*Un travailleur a besoin d'aides, de seconds, d'ouvriers; il les cherche intelligents, habiles, dévoués; il les met à l'œuvre, et leurs travaux sont productifs*" ([Enfantin]* Religion saint-simonienne. Economie politique et Politique, Paris, 1831, p. 104).

In fact, one should bear in mind that only in his last work, *Le Nouveau Christianisme*, Saint-Simon speaks directly for the working-class and declares their emanci-

* "A *travailleur* (worker) needs helpers, supporters, *labourers*; he looks for such as are intelligent, able, devoted; he puts them to work, and their labour is productive." (*Religion saint-simonienne. Economie politique et Politique*, Paris, 1831, p. 104.)

pation to be the goal of his efforts. All his former writings are, indeed, mere encomiums of modern bourgeois society in contrast to the feudal order, or of industrialists and bankers in contrast to marshals and juristic law-manufacturers of the Napoleonic era. What a difference compared with the contemporaneous writings of Owen!* For the followers of Saint-Simon, the industrial capitalist likewise remains the *travailleur par excellence*, as the above-quoted passage indicates. After reading their writings critically, one will not be surprised that their credit and bank fantasies materialised in the *crédit mobilier*,⁵⁶ founded by an ex-follower of Saint-Simon, Emile Pereire. This form, incidentally, could become dominant only in a country like France, where neither the credit system nor large-scale industry had reached the modern level of development. This was not at all possible in England and America. The embryo of *crédit mobilier* is already contained in the following passages from *Doctrine de Saint-Simon. Exposition. Première année, 1828-29, 3^{me} éd., Paris, 1831*. It is understandable that bankers can lend money more cheaply than the capitalists and private usurers. These bankers are,

* Marx would surely have modified this passage considerably, had he reworked his manuscript. It was inspired by the role of the ex-followers of Saint-Simon under France's Second Empire,⁵⁷ where, just at the time that Marx wrote the above, the world-redeeming credit fantasies of this school, through the irony of history, were being realised in the form of a tremendous swindle on a scale never seen before. Later Marx spoke only with admiration of the genius and encyclopaedic mind of Saint-Simon. When in his earlier works the latter ignores the antithesis between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat which was just then coming into existence in France, when he includes among the *travailleurs* that part of the bourgeoisie which was active in production, this corresponds to Fourier's conception of attempting to reconcile capital and labour and is explained by the economic and political situation of France in those days. The fact that Owen was more farsighted in this respect is due to his different environment, for he lived in a period of industrial revolution and of acutely sharpening class antagonisms. [Note by Engels.]

therefore, "able to supply tools to the industrialists far more cheaply, that is, at *lower interest*, than the real estate owners and capitalists, who may be more easily mistaken in their choice of borrowers" (p. 202). But the authors themselves add in a footnote: "The advantage that would accrue from the mediation of bankers between the idle rich and the *travailleurs* is often counterbalanced, or even cancelled, by the opportunities offered in our disorganised society to egoism, which may manifest itself in various forms of fraud and charlatanism. The bankers often worm their way between the *travailleurs* and idle rich for the purpose of exploiting both to the detriment of society." *Travailleur* here means *capitaliste industriel*. Incidentally, it is wrong to regard the means at the command of the modern banking system merely as the means of idle people. In the first place, it is the portion of capital which industrialists and merchants temporarily hold in the form of idle money, as a money reserve or as capital to be invested. Hence it is idle capital, but not capital of the idle. In the second place, it is the portion of all revenue and savings in general which is to be temporarily or permanently accumulated. Both are essential to the nature of the banking system.

But it should always be borne in mind that, in the first place, money—in the form of precious metal—remains the foundation from which the credit system, by its very nature, can *never* detach itself. Secondly, that the credit system presupposes the monopoly of social means of production by private persons (in the form of capital and landed property), that it is itself, on the one hand, an immanent form of the capitalist mode of production, and on the other, a driving force in its development to its highest and ultimate form.

The banking system, so far as its formal organisation and centralisation is concerned, is the most artificial and most developed product turned out by the capitalist mode of production, a fact already expressed in 1697 in *Some*

Thoughts of the Interests of England. This accounts for the immense power of an institution such as the Bank of England over commerce and industry, although their actual movements remain completely beyond its province and it is passive toward them. The banking system possesses indeed the form of universal book-keeping and distribution of means of production on a social scale, but solely the form. We have seen that the average profit of the individual capitalist, or of every individual capital, is determined not by the surplus-labour appropriated at first hand by each capital, but by the quantity of total surplus-labour appropriated by the total capital, from which each individual capital receives its dividend only proportional to its aliquot part of the total capital. This social character of capital is first promoted and wholly realised through the full development of the credit and banking system. On the other hand this goes farther. It places all the available and even potential capital of society that is not already actively employed at the disposal of the industrial and commercial capitalists so that neither the lenders nor users of this capital are its real owners or producers. It thus does away with the private character of capital and thus contains in itself, but only in itself, the abolition of capital itself. By means of the banking system the distribution of capital as a special business, a social function, is taken out of the hands of the private capitalists and usurers. But at the same time, banking and credit thus become the most potent means of driving capitalist production beyond its own limits, and one of the most effective vehicles of crises and swindle.

The banking system shows, furthermore, by substituting various forms of circulating credit in place of money, that money is in reality nothing but a particular expression of the social character of labour and its products, which, however, as antithetical to the basis of private production, must always appear in the last analysis as a thing, a special commodity, alongside other commodities.

Finally, there is no doubt that the credit system will serve as a powerful lever during the transition from the capitalist mode of production to the mode of production of associated labour; but only as one element in connection with other great organic revolutions of the mode of production itself. On the other hand, the illusions concerning the miraculous power of the credit and banking system, in the socialist sense, arise from a complete lack of familiarity with the capitalist mode of production and the credit system as one of its forms. As soon as the means of production cease being transformed into capital (which also includes the abolition of private property in land), credit as such no longer has any meaning. This, incidentally, was even understood by the followers of Saint-Simon. On the other hand, as long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist, interest-bearing capital, as one of its forms, also continues to exist and constitutes in fact the basis of its credit system. Only that sensational writer, Proudhon, who wanted to perpetuate commodity-production and abolish money, was capable of dreaming up the monstrous *crédit gratuit*, the ostensible realisation of the pious wish of the petty-bourgeois estate.

In *Religion saint-simonienne, Économie politique et Politique*, we read on page 45: "Credit serves the purpose, in a society in which some own the instruments of industry without the ability or will to employ them, and where other industrious people have no instruments of labour, of transferring these instruments in the easiest manner possible from the hands of the former, their owners, to the hands of the others who know how to use them. Note that this definition regards credit as a result of the way in which *property* is constituted." Therefore, credit disappears with this constitution of property. We read, furthermore, on page 98, that the present banks "consider it their business to follow the movement initiated by transactions taking place outside of their domain, but not themselves to provide an impulse to this move-

ment; in other words, the banks perform the role of capitalists in relation to the *travailleurs*, whom they loan money." The notion that the banks themselves should take over the management and distinguish themselves "through the number and usefulness of their managed establishments and of promoted works" (p. 101) contains the *crédit mobilier* in embryo. In the same way, Charles Pecqueur demands that the banks (which the followers of Saint-Simon call a *Système général des banques*) "should rule production." Pecqueur is essentially a follower of Saint-Simon, but much more radical. He wants "the credit institution . . . to control the entire movement of national production."—"Try to create a national credit institution, which shall advance the wherewithal to needy people of talent and merit, without, however, forcibly tying these borrowers together through close solidarity in production and consumption, but on the contrary enabling them to determine their own exchange and production. In this way, you will only accomplish what the private banks already accomplish now, that is, anarchy, disproportion between production and consumption, the sudden ruin of one person, and the sudden enrichment of another; so that your institution will never get any farther than producing a certain amount of benefits for one person, corresponding to an equivalent amount of misfortune to be endured by another . . . and you will have only provided the wage-labourers assisted by you with the means to compete with one another just as their capitalist masters now do." (Ch. Pecqueur, *Théorie Nouvelle d'Économie Sociale et Politique*, Paris, 1842, p. 434.)

We have seen that merchant's capital and interest-bearing capital are the oldest forms of capital. But it is in the nature of things that interest-bearing capital assumes in popular conception the form of capital *par excellence*. In merchant's capital there takes place the work of middleman, no matter whether considered as cheating, labour, or anything else. But in the case of interest-bear-

ing capital the self-reproducing character of capital, the self-expanding value, the production of surplus-value, appears purely as an occult property. This accounts for the fact that even some political economists, particularly in countries where industrial capital is not yet fully developed, as in France, cling to interest-bearing capital as the fundamental form of capital and regard ground-rent, for example, merely as a modified form of it, since the loan-form also predominates here. In this way, the internal organisation of the capitalist mode of production is completely misunderstood, and the fact is entirely overlooked that land, like capital, is loaned only to capitalists. Of course, means of production in kind, such as machines and business offices, can also be loaned instead of money. But they then represent a definite sum of money, and the fact that in addition to interest a part is paid for wear and tear is due to their use-value, i.e., the specific natural form of these elements of capital. The decisive factor here is again whether they are loaned to direct producers, which would presuppose the non-existence of the capitalist mode of production—at least in the sphere in which this occurs—or whether they are loaned to industrial capitalists, which is precisely the assumption based upon the capitalist mode of production. It is still more irrelevant and meaningless to drag the lending of houses, etc., for individual use into this discussion. That the working-class is also swindled in this form, and to an enormous extent, is self-evident; but this is also done by the retail dealer, who sells means of subsistence to the worker. This is secondary exploitation, which runs parallel to the primary exploitation taking place in the production process itself. The distinction between selling and loaning is quite immaterial in this case and merely formal, and, as already indicated,* cannot appear as essential to anyone, unless he be wholly unfamiliar with the actual nature of the problem.

* Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, pp. 345-50.—Ed.

Usury, like commerce, exploits a given mode of production. It does not create it, but is related to it outwardly. Usury tries to maintain it directly, so as to exploit it ever anew; it is conservative and makes this mode of production only more pitiable. The less elements of production enter into the production process as commodities, and emerge from it as commodities, the more does their origination from money appear as a separate act. The more insignificant the role played by circulation in the social reproduction, the more usury flourishes.

That money wealth develops as a special kind of wealth, means in respect to usurer's capital that it possesses all its claims in the form of money claims. It develops that much more in a given country, the more the main body of production is limited to natural services, etc., that is, to use-values.

Usury is a powerful lever in developing the preconditions for industrial capital in so far as it plays the following double role, first, building up, in general, an independent money wealth alongside that of the merchant, and, secondly, appropriating the conditions of labour, that is, ruining the owners of the old conditions of labour.

INTEREST IN THE MIDDLE AGES

"In the Middle Ages the population was purely agricultural. Under such a government as was the feudal system there can be but little traffic, and hence but little profit. Hence the laws against usury were justified in the Middle Ages. Besides, in an agricultural country a person seldom wants to borrow money except he be reduced to poverty or distress. . . . In the reign of Henry VIII, interest was limited to 10 per cent. James I reduced it to 8 per cent. . . . Charles II reduced it to 6 per cent; in the reign of Queen Anne, it was reduced to 5 per cent. . . . In those times, the lenders . . . had, in fact, though not a legal, yet

an actual monopoly, and hence it was necessary that they, like other monopolists, should be placed under restraint. In our times, it is the rate of profit which regulates the rate of interest. In those times, it was the rate of interest which regulated the rate of profit. If the money-lender charged a high rate of interest to the merchant, the merchant must have charged a higher rate of profit on his goods. Hence, a large sum of money would be taken from the pockets of the purchasers to be put into the pockets of the money-lenders." (Gilbart, *History and Principles of Banking*, pp. 163, 164, 165.)

"I have been told that 10 gulden are now taken annually at every Leipzig Fair, that is, 30 on each hundred⁵⁸; some add the Neuenburg Fair, thus making 40 per hundred; whether that is so, I don't know. For shame! What will be the infernal outcome of this? . . . Whoever now has 100 florins at Leipzig, takes 40 annually, which is the same as devouring one peasant or burgher each year. If one has 1,000 florins, he takes 400 annually, which means devouring a knight or a rich nobleman per year. If one has 10,000 florins, he takes 4,000 per year, which means devouring a rich count each year. If one has 100,000 florins, as the big merchants must possess, he takes 40,000 annually, which means devouring one affluent prince each year. If one has 1,000,000 florins, he takes 400,000 annually, which means devouring one mighty king every year. And he does not risk either his person or his wares, does not work, sits near his fire-place and roasts apples; so might a lowly robber sit at home and devour a whole world in ten years." (Quoted from *Bücher vom Kaufhandel und Wucher vom Jahre 1524*, Luther's *Werke*, Wittenberg, 1589, Teil 6, S. 312.)

"Fifteen years ago I took pen in hand against usury, when it had spread so alarmingly that I could scarcely hope for any improvement. Since then it has become so arrogant that it deigns not to be classed as vice, sin, or shame, but achieves praise as pure virtue and honour, as

though it were performing a great favour and Christian service for the people. What will help deliver us now that shame has turned into honour and vice into virtue?" (Martin Luther, *An die Pfarherrn wider den Wucher zu predigen*, Wittenberg, 1540.)

"Jews, Lombards, usurers and extortioners were our first bankers, our primitive traffickers in money, their character little short of infamous. . . . They were joined by London goldsmiths. As a body . . . our primitive bankers . . . were a very bad set, they were gripping usurers, iron-hearted extortioners." (D. Hardcastle, *Banks and Bankers*, 2nd ed., London, 1843, pp. 19, 20.)

"The example shown by Venice (in establishing a bank) was thus quickly imitated; all sea-coast towns, and in general all towns which had earned fame through their independence and commerce, founded their first banks. The return voyage of their ships, which often was of long duration, inevitably led to the custom of lending on credit. This was further intensified by the discovery of America and the ensuing trade with that continent." (This is the main point.) The chartering of ships made large loans necessary—a procedure already obtaining in ancient Athens and Greece. In 1308, the Hanse town of Bruges possessed an insurance company. (M. Augier, l. c., pp. 202, 203.)

To what extent the granting of loans to landowners, and thus to the pleasure-seeking wealthy in general, still prevailed in the last third of the 17th century, even in England, before the development of modern credit, may be seen, among others, in the works of Sir Dudley North. He was not only one of the first English merchants, but also one of the most prominent theoretical economists of his time: "The moneys employed at interest in this nation, are not near the tenth part, disposed to trading people, wherewith to manage their trades; but are for the most part lent for the supplying of luxury, and to support the

expense of persons, who though great owners of lands, yet spend faster than their lands bring in; and being loath to sell, choose rather to mortgage their estates." (*Discourses upon Trade*, London, 1691, pp. 6-7.)

Poland in the 18th century: "Warsaw carried on a large bustling business in bills of exchange which, however, had as its principal basis and aim the usury of its bankers. In order to secure money, which they could lend to spend-thrift gentry at 8% and more, they sought and obtained abroad open exchange credit, that is, credit that had no commodity trade as its basis, but which the foreign drawee continued to accept as long as the returns from these manipulations did not fail to come in. However, they paid heavily for this through bankruptcies of men like Tapper and other highly respected Warsaw bankers." (J. G. Büsch, *Theoretisch-praktische Darstellung der Handlung, etc.*, 3rd ed., Hamburg, 1808, Vol. II, pp. 232, 233.)

ADVANTAGES DERIVED BY THE CHURCH FROM THE PROHIBITION OF INTEREST

"Taking interest had been interdicted by the Church. But selling property for the purpose of finding succour in distress had not been forbidden. It had not even been prohibited to transfer property to the money-lender as security for a certain term, until a debtor repaid his loan, leaving the money-lender free to enjoy the usufruct of the property as a reward for his abstinence from his money. . . . The Church itself, and its associated communes and *pia corpora*, derived much profit from this practice, particularly during the crusades. This brought a very large portion of national wealth into possession of the so-called 'dead hand,' all the more so because the Jews were barred from engaging in such usury, the possession of such fixed liens not being concealable. . . . Without the ban on interest churches and cloisters would never have become so affluent" (l.c., p. 55).

From CHAPTER XXXVII

INTRODUCTION

Landed property is based on the monopoly by certain persons over definite portions of the globe, as exclusive spheres of their private will to the exclusion of all others.*

* Nothing could be more comical than Hegel's development of private landed property. According to this, man as an individual must endow his will with reality as the soul of external nature, and must therefore take possession of this nature and make it his private property. If this were the destiny of the "individual," of man as an individual, it would follow that every human being must be a landowner, in order to become a real individual. Free private ownership of land, a very recent product, is, according to Hegel, not a definite social relation, but a relation of man as an individual to "nature," an absolute right of man to appropriate all things (Hegel, *Philosophie des Rechts*, Berlin, 1840, S. 79). This much, at least, is evident: the individual cannot maintain himself as a landowner by his mere "will" against the will of another individual, who likewise wants to become a real individual by virtue of the same strip of land. It definitely requires something other than goodwill. Furthermore, it is absolutely impossible to determine where the "individual" draws the line for realising his will—whether this will requires for its realisation a whole country, or whether it requires a whole group of countries by whose appropriation "the supremacy of my will over the thing can be manifested." Here Hegel comes to a complete impasse. "The appropriation is of a very particular kind; I do not take possession of more than I touch with my body; but it is clear, on the other hand, that external things are more extensive than I can grasp. By thus having possession of such a thing, some other is thereby connected to it. I carry out the act of appropriation by means of my hand, but its scope can be extended" (p. 90). But this other thing is again linked with still another, and so the boundary within which my will, as the soul, can pour into the soil, disappears. "When I possess something, my mind at once passes over to the idea that not only this property in my immediate possession, but what is associated with it is also mine. Here positive right must decide, for nothing more can be deduced from the concept" (p. 91). This is an extraordinarily naïve admission "of the concept," and proves that this concept which makes the blunder at the very outset of regarding as absolute a very definite legal view of landed property—belonging to bourgeois

With this in mind, the problem is to ascertain the economic value, that is, the realisation of this monopoly on the basis of capitalist production. With the legal power of these persons to use or misuse certain portions of the globe, nothing is decided. The use of this power depends wholly upon economic conditions, which are independent of their will. The legal view itself only means that the landowner can do with the land what every owner of commodities can do with his commodities. And this view, this legal view of free private ownership of land, arises in the ancient world only with the dissolution of the organic order of society, and in the modern world only with the development of capitalist production. It has been imported by Europeans to Asia only here and there. In the section dealing with primitive accumulation (Buch I, Kap. XXIV*), we saw that this mode of production presupposes, on the one hand, the separation of the direct producers from their position as mere accessories to the land (in the form of vassals, serfs, slaves, etc.), and, on the other hand, the expropriation of the mass of the people from the land. To this extent the monopoly of landed property is a historical premise, and continues to remain the basis of the capitalist mode of production, just as in all previous modes of production which are based on the exploitation of the masses in one form or another. But the form of landed property with which the incipient capitalist mode of production is confronted does not suit it. It first creates for itself the form required by subordinating agriculture to capital. It thus transforms feudal landed property, clan property, small-peasant property in mark communes—no matter how divergent their juristic

society—understands “nothing” of the actual nature of this landed property. This contains at the same time the admission that “positive right” can, and must, alter its determinations as the requirements of social, i.e., economic, development change. [Note by Marx.]

* English edition: Part VIII.—Ed.

forms may be—into the economic form corresponding to the requirements of this mode of production. One of the major results of the capitalist mode of production is that, on the one hand, it transforms agriculture from a mere empirical and mechanical self-perpetuating process employed by the least developed part of society into the conscious scientific application of agronomy, in so far as this is at all feasible under conditions of private property,* that it divorces landed property from the relations of dominion and servitude, on the one hand, and, on the other,

* Very conservative agricultural chemists, such as Johnston, admit that a really rational agriculture is confronted everywhere with insurmountable barriers stemming from private property. So do writers who are *ex professo* advocates of the monopoly of private property in the world, for instance, Charles Comte in his two-volume work, which has as its special aim the defence of private property. "A nation," he says, "cannot attain to the degree of prosperity and power compatible with its nature, unless every portion of the soil nourishing it is assigned to that purpose which agrees best with the general interest. In order to give to its wealth a strong development, one sole and above all highly enlightened will should, if possible, take it upon itself to assign each piece of its domain its task and make every piece contribute to the prosperity of all others. But the existence of such a will ... would be incompatible with the division of the land into private plots ... and with the authority guaranteed each owner to dispose of his property in an almost absolute manner." [*Traité de la propriété*", Tome I, Paris, 1834, p. 228—*Ed.*]—Johnston, Comte, and others, only have in mind the necessity of tilling the land of a certain country as a whole, when they speak of a contradiction between property and a rational system of agronomy. But the dependence of the cultivation of particular agricultural products upon the fluctuations of market-prices, and the continual changes in this cultivation with these price fluctuations—the whole spirit of capitalist production, which is directed toward the immediate gain of money—are in contradiction to agriculture, which has to minister to the entire range of permanent necessities of life required by the chain of successive generations. A striking illustration of this is furnished by the forests, which are only rarely managed in a way more or less corresponding to the interests of society as a whole, i.e., when they are not private property, but subject to the control of the state. [*Note by Marx.*]

totally separates land as an instrument of production from landed property and landowner—for whom the land merely represents a certain money assessment which he collects by virtue of his monopoly from the industrial capitalist, the capitalist farmer; it dissolves the connection between landownership and the land so thoroughly that the landowner may spend his whole life in Constantinople, while his estates lie in Scotland. Landed property thus receives its purely economic form by discarding all its former political and social embellishments and associations, in brief all those traditional accessories, which are denounced, as we shall see later, as useless and absurd superfluities by the industrial capitalists themselves, as well as their theoretical spokesmen, in the heat of their struggle with landed property. The rationalising of agriculture, on the one hand, which makes it for the first time capable of operating on a social scale, and the reduction *ad absurdum* of property in land, on the other, are the great achievements of the capitalist mode of production. Like all of its other historical advances, it also attained these by first completely impoverishing the direct producers. . . .

There are three main errors to be avoided in studying ground-rent, and which obscure its analysis.

1) Confusing the various forms of rent pertaining to different stages of development of the social production process.

Whatever the specific form of rent may be, all types have this in common: the appropriation of rent is that economic form in which landed property is realised, and ground-rent, in turn, presupposes the existence of landed property, the ownership of certain portions of our planet by certain individuals. The owner may be an individual representing the community, as in Asia, Egypt, etc.; or this landed property may be merely incidental to the

ownership of the immediate producers themselves by some individual as under slavery or serfdom; or it may be a purely private ownership of Nature by non-producers, a mere title to land; or, finally, it may be a relationship to the land which, as in the case of colonists and small peasants owning land, seems to be directly included—in the isolated and not socially developed labour—in the appropriation and production of the products of particular plots of land by the direct producers.

CHAPTER XLVII

GENESIS OF CAPITALIST GROUND-RENT

I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

We must clarify in our minds wherein lies the real difficulty in analysing ground-rent from the viewpoint of modern economics, as the theoretical expression of the capitalist mode of production. Even many of the more modern writers have not as yet grasped this, as evidenced by each renewed attempt to "newly" explain ground-rent. The novelty almost invariably consists in a relapse into long out-of-date views. The difficulty is not to explain the surplus-product produced by agricultural capital and its corresponding surplus-value in general. This question is solved in the analysis of the surplus-value produced by all productive capital, in whatever sphere it may be invested. The difficulty consists rather in showing the source of the excess of surplus-value paid the landlord by capital invested in land in the form of rent, after equalisation of the surplus-value to the average profit among the various capitals, after the various capitals have shared in the total surplus-value produced by the social capital in all spheres of production in proportion to their relative size; in other words, the source subsequent to this equalisation and the apparently already completed distribution of all surplus-value which, in general, is to be distributed. Quite apart from the practical motives, which prodded modern econ-

omists as spokesmen of industrial capital against landed property to investigate this question—motives which we shall point out more clearly in the chapter on history of ground-rent—the question was of paramount interest to them as theorists. To admit that the appearance of rent for capital invested in agriculture is due to some particular effect produced by the sphere of investment itself, due to singular qualities of the earth's crust itself, is tantamount to giving up the conception of value as such, thus tantamount to abandoning all attempts at a scientific understanding of this field. Even the simple observation that rent is paid out of the price of agricultural produce—which takes place even where rent is paid in kind if the farmer is to recover his price of production—showed the absurdity of attempting to explain the excess of this price over the ordinary price of production; in other words, to explain the relative dearness of agricultural products on the basis of the excess of natural productivity of agricultural production over the productivity of other lines of production. For the reverse is true: the more productive labour is, the cheaper is every aliquot part of its product, because so much greater is the mass of use-values incorporating the same quantity of labour, i.e., the same value.

The whole difficulty in analysing rent, therefore, consists in explaining the excess of agricultural profit over the average profit, not the surplus-value, but the excess of surplus-value characteristic of this sphere of production; in other words, not the "net product", but the excess of this net product over the net product of other branches of industry. The average profit itself is a product formed under very definite historical production relations by the movement of social processes, a product which, as we have seen, requires very complex adjustment. To be able to speak at all of a surplus over the average profit, this average profit itself must already be established as a standard and as a regulator of production in general as is the case under capitalist production. For this reason

there can be no talk of rent in the modern sense, a rent consisting of a surplus over the average profit, i.e., over and above the proportional share of each individual capital in the surplus-value produced by the total social capital, in social formations where it is not capital which performs the function of enforcing all surplus-labour and appropriating directly all surplus-value. And where therefore capital has not yet completely, or only sporadically, brought social labour under its control. It reflects naïveté, e.g., of a person like Passy (see below), when he speaks of rent in primitive society as a surplus over profit*—a historically defined social form of surplus-value, but which, according to Passy, might almost as well exist without any society.

For the older economists, who in general merely begin analysing the capitalist mode of production, still undeveloped in their day, the analysis of rent offers either no difficulty at all, or only a difficulty of a completely different kind. Petty, Cantillon, and in general those writers who are closer to feudal times, assume ground-rent to be the normal form of surplus-value in general,** whereas profit to them is still amorphously combined with wages, or at best appears to be a portion of surplus-value extorted by the capitalist from the landlord. These writers thus take as their point of departure a situation where, in the first place, the agricultural population still constitutes the overwhelming majority of the nation, and, secondly, the landlord still appears as the person appropriating at first hand the surplus-labour of the direct producers by virtue of his monopoly of landed property, where landed property, therefore, still appears as the

* Passy, *Rente du sol*. In: *Dictionnaire de l'économie politique*, Tome II, Paris, 1854, p. 511.—Ed.

** [Petty] *A Treatise of Taxes and Contributions*, London, 1667, pp. 23-24; [Richard Cantillon] *Essai sur la nature du commerce en général*, Amsterdam, 1756.—Ed.

main condition of production. For these writers the question could not yet be posed, which, inversely, seeks to investigate from the viewpoint of capitalist production how landed property manages to wrest back again from capital a portion of the surplus-value produced by it (that is, filched by it from the direct producers) and already appropriated directly.

The *physiocrats*⁵⁹ are troubled by difficulties of another nature. As the actually first systematic spokesmen of capital, they attempt to analyse the nature of surplus-value in general. For them, this analysis coincides with the analysis of rent, the only form of surplus-value which they recognise. Therefore, they consider rent-yielding, or agricultural, capital to be the only capital producing surplus-value, and the agricultural labour set in motion by it, the only labour producing surplus-value, which from a capitalist viewpoint is quite properly considered the only productive labour. They are quite right in considering the creation of surplus-value as decisive. Apart from other merits to be set forth in Book IV,⁶⁰ they deserve credit primarily for going back from merchant's capital, which functions solely in the sphere of circulation, to productive capital, in opposition to the mercantile system, which, with its crude realism, constitutes the actual vulgar economy of that period, pushing into the background in favour of its own practical interests the beginnings of scientific analysis made by Petty and his successors. In this critique of the mercantile system, incidentally, only its conceptions of capital and surplus-value are dealt with. It has already been indicated previously that the monetary system correctly proclaims production for the world-market and the transformation of the output into commodities, and thus into money, as the prerequisite and condition of capitalist production.⁶¹ In this system's further development into the mercantile system, it is no longer the transformation of commodity-value into money, but the creation of surplus-value which is decisive—but from

the meaningless viewpoint of the circulation sphere and, at the same time, in such manner that this surplus-value is represented as surplus money, as the balance of trade surplus. At the same time, however, the characteristic feature of the interested merchants and manufacturers of that period, which is in keeping with the stage of capitalist development represented by them, is that the transformation of feudal agricultural societies into industrial ones and the corresponding industrial struggle of nations on the world-market depends on an accelerated development of capital, which is not to be arrived at along the so-called natural path, but rather by means of coercive measures. It makes a tremendous difference whether national capital is gradually and slowly transformed into industrial capital, or whether this development is accelerated by means of a tax which they impose through protective duties mainly upon landowners, middle and small peasants, and handicraftsmen, by way of accelerated expropriation of the independent direct producers, and through the violently accelerated accumulation and concentration of capital, in short by means of the accelerated establishment of conditions of capitalist production. It simultaneously makes an enormous difference in the capitalist and industrial exploitation of the natural national productive power. Hence the national character of the mercantile system is not merely a phrase on the lips of its spokesmen. Under the pretext of concern solely for the wealth of the nation and the resources of the state, they, in fact, pronounce the interests of the capitalist class and the amassing of riches in general to be the ultimate aim of the state, and thus proclaim bourgeois society in place of the old divine state. But at the same time they are consciously aware that the development of the interests of capital and of the capitalist class, of capitalist production, forms the foundation of national power and national ascendancy in modern society.

The physiocrats, furthermore, are correct in stating that

in fact all production of surplus-value, and thus all development of capital, has for its natural basis the productivity of agricultural labour. If man were not capable of producing in one working-day more means of subsistence, which signifies in the strictest sense more agricultural products than every labourer needs for his own reproduction, if the daily expenditure of his entire labour-power sufficed merely to produce the means of subsistence indispensable for his own individual requirements, then one could not speak at all either of surplus-product or surplus-value. An agricultural labour productivity exceeding the individual requirements of the labourer is the basis of all societies, and is above all the basis of capitalist production, which disengages a constantly increasing portion of society from the production of basic foodstuffs and transforms them into "free heads," as Steuart* has it, making them available for exploitation in other spheres.

But what can be said of more recent writers on economics, such as Daire, Passy, etc., who parrot the most primitive conceptions concerning the natural conditions of surplus-labour and thereby surplus-value in general, in the twilight of classical economy, indeed on its very death-bed, and who imagine that they are thus propounding something new and striking on ground-rent** long after this ground-rent has been investigated as a special form and become a specific portion of surplus-value? It is particularly characteristic of vulgar economy that it echoes what was new, original, profound and justified during a specific outgrown stage of development, in a period when it has turned platitudinous, stale, and false. It thus confesses its complete ignorance of the problems

* J. Steuart, *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*, Vol. I, Dublin, 1770, p. 396.—Ed.

** Daire, *Introduction*. In: *Physiocrats*, 1. Teil, Paris, 1846; Passy, *Rente du sol*. In: *Dictionnaire de l'économie politique*, Tome II, Paris, 1854, p. 511.—Ed.

which concerned classical economy. It confounds them with questions that could only have been posed on a lower level of development of bourgeois society. The same holds true of its incessant and self-complacent rumination of the physiocratic phrases concerning free trade. These phrases have long since lost all theoretical interest, no matter how much they may engage the practical attention of this or that state.

In natural economy proper, when no part of the agricultural product, or but a very insignificant portion, enters into the process of circulation, and then only a relatively small portion of that part of the product which represents the landlord's revenue, as, e.g., in many Roman latifundia, or upon the villas of Charlemagne, or more or less during the entire Middle Ages (see Vinçard, *Histoire du travail*), the product and surplus-product of the large estates consists by no means purely of products of agricultural labour. It encompasses equally well the products of industrial labour. Domestic handicrafts and manufacturing labour, as secondary occupations of agriculture, which forms the basis, are the prerequisite of that mode of production upon which natural economy rests—in European antiquity and the Middle Ages as well as in the present-day Indian community, in which the traditional organisation has not yet been destroyed. The capitalist mode of production completely abolishes this relationship; a process which may be studied on a large scale particularly in England during the last third of the 18th century. Thinkers like Herrenschand, who had grown up in more or less semi-feudal societies, still consider, e.g., as late as the close of the 18th century, this separation of manufacture from agriculture as a foolhardy social adventure, as an unthinkably risky mode of existence. And even in the agricultural economies of antiquity showing the greatest analogy to capitalist agriculture, namely Carthage and Rome, the similarity to a plantation economy is greater than to a form corresponding to the really cap-

italist mode of exploitation.* A formal analogy, which, simultaneously, however, turns out to be completely illusory in all essential points to a person familiar with the capitalist mode of production, who does not, like Herr Mommsen,** discover a capitalist mode of production in every monetary economy, is not to be found at all in continental Italy during antiquity, but at best only in Sicily, since this island served Rome as an agricultural tributary so that its agriculture was aimed chiefly at export. Farmers in the modern sense existed there.

An erroneous conception of the nature of rent is based upon the fact that rent in kind, partly as tithes to the church and partly as a curiosity perpetuated by long-established contracts, has been dragged over into modern times from the natural economy of the Middle Ages, completely in contradiction to the conditions of the capitalist mode of production. It thereby creates the impression that rent does not arise from the price of the agricultural product, but from its mass, thus not from social conditions, but from the earth. We have previously shown that although surplus-value is manifested in a surplus-product the converse does not hold that a surplus-product, representing a mere increase in the mass of product, consti-

* Adam Smith emphasises how, in his time (and this applies also to the plantations in tropical and subtropical countries in our own day), rent and profit were not yet divorced from one another [Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, Aberdeen, London, 1848, p. 44.—*Ed.*], for the landlord was simultaneously a capitalist, just as Cato, for instance, was on his estates. But this separation is precisely the prerequisite for the capitalist mode of production, to whose conception the basis of slavery moreover stands in direct contradiction. [*Note by Marx.*]

** Herr Mommsen, in his "Roman History", by no means uses the term capitalist in the sense employed by modern economics and modern society, but rather in the manner of popular conception, such as still continues to thrive, though not in England or America, but nevertheless on the European continent, as an ancient tradition reflecting bygone conditions. [*Note by Marx.*]

tutes surplus-value. It may represent a minus quantity in value. Otherwise the cotton industry of 1860, compared with that of 1840, would show an enormous surplus-value, whereas on the contrary the price of the yarn has fallen. Rent may increase enormously as a result of a succession of crop failures, because the price of grain rises, although this surplus-value appears as an absolutely decreasing mass of dearer wheat. Conversely, the rent may fall in consequence of a succession of bountiful years, because the price falls, although the reduced rent appears as a greater mass of cheaper wheat. As regards rent in kind, it should be noted now that, in the first place, it is a mere tradition carried over from an obsolete mode of production and managing to prolong its existence as a survival. Its contradiction to the capitalist mode of production is shown by its disappearance of itself from private contracts, and its being forcibly shaken off as an anachronism, wherever legislation was able to intervene as in the case of church tithes in England.⁶² Secondly, however, where rent in kind persisted on the basis of capitalist production, it was no more, and could be no more, than an expression of money-rent in medieval garb. Wheat, for instance, is quoted at 40 shillings per quarter. One portion of this wheat must replace the wages contained therein, and must be sold to become available for renewed expenditure. Another portion must be sold to pay its proportionate share of taxes. Seed and even a portion of fertiliser enter as commodities into the process of reproduction, wherever the capitalist mode of production and with it division of social labour are developed, i.e., they must be purchased for replacement purposes; and therefore another portion of this quarter must be sold to obtain money for this. In so far as they need not be bought as actual commodities, but are taken out of the product itself in kind, in order to enter into its reproduction anew as conditions of production—as occurs not only in agriculture, but in many other lines of production pro-

ducing constant capital—they figure in the books as money of account and are deducted as elements of the cost-price. The wear and tear of machinery, and of fixed capital in general, must be made good in money. And finally comes profit, which is calculated on this sum, expressed as costs either in actual money or in money of account. This profit is represented by a definite portion of the gross product, which is determined by its price. And the excess portion which then remains forms rent. If the rent in kind stipulated by contract is greater than this remainder determined by the price, then it does not constitute rent, but a deduction from profit. Owing to this possibility alone, rent in kind is an obsolete form, in so far as it does not reflect the price of the product, but may be greater or smaller than the real rent, and thus may comprise not only a deduction from profit, but also from those elements required for capital replacement. In fact, this rent in kind, so far as it is rent not merely in name but also in essence, is exclusively determined by the excess of the price of the product over its price of production. Only it presupposes that this variable is a constant magnitude. But it is such a comforting reflection that the product in kind should suffice, first, to maintain the labourer, secondly, to leave the capitalist tenant farmer more food than he needs, and finally, that the remainder should constitute the natural rent. Quite like a manufacturer producing 200,000 yards of cotton goods. These yards of goods not only suffice to clothe his labourers; to clothe his wife, all his offspring and himself abundantly; but also leave over enough cotton for sale, in addition to paying an enormous rent in terms of cotton goods. It is all so simple! Deduct the price of production from 200,000 yards of cotton goods, and a surplus of cotton goods must remain for rent. But it is indeed a naïve conception to deduct the price of productoin of, say, £10,000 from 200,000 yards of cotton goods, without knowing the selling price, to deduct money from cotton goods, to deduct an exchange-

value from a use-value as such, and thus to determine the surplus of yards of cotton goods over pounds sterling. It is worse than squaring the circle, which is at least based upon the conception that there is a limit at which straight lines and curves imperceptibly flow together. But such is the prescription of M. Passy. Deduct money from cotton goods, before the cotton goods have been converted into money, either in one's mind or in reality! What remains is the rent, which, however, is to be grasped *naturaliter* (see, for instance, Karl Arnd*) and not by deviltries of sophistry. The entire restoration of rent in kind is finally reduced to this foolishness, the deduction of the price of production from so many and so many bushels of wheat, and the subtraction of a sum of money from a cubic measure.

II. LABOUR RENT

If we consider ground-rent in its simplest form, that of *labour rent*, where the direct producer, using instruments of labour (plough, cattle, etc.) which actually or legally belong to him, cultivates soil actually owned by him during part of the week, and works during the remaining days upon the estate of the feudal lord without any compensation from the feudal lord, the situation here is still quite clear, for in this case rent and surplus-value are identical. Rent, not profit, is the form here through which unpaid surplus-labour expresses itself. To what extent the labourer (a self-sustaining serf) can secure in this case a surplus above his indispensable necessities of life, i.e., a surplus above that which we would call wages under the capitalist mode of production, depends, other circumstances remaining unchanged, upon the proportion in which his labour-time is divided into labour-time for himself

* K. Arnd, *Die naturgemässe Volkswirtschaft, gegenüber dem Monopoliengeiste und dem Communismus*, Hanau, 1845, S. 461-62.-Ed.

and enforced labour-time for his feudal lord. This surplus above the indispensable requirements of life, the germ of what appears as profit under the capitalist mode of production, is therefore wholly determined by the amount of ground-rent, which in this case is not only directly unpaid surplus-labour, but also appears as such. It is unpaid surplus-labour for the "owner" of the means of production, which here coincide with the land, and so far as they differ from it, are mere accessories to it. That the product of the serf must here suffice to reproduce his conditions of labour, in addition to this subsistence, is a circumstance which remains the same under all modes of production. For it is not the result of their specific form, but a natural requisite of all continuous and reproductive labour in general, of any continuing production, which is always simultaneously reproduction, i.e., including reproduction of its own operating conditions. It is furthermore evident that in all forms in which the direct labourer remains the "possessor" of the means of production and labour conditions necessary for the production of his own means of subsistence, the property relationship must simultaneously appear as a direct relation of lordship and servitude, so that the direct producer is not free; a lack of freedom which may be reduced from serfdom with enforced labour to a mere tributary relationship. The direct producer, according to our assumption is to be found here in possession of his own means of production, the necessary material labour conditions required for the realisation of his labour and the production of his means of subsistence. He conducts his agricultural activity and the rural home industries connected with it independently. This independence is not undermined by the circumstance that the small peasants may form among themselves a more or less natural production community, as they do in India, since it is here merely a question of independence from the nominal lord of the manor. Under such conditions the surplus-labour for the nominal owner of the land can only

be extorted from them by other than economic pressure, whatever the form assumed may be.* This differs from slave or plantation economy in that the slave works under alien conditions of production and not independently. Thus, conditions of personal dependence are requisite, a lack of personal freedom, no matter to what extent, and being tied to the soil as its accessory, bondage in the true sense of the word. Should the direct producers not be confronted by a private landowner, but rather, as in Asia, under direct subordination to a state which stands over them as their landlord and simultaneously as sovereign, then rent and taxes coincide, or rather, there exists no tax which differs from this form of ground-rent. Under such circumstances, there need exist no stronger political or economic pressure than that common to all subjection to that state. The state is then the supreme lord. Sovereignty here consists in the ownership of land concentrated on a national scale. But, on the other hand, no private ownership of land exists, although there is both private and common possession and use of land.

The specific economic form, in which unpaid surplus-labour is pumped out of direct producers, determines the relationship of rulers and ruled, as it grows directly out of production itself and, in turn, reacts upon it as a determining element. Upon this, however, is founded the entire formation of the economic community which grows up out of the production relations themselves, thereby simultaneously its specific political form. It is always the direct relationship of the owners of the conditions of production to the direct producers—a relation always naturally corresponding to a definite stage in the development of

* Following the conquest of a country, the immediate aim of a conqueror was also to convert its people to his own use. Cf. Linguet [*Théorie des loix civiles, ou Principes fondamentaux de la société*, Tomes I-II, Londres, 1767.—Ed.]. See also Möser [*Osnabrückische Geschichte*, 1. Theil, Berlin und Stettin, S. 178.—Ed.]. (Note by Marx.)

the methods of labour and thereby its social productivity—which reveals the innermost secret, the hidden basis of the entire social structure, and with it the political form of the relation of sovereignty and dependence, in short, the corresponding specific form of the state. This does not prevent the same economic basis—the same from the standpoint of its main conditions—due to innumerable different empirical circumstances, natural environment, racial relations, external historical influences, etc., from showing infinite variations and gradations in appearance, which can be ascertained only by analysis of the empirically given circumstances.

So much is evident with respect to labour rent, the simplest and most primitive form of rent: Rent is here the primeval form of surplus-value and coincides with it. But this identity of surplus-value with unpaid labour of others need not be analysed here, because it still exists in its visible, palpable form, since the labour of the direct producer for himself is still separated in space and time from his labour for the landlord, and the latter appears directly in the brutal form of enforced labour for a third person. In the same way the "attribute" possessed by the soil to produce rent is here reduced to a tangibly open secret, for the disposition to furnish rent here also includes human labour-power bound to the soil, and the property relation which compels the owner of labour-power to drive it on and activate it beyond such measure as is required to satisfy his own indispensable needs. Rent consists directly in the appropriation of this surplus expenditure of labour-power by the landlord; for the direct producer pays him no additional rent. Here, where surplus-value and rent are not only identical but where surplus-value has the tangible form of surplus-labour, the natural conditions or limits of rent, being those of surplus-labour in general, are plainly clear. The direct producer must 1) possess enough labour-power, and 2) the natural conditions of his labour, above all the soil cultivated by him, must be

productive enough, in a word, the natural productivity of his labour must be big enough to give him the possibility of retaining some surplus-labour over and above that required for the satisfaction of his own indispensable needs. It is not this possibility which creates the rent, but rather compulsion which turns this possibility into reality. But the possibility itself is conditioned by subjective and objective natural circumstances. And here too lies nothing at all mysterious. Should labour-power be minute, and the natural conditions of labour scanty, then the surplus-labour is small, but in such a case so are the wants of the producers on the one hand and the relative number of exploiters of surplus-labour on the other, and finally so is the surplus-product, whereby this barely productive surplus-labour is realised for those few exploiting landowners.

Finally, labour rent in itself implies that, all other circumstances remaining equal, it will depend wholly upon the relative amount of surplus-labour, or enforced labour, to what extent the direct producer shall be enabled to improve his own condition, to acquire wealth, to produce an excess over and above his indispensable means of subsistence, or, if we wish to anticipate the capitalist mode of expression, whether he shall be able to produce a profit for himself, and how much of a profit, i.e., an excess over his wages which have been produced by himself. Rent here is the normal, all-absorbing, so to say legitimate form of surplus-labour, and far from being excess over profit, which means in this case being above any other excess over wages, it is rather that the amount of such profit, and even its very existence, depends, other circumstances being equal, upon the amount of rent, i.e., the enforced surplus-labour to be surrendered to the landowners.

Since the direct producer is not the owner, but only a possessor, and since all his surplus-labour *de jure* actually belongs to the landlord, some historians have expressed astonishment that it should be at all possible for those subject to enforced labour, or serfs, to acquire any inde-

pendent property, or relatively speaking, wealth, under such circumstances. However, it is evident that tradition must play a dominant role in the primitive and undeveloped circumstances on which these social production relations and the corresponding mode of production are based. It is furthermore clear that here as always it is in the interest of the ruling section of society to sanction the existing order as law and to legally establish its limits given through usage and tradition. Apart from all else, this, by the way, comes about of itself as soon as the constant reproduction of the basis of the existing order and its fundamental relations assumes a regulated and orderly form in the course of time. And such regulation and order are themselves indispensable elements of any mode of production, if it is to assume social stability and independence from mere chance and arbitrariness. These are precisely the form of its social stability and therefore its relative freedom from mere arbitrariness and mere chance. Under backward conditions of the production process as well as the corresponding social relations, it achieves this form by mere repetition of their very reproduction. If this has continued on for some time, it entrenches itself as custom and tradition and is finally sanctioned as an explicit law. However, since the form of this surplus-labour, enforced labour, is based upon the imperfect development of all social productive powers and the crudeness of the methods of labour itself, it will naturally absorb a relatively much smaller portion of the direct producer's total labour than under developed modes of production, particularly the capitalist mode of production. Take it, for instance, that the enforced labour for the landlord originally amounted to two days per week. These two days of enforced labour per week are thereby fixed, are a constant magnitude, legally regulated by prescriptive or written law. But the productivity of the remaining days of the week, which are at the disposal of the direct producer himself, is a variable magnitude, which must

develop in the course of his experience, just as the new wants he acquires, and just as the expansion of the market for his product and the increasing assurance with which he disposes of this portion of his labour-power will spur him on to a greater exertion of his labour-power, whereby it should not be forgotten that the employment of his labour-power is by no means confined to agriculture, but includes rural home industry. The possibility is here presented for definite economic development taking place depending, of course, upon favourable circumstances, inborn racial characteristics, etc.

III. RENT IN KIND

The transformation of labour rent into rent in kind changes nothing from the economic standpoint in the nature of ground-rent. The latter consists, in the forms considered here, in that rent is the sole prevailing and normal form of surplus-value, or surplus-labour. This is further expressed in the fact that it is the only surplus-labour, or the only surplus-product, which the direct producer, who is in *possession* of the labour conditions needed for his own reproduction, must give up to the *owner* of the land, which in this situation is the all-embracing condition of labour. And, furthermore, that land is the only condition of labour which confronts the direct producer as alien property, independent of him, and personified by the landlord. To whatever extent rent in kind is the prevailing and dominant form of ground-rent, it is furthermore always more or less accompanied by survivals of the earlier form, i.e., of rent paid directly in labour, corvée-labour, no matter whether the landlord be a private person or the state. Rent in kind presupposes a higher stage of civilisation for the direct producer, i.e., a higher level of development of his labour and of society in general. And it is distinct from the preceding form in that surplus-labour needs no longer be performed in its natural

form, thus no longer under the direct supervision and compulsion of the landlord or his representatives; the direct producer is driven rather by force of circumstances than by direct coercion, through legal enactment rather than the whip, to perform it on his own responsibility. Surplus-production, in the sense of production beyond the indispensable needs of the direct producer, and within the field of production actually belonging to him, upon the land exploited by himself instead of, as earlier, upon the nearby lord's estate beyond his own land, has already become a self-understood rule here. In this relation the direct producer more or less disposes of his entire labour-time, although, as previously, a part of this labour-time, at first practically the entire surplus portion of it, belongs to the landlord without compensation; except that the landlord no longer directly receives this surplus-labour in its natural form, but rather in the products' natural form in which it is realised. The burdensome, and according to the way in which enforced labour is regulated, more or less disturbing interruption by work for the landlord (see Buch I, Kap. VIII, 2)* ("Manufacturer and Boyard") stops wherever rent in kind appears in pure form, or at least it is reduced to a few short intervals during the year, when a continuation of some corvée-labour side by side with rent in kind takes place. The labour of the producer for himself and his labour for the landlord are no longer palpably separated by time and space. This rent in kind, in its pure form, while it may drag fragments along into more highly developed modes of production and production relations still presupposes for its existence a natural economy, i.e., that the conditions of the economy are either wholly or for the overwhelming part produced by the economy itself, directly replaced and reproduced out of its gross product. It furthermore presupposes the combination of rural home industry with agriculture. The sur-

* English edition: Ch. X, 2.-Ed.

plus-product, which forms the rent, is the product of this combined agricultural and industrial family labour, no matter whether rent in kind contains more or less of the industrial product, as is often the case in the Middle Ages, or whether it is paid only in the form of actual products of the land. In this form of rent it is by no means necessary for rent in kind, which represents the surplus-labour, to fully exhaust the entire surplus-labour of the rural family. Compared with labour rent, the producer rather has more room for action to gain time for surplus-labour whose product shall belong to himself, as well as the product of his labour which satisfies his indispensable needs. Similarly, this form will give rise to greater differences in the economic position of the individual direct producers. At least the possibility for such a differentiation exists, and the possibility for the direct producer to have in turn acquired the means to exploit other labourers directly. This, however, does not concern us here, since we are dealing with rent in kind in its pure form; just as in general we cannot enter into the endless variety of combinations wherein the various forms of rent may be united, adulterated and amalgamated. The form of rent in kind, by being bound to a definite type of product and production itself and through its indispensable combination of agriculture and domestic industry, through its almost complete self-sufficiency whereby the peasant family supports itself through its independence from the market and the movement of production and history of that section of society lying outside of its sphere, in short owing to the character of natural economy in general, this form is quite adapted to furnishing the basis for stationary social conditions as we see, e.g., in Asia. Here, as in the earlier form of labour rent, ground-rent is the normal form of surplus-value, and thus of surplus-labour, i.e., of the entire excess labour which the direct producer must perform gratis, hence actually under compulsion although this compulsion no longer confronts him in the

old brutal form—for the benefit of the owner of his essential condition of labour, the land. The profit, if by erroneously anticipating we may thus call that portion of the direct producer's labour excess over his necessary labour, which he retains for himself, has so little to do with determining rent in kind, that this profit, on the contrary, grows up behind the back of rent and finds its natural limit in the size of rent in kind. The latter may assume dimensions which seriously imperil reproduction of the conditions of labour, the means of production themselves, rendering the expansion of production more or less impossible and reducing the direct producers to the physical minimum of means of subsistence. This is particularly the case, when this form is met with and exploited by a conquering commercial nation, e.g., the English in India.

IV. MONEY-RENT

By money-rent—as distinct from industrial and commercial ground-rent based upon the capitalist mode of production, which is but an excess over average profit—we here mean the ground-rent which arises from a mere change in form of rent in kind, just as the latter in turn is but a modification of labour rent. The direct producer here turns over instead of the product, its price to the landlord (who may be either the state or a private individual). An excess of products in their natural form no longer suffices; it must be converted from its natural form into money-form. Although the direct producer still continues to produce at least the greater part of his means of subsistence himself, a certain portion of this product must now be converted into commodities, must be produced as commodities. The character of the entire mode of production is thus more or less changed. It loses its independence, its detachment from social connection. The ratio of cost of production, which now comprises greater or lesser expenditures of money, becomes decisive; at any rate, the

excess of that portion of gross product to be converted into money over that portion which must serve, on the one hand, as means of reproduction again, and, on the other, as means of direct subsistence, assumes a determining role. However, the basis of this type of rent, although approaching its dissolution, remains the same as that of rent in kind, which constitutes its point of departure. The direct producer as before is still possessor of the land, either through inheritance or some other traditional right, and must perform for his lord, as owner of his most essential condition of production, excess *corvée-labour*, that is, unpaid labour for which no equivalent is returned, in the form of a surplus-product transformed into money. Ownership of the conditions of labour as distinct from land, such as agricultural implements and other goods and chattels, is transformed into the property of the direct producer even under the earlier forms of rent, first in fact, and then also legally, and even more so is this the precondition for the form of money-rent. The transformation of rent in kind into money-rent, taking place first sporadically and then on a more or less national scale, presupposes a considerable development of commerce, of urban industry, of commodity-production in general, and thereby of money circulation. It furthermore assumes a market-price for products, and that they be sold at prices roughly approximating their values, which need not at all be the case under earlier forms. In Eastern Europe we may still partly observe this transformation taking place under our very eyes. How unfeasible it can be without a certain development of social labour productivity is proved by various unsuccessful attempts to carry it through under the Roman Empire, and by relapses into rent in kind after seeking to convert at least the state tax portion of this rent into money-rent. The same transitional difficulties are evidenced, e.g., in pre-revolutionary France, when money-rent was combined with and adulterated by, survivals of its earlier forms.

Money-rent, as a transmuted form of rent in kind, and in antithesis to it, is, nevertheless, the final form, and simultaneously the form of dissolution of the type of ground-rent which we have heretofore considered, namely ground-rent as the normal form of surplus-value and of the unpaid surplus-labour to be performed for the owner of the conditions of production. In its pure form, this rent, like labour rent and rent in kind, represents no excess over profit. It absorbs the profit, as it is understood. In so far as profit arises beside it practically as a separate portion of excess labour, money-rent like rent in its earlier forms still constitutes the normal limit of such embryonic profit, which can only develop in relation to the possibilities of exploitation, be it of one's own excess labour or that of another, which remains after the performance of the surplus-labour represented by money-rent. Should any profit actually arise along with this rent, then this profit does not constitute the limit of rent, but rather conversely, the rent is the limit of the profit. However, as already indicated, money-rent is simultaneously the form of dissolution of the ground-rent considered thus far, coinciding *prima facie* with surplus-value and surplus-labour, i.e., ground-rent as the normal and dominant form of surplus-value.

In its further development money-rent must lead—aside from all intermediate forms, e.g., the small peasant tenant farmer—either to the transformation of land into peasants' freehold, or to the form corresponding to the capitalist mode of production, that is, to rent paid by the capitalist tenant farmer.

With money-rent prevailing, the traditional and customary legal relationship between landlord and subjects who possess and cultivate a part of the land, is necessarily turned into a pure money relationship fixed contractually in accordance with the rules of positive law. The possessor engaged in cultivation thus becomes virtually a mere tenant. This transformation serves on the one hand, pro-

vided other general production relations permit, to expropriate more and more the old peasant possessors and to substitute capitalist tenants in their stead. On the other hand, it leads to the former possessor buying himself free from his rent obligation and to his transformation into an independent peasant with complete ownership of the land he tills. The transformation of rent in kind into money-rent is furthermore not only inevitably accompanied, but even anticipated, by the formation of a class of propertyless day-labourers, who hire themselves out for money. During their genesis, when this new class appears but sporadically, the custom necessarily develops among the more prosperous peasants subject to rent payments of exploiting agricultural wage-labourers for their own account, much as in feudal times, when the more well-to-do peasant serfs themselves also held serfs. In this way, they gradually acquire the possibility of accumulating a certain amount of wealth and themselves becoming transformed into future capitalists. The old self-employed possessors of land themselves thus give rise to a nursery school for capitalist tenants, whose development is conditioned by the general development of capitalist production beyond the bounds of the countryside. This class shoots up very rapidly when particularly favourable circumstances come to its aid, as in England in the 16th century, where the then progressive depreciation of money enriched them under the customary long leases at the expense of the landlords.

Furthermore: as soon as rent assumes the form of money-rent, and thereby the relationship between rent-paying peasant and landlord becomes a relationship fixed by contract—a development which is only possible generally when the world-market, commerce and manufacture have reached a certain relatively high level—the leasing of land to capitalists inevitably also makes its appearance. The latter hitherto stood beyond the rural limits and now carry over to the countryside and agriculture the capital acquired in the cities and with it the capitalist mode of

operation developed—i.e., creating a product as a mere commodity and solely as a means of appropriating surplus-value. This form can become the general rule only in those countries which dominate the world-market in the period of transition from the feudal to the capitalist mode of production. When the capitalist tenant farmer steps in between landlord and actual tiller of the soil, all relations which arose out of the old rural mode of production are torn asunder. The farmer becomes the actual commander of these agricultural labourers and the actual exploiter of their surplus-labour, whereas the landlord maintains a direct relationship, and indeed simply a money and contractual relationship, solely with this capitalist tenant. Thus, the nature of rent is also transformed, not merely in fact and by chance, as occurred in part even under earlier forms, but normally, in its recognised and prevailing form. From the normal form of surplus-value and surplus-labour, it descends to a mere excess of this surplus-labour over that portion of it appropriated by the exploiting capitalist in the form of profit; just as the total surplus-labour, profit and excess over profit, is extracted directly by him, collected in the form of the total surplus-product, and turned into cash. It is only the excess portion of this surplus-value which is extracted by him from the agricultural labourer by direct exploitation, by means of his capital, which he turns over to the landlord as rent. How much or how little he turns over to the latter depends, on the average, upon the limits set by the average profit which is realised by capital in the non-agricultural spheres of production, and by the prices of non-agricultural production regulated by this average profit. From a normal form of surplus-value and surplus-labour, rent has now become transformed into an excess over that portion of the surplus-labour claimed in advance by capital as its legitimate and normal share, and characteristic of this particular sphere of production, the agricultural sphere of production. Profit, instead of rent, has now become the

normal form of surplus-value and rent still exists solely as a form, not of surplus-value in general, but of one of its offshoots, surplus-profit, which assumes an independent form under particular circumstances. It is not necessary to elaborate the manner in which a gradual transformation in the mode of production itself corresponds to this transformation. This already follows from the fact that it is normal for the capitalist tenant farmer to produce agricultural products as commodities, and that, while formerly only the excess over his means of subsistence was converted into commodities, now but a relatively insignificant part of these commodities is directly used by him as means of subsistence. It is no longer the land, but rather capital, which has now brought even agricultural labour under its direct sway and productiveness.

The average profit and the price of production regulated thereby are formed outside of relations in the countryside and within the sphere of urban trade and manufacture. The profit of the rent-paying peasant does not enter into it as an equalising factor, for his relation to the landlord is not a capitalist one. In so far as he makes profit, i.e., realises an excess above his necessary means of subsistence, either by his own labour or through exploiting other people's labour, it is done behind the back of the normal relationship, and other circumstances being equal, the size of this profit does not determine rent, but on the contrary, it is determined by the rent as its limit. The high rate of profit in the Middle Ages is not entirely due to the low composition of capital, in which the variable component invested in wages predominates. It is due to swindling on the land, the appropriation of a portion of the landlord's rent and of the income of his vassals. If the countryside exploits the town politically in the Middle Ages, wherever feudalism has not been broken down by exceptional urban development—as in Italy, the town, on the other hand, exploits the land economically everywhere and without exception, through its monopoly prices, its system of taxa-

tion, its guild organisation, its direct commercial fraudulence and its usury.

One might imagine that the mere appearance of the capitalist farmer in agricultural production would prove that the price of agricultural products, which from time immemorial have paid rent in one form or another, must be higher, at least at the time of this appearance, than the prices of production of manufacture whether it be because the price of such agricultural products has reached a monopoly price level, or has risen as high as the value of the agricultural products, and their value actually is above the price of production regulated by the average profit. For were this not so, the capitalist farmer could not at all realise, at the existing prices of agricultural produce, first the average profit out of the price of these products, and then pay out of the same price an excess above this profit in the form of rent. One might conclude from this that the general rate of profit, which guides the capitalist farmer in his contract with the landlord, has been formed without including rent, and, therefore, as soon as it assumes a regulating role in agricultural production, it finds this excess at hand and pays it to the landlord. It is in this traditional manner that, for instance, Herr Rodbertus explains the matter.* But:

First. This appearance of capital as an independent and leading force in agriculture does not take place all at once and generally, but gradually and in particular lines of production. It encompasses at first, not agriculture proper, but such branches of production as cattle-breeding, especially sheep-raising, whose principal product, wool, offers at the early stages a constant excess of market-price over price of production during the rise of industry, and this

* J. Rodbertus, *Soziale Briefe an von Kirchmann, Dritter Brief: Widerlegung der Ricardo'schen Lehre von der Grundrente und Begründung einer neuen Rententheorie*. See also K. Marx, *Theorien über den Mehrwert*. 2. Teil, 1957, pp. 3-106, 142-54.—Ed.

does not level out until later. Thus in England during the 16th century.

Secondly. Since this capitalist production appears at first but sporadically, the assumption cannot be disputed that it first extends only to such land categories as are able, through their particular fertility, or their exceptionally favourable location, to generally pay a differential rent.

Thirdly. Let us even assume that at the time this mode of production appeared—and this indeed presupposes an increasing preponderance of urban demand—the prices of agricultural products were higher than the price of production, as was doubtless the case in England during the last third of the 17th century. Nevertheless, as soon as this mode of production has somewhat extricated itself from the mere subordination of agriculture to capital, and as soon as agricultural improvement and the reduction of production costs, which necessarily accompany its development, have taken place, the balance will be restored by a reaction, a fall in the price of agricultural produce, as happened in England in the first half of the 18th century.

Rent, thus, as an excess over the average profit cannot be explained in this traditional way. Whatever may be the existing historical circumstances at the time rent first appears, once it has struck root it cannot exist except under the modern conditions earlier described.

Finally, it should be noted in the transformation of rent in kind into money-rent that along with it capitalised rent, or the price of land, and thus its alienability and alienation become essential factors, and that thereby not only can the former peasant subject to payment of rent be transformed into an independent peasant proprietor, but also urban and other moneyed people can buy real estate in order to lease it either to peasants or capitalists and thus enjoy rent as a form of interest on their capital so invested; that, therefore, this circumstance likewise facilitates the

transformation of the former mode of exploitation, the relation between owner and actual cultivator of the land, and of rent itself.

V. METAYAGE AND PEASANT PROPRIETORSHIP OF LAND PARCELS

We have now arrived at the end of our elaboration of ground-rent.

In all these forms of ground-rent, whether labour-rent, rent in kind, or money-rent (as merely a changed form of rent in kind), the one paying rent is always supposed to be the actual cultivator and possessor of the land, whose unpaid surplus-labour passes directly into the hands of the landlord. Even in the last form, money-rent in so far as it is "pure," i.e., merely a changed form of rent in kind—this is not only possible, but actually takes place.

As a transitory form from the original form of rent to capitalist rent, we may consider the metayer system, or share-cropping, under which the manager (farmer) furnishes labour (his own or another's), and also a portion of working capital, and the landlord furnishes, aside from land, another portion of working capital (e.g., cattle), and the product is divided between tenant and landlord in definite proportions which vary from country to country. On the one hand, the farmer here lacks sufficient capital required for complete capitalist management. On the other hand, the share here appropriated by the landlord does not bear the pure form of rent. It may actually include interest on the capital advanced by him and an excess rent. It may also absorb practically the entire surplus-labour of the farmer, or leave him a greater or smaller portion of this surplus-labour. But, essentially, rent no longer appears here as the normal form of surplus-value in general. On the one hand, the sharecropper, whether he employs his own or another's labour, is to lay claim to a portion of the product not in his capacity as labourer,

but as possessor of part of the instruments of labour, as his own capitalist. On the other hand, the landlord claims his share not exclusively on the basis of his landownership, but also as lender of capital.*

A survival of the old communal ownership of land, which had endured after the transition to independent peasant farming, e.g., in Poland and Rumania, served there as a subterfuge for effecting a transition to the lower forms of ground-rent. A portion of the land belongs to the individual peasant and is tilled independently by him. Another portion is tilled in common and creates a surplus-product, which serves partly to cover community expenses, partly as a reserve in cases of crop failure, etc. These last two parts of the surplus-product, and ultimately the entire surplus-product including the land upon which it has been grown, are more and more usurped by state officials and private individuals, and thus the originally free peasant proprietors, whose obligation to till this land in common is maintained, are transformed into vassals subject either to *corvée*-labour or rent in kind; while the usurpers of common land are transformed into owners, not only of the usurped common lands, but even the very lands of the peasants themselves.

We need not further investigate slave economy proper (which likewise passes through a metamorphosis from the patriarchal system mainly for home use to the plantation system for the world-market) nor the management of estates under which the landlords themselves are independent cultivators, possessing all instruments of production, and exploiting the labour of free or unfree bondsmen, who are paid either in kind or money. Landlord and owner of the instruments of production, and thus the direct ex-

* Cf. Buret [*Cours d'économie politique*, Bruxelles, 1842.—Ed.], Tocqueville [*L'ancien régime et la révolution*, Paris, 1856.—Ed.], Sismondi [*Nouveaux principes d'économie politique*.—Seconde édition, Tome I, Paris, 1827.—Ed.]. [Note by Marx.]

exploiter of labourers included among these elements of production, are in this case one and the same person. Rent and profit likewise coincide then, there occurring no separation of the different forms of surplus-value. The entire surplus-labour of the labourers, which is manifested here in the surplus-product, is extracted from them directly by the owner of all instruments of production, to which belong the land and, under the original form of slavery, the immediate producers themselves. Where the capitalist outlook prevails, as on American plantations, this entire surplus-value is regarded as profit; where neither the capitalist mode of production itself exists, nor the corresponding outlook has been transferred from capitalist countries, it appears as rent. At any rate, this form presents no difficulties. The income of the landlord, whatever it may be called, the available surplus-product appropriated by him, is here the normal and prevailing form, whereby the entire unpaid surplus-labour is directly appropriated, and landed property forms the basis of such appropriation.

Further, *proprietorship of land parcels*. The peasant here is simultaneously the free owner of his land, which appears as his principal instrument of production, the indispensable field of employment for his labour and his capital. No lease money is paid under this form. Rent, therefore, does not appear as a separate form of surplus-value, although in countries in which otherwise the capitalist mode of production is developed, it appears as a surplus-profit compared with other lines of production; but as surplus-profit which, like all proceeds of his labour in general, accrues to the peasant.

This form of landed property presupposes, as in the earlier older forms, that the rural population greatly predominates numerically over the town population, so that, even if the capitalist mode of production otherwise prevails, it is but relatively little developed, and thus also in the other lines of production the concentration of capital is restricted to narrow limits and a fragmentation of

capital predominates. In the nature of things, the greater portion of agricultural produce must be consumed as direct means of subsistence by the producers themselves, the peasants, and only the excess above that will find its way as commodities into urban commerce. No matter how the average market-price of agricultural products may here be regulated, differential rent, an excess portion of commodity-prices from superior or more favourably located land, must evidently exist here much as under the capitalist mode of production. This differential rent exists, even where this form appears under social conditions, under which no general market-price has as yet been developed; it appears then in the excess surplus-product. Only then it flows into the pockets of the peasant, whose labour is realised under more favourable natural conditions. The assumption here is generally to be made that no absolute rent exists, i.e., that the worst soil does not pay any rent—precisely under this form where the price of land enters as a factor in the peasant's actual cost of production whether because in the course of this form's further development either the price of land has been computed at a certain money-value, in dividing up an inheritance, or, during the constant change in ownership of an entire estate, or of its component parts, the land has been bought by the cultivator himself, largely by raising money on mortgage; and, therefore, where the price of land, representing nothing more than capitalised rent, is a factor assumed in advance, and where rent thus seems to exist independently of any differentiation in fertility and location of the land. For, absolute rent presupposes either realised excess in product value above its price of production, or a monopoly price exceeding the value of the product. But since agriculture here is carried on largely as cultivation for direct subsistence, and the land exists as an indispensable field of employment for the labour and capital of the majority of the population, the regulating market-price of the product will reach its value only under extraordinary

circumstances. But this value will, generally, be higher than its price of production owing to the preponderant element of living labour, although this excess of value over price of production will in turn be limited by the low composition even of non-agricultural capital in countries with an economy composed predominantly of land parcels. For the peasant owning a parcel, the limit of exploitation is not set by the average profit of capital, in so far as he is a small capitalist; nor, on the other hand, by the necessity of rent, in so far as he is a landowner. The absolute limit for him as a small capitalist is no more than the wages he pays to himself, after deducting his actual costs. So long as the price of the product covers these wages, he will cultivate his land, and often at wages down to a physical minimum. As for his capacity as land proprietor, the barrier of ownership is eliminated for him, since it can make itself felt only vis-à-vis a capital (including labour) separated from landownership, by erecting an obstacle to the investment of capital. It is true, to be sure, that interest on the price of land—which generally has to be paid to still another individual, the mortgage creditor—is a barrier. But this interest can be paid precisely out of that portion of surplus-labour which would constitute profit under capitalist conditions. The rent anticipated in the price of land and in the interest paid for it can therefore be nothing but a portion of the peasant's capitalised surplus-labour over and above the labour indispensable for his subsistence, without this surplus-labour being realised in a part of the commodity-value equal to the entire average profit, and still less in an excess above the surplus-labour realised in the average profit, i.e., in a surplus-profit. The rent may be a deduction from the average profit, or even the only portion of it which is realised. For the peasant parcel holder to cultivate his land, or to buy land for cultivation, it is therefore not necessary, as under the normal capitalist mode of production, that the market-price of the agricultural products rise high enough to

afford him the average profit, and still less a fixed excess above this average profit in the form of rent. It is not necessary, therefore, that the market-price rise, either up to the value or the price of production of his product. This is one of the reasons why grain prices are lower in countries with predominant small peasant land proprietorship than in countries with a capitalist mode of production. One portion of the surplus-labour of the peasants, who work under the least favourable conditions, is bestowed gratis upon society and does not at all enter into the regulation of price of production or into the creation of value in general. This lower price is consequently a result of the producers' poverty and by no means of their labour productivity.

This form of free self-managing peasant proprietorship of land parcels as the prevailing, normal form constitutes, on the one hand, the economic foundation of society during the best periods of classical antiquity, and on the other hand, it is found among modern nations as one of the forms arising from the dissolution of feudal landownership. Thus, the yeomanry in England, the peasantry in Sweden, the French and West German peasants. We do not include colonies here, since the independent peasant there develops under different conditions.

The free ownership of the self-managing peasant is evidently the most normal form of landed property for small-scale operation, i.e., for a mode of production, in which possession of the land is a prerequisite for the labourer's ownership of the product of his own labour, and in which the cultivator, be he free owner or vassal, always must produce his own means of subsistence independently, as an isolated labourer with his family. Ownership of the land is as necessary for full development of this mode of production as ownership of tools is for free development of handicraft production. Here is the basis for the development of personal independence. It is a necessary transitional stage for the development of agriculture itself.

The causes which bring about its downfall show its limitations. These are: Destruction of rural domestic industry, which forms its normal supplement as a result of the development of large-scale industry; a gradual impoverishment and exhaustion of the soil subjected to this cultivation; usurpation by big landowners of the common lands, which constitute the second supplement of the management of land parcels everywhere and which alone enable it to raise cattle; competition, either of the plantation system or large-scale capitalist agriculture. Improvements in agriculture, which on the one hand cause a fall in agricultural prices and, on the other, require greater outlays and more extensive material conditions of production, also contribute towards this, as in England during the first half of the 18th century.

Proprietorship of land parcels by its very nature excludes the development of social productive forces of labour, social forms of labour, social concentration of capital, large-scale cattle-raising, and the progressive application of science.

Usury and a taxation system must impoverish it everywhere. The expenditure of capital in the price of the land withdraws this capital from cultivation. An infinite fragmentation of means of production, and isolation of the producers themselves. Monstrous waste of human energy. Progressive deterioration of conditions of production and increased prices of means of production—an inevitable law of proprietorship of parcels. Calamity of seasonal abundance for this mode of production.*

One of the specific evils of small-scale agriculture where it is combined with free landownership arises from the cultivator's investing capital in the purchase of land. (The

* See the speech from the throne of the King of France in Tooke. [*Newmarch, A History of Prices, and of the State of the Circulation, during the nine years 1848-56*, Vol. VI, London, 1857, pp. 29-30.—Ed.] [*Note by Marx.*]

same applies also to the transitory form, in which the big landowner invests capital, first, to buy land, and second, to manage it as his own tenant farmer.) Owing to the changeable nature which the land here assumes as a mere commodity, the changes of ownership increase,* so that the land, from the peasant's viewpoint, enters anew as an investment of capital with each successive generation and division of estates, i.e., it becomes land purchased by him. The price of land here forms a weighty element of the individual unproductive costs of production or cost-price of the product for the individual producer.

The price of land is nothing but capitalised and therefore anticipated rent. If capitalist methods are employed by agriculture, so that the landlord receives only rent, and the farmer pays nothing for land except this annual rent, then it is evident that the capital invested by the landowner himself in purchasing the land constitutes indeed an interest-bearing investment of capital for him, but has absolutely nothing to do with capital invested in agriculture itself. It forms neither a part of the fixed, nor of the circulating, capital employed here,** it merely secures for

* See Mounier [*De l'agriculture en France*, Paris, 1846.—Ed.] and Rubichon [*Du mécanisme de la société en France et en Angleterre*, Paris, 1837.—Ed.]. [Note by Marx.]

** Dr. H. Maron (*Extensiv oder Intensiv?*) [no further information given about this pamphlet] starts from the false assumption of the adversaries he opposes. He assumes that capital invested in the purchase of land is "investment capital," and then engages in a controversy about the respective definitions of investment capital and working capital, that is, fixed and circulating capital. His wholly amateurish conceptions of capital in general, which may be excused incidentally in one who is not an economist in view of the state of German political economy, conceal from him that this capital is neither investment nor working capital, any more than the capital which someone invests at the Stock Exchange in purchasing stocks or government securities, and which, for him, represents a personal investment of capital, is "invested" in any branch of production. [Note by Marx.]

the buyer a claim to receive annual rent, but has absolutely nothing to do with the production of the rent itself. The buyer of land just pays his capital out to the one who sells the land, and the seller in return relinquishes his ownership of the land. Thus this capital no longer exists as the capital of the purchaser; he no longer has it; therefore it does not belong to the capital which he can invest in any way in the land itself. Whether he bought the land dear or cheap, or whether he received it for nothing, alters nothing in the capital invested by the farmer in his establishment, and changes nothing in the rent, but merely alters the question whether it appears to him as interest or not, or as higher or lower interest respectively.

Take, for instance, the slave economy. The price paid for a slave is nothing but the anticipated and capitalised surplus-value or profit to be wrung out of the slave. But the capital paid for the purchase of a slave does not belong to the capital by means of which profit, surplus-labour, is extracted from him. On the contrary. It is capital which the slave-holder has parted with, it is a deduction from the capital which he has available for actual production. It has ceased to exist for him, just as capital invested in purchasing land has ceased to exist for agriculture. The best proof of this is that it does not reappear for the slave-holder or the landowner except when he, in turn, sells his slaves or land. But then the same situation prevails for the buyer. The fact that he has bought the slave does not enable him to exploit the slave without further ado. He is only able to do so when he invests some additional capital in the slave economy itself.

The same capital does not exist twice, once in the hands of the seller, and a second time in the hands of the buyer of the land. It passes from the hands of the buyer to those of the seller, and there the matter ends. The buyer now no longer has capital, but in its stead a piece of land. The circumstance that the rent produced by a real investment of capital in this land is calculated

by the new landowner as interest on capital which he has not invested in the land, but given away to acquire the land, does not in the least alter the economic nature of the land factor, any more than the circumstance that someone has paid £1,000 for 3% consols has anything to do with the capital out of whose revenue the interest on the national debt is paid.

In fact, the money expended in purchasing land, like that in purchasing government bonds, is merely capital *in itself*, just as any value sum is capital in itself, potential capital, on the basis of the capitalist mode of production. What is paid for land, like that for government bonds or any other purchased commodity, is a sum of money. This is capital in itself, because it can be converted into capital. It depends upon the use put to it by the seller whether the money obtained by him is really transformed into capital or not. For the buyer, it can never again function as such, no more than any other money which he has definitely paid out. It figures in his accounts as interest-bearing capital, because he considers the income, received as rent from the land or as interest on state indebtedness, as interest on the money which the purchase of the claim to this revenue has cost him. He can only realise it as capital through resale. But then another, the new buyer, enters the same relationship maintained by the former, and the money thus expended cannot be transformed into actual capital for the expender through any change of hands.

In the case of small landed property the illusion is fostered still more that land itself possesses value and thus enters as capital into the price of production of the product, much as machines or raw materials. But we have seen that rent, and therefore capitalised rent, the price of land, can enter as a determining factor into the price of agricultural products in only two cases. First, when as a consequence of the composition of agricultural capital—a capital which has nothing to do with the capital

invested in purchasing land—the value of the products of the soil is higher than their price of production, and market conditions enable the landlord to realise this difference. Second, when there is a monopoly price. And both are least of all the case under the management of land parcels and small landownership because precisely here production to a large extent satisfies the producers' own wants and is carried on independently of regulation by the average rate of profit. Even where cultivation of land parcels is conducted upon leased land, the lease money comprises, far more so than under any other conditions, a portion of the profit and even a deduction from wages; this money is then only a nominal rent, not rent as an independent category as opposed to wages and profit.

The expenditure of money-capital for the purchase of land, then, is not an investment of agricultural capital. It is a decrease *pro tanto* in the capital which small peasants can employ in their own sphere of production. It reduces *pro tanto* the size of their means of production and thereby narrows the economic basis of reproduction. It subjects the small peasant to the money-lender, since credit proper occurs but rarely in this sphere in general. It is a hindrance to agriculture, even where such purchase takes place in the case of large estates. It contradicts in fact the capitalist mode of production, which is on the whole indifferent to whether the landowner is in debt, no matter whether he has inherited or purchased his estate. The nature of management of the leased estate itself is not altered whether the landowner pockets the rent himself or whether he must pay it out to the holder of his mortgage.

We have seen that, in the case of a given ground-rent, the price of land is regulated by the interest rate. If the rate is low, then the price of land is high, and vice versa. Normally, then, a high price of land and a low interest rate should go hand in hand, so that if the peasant paid

a high price for the land in consequence of a low interest rate, the same low rate of interest should also secure his working capital for him on easy credit terms. But in reality, things turn out differently when peasant proprietorship of land parcels is the prevailing form. In the first place, the general laws of credit are not adapted to the farmer, since these laws presuppose a capitalist as the producer. Secondly, where proprietorship of land parcels predominates—we are not referring to colonies here—and the small peasant constitutes the backbone of the nation, the formation of capital, i.e., social reproduction, is relatively weak, and still weaker is the formation of loanable money-capital, in the sense previously elaborated. This presupposes the concentration and existence of a class of idle rich capitalists (Massie).^{*} Thirdly, here where the ownership of the land is a necessary condition for the existence of most producers, and an indispensable field of investment for their capital, the price of land is raised independently of the interest rate, and often in inverse ratio to it, through the preponderance of the demand for landed property over its supply. Land sold in parcels brings a far higher price in such a case than when sold in large tracts, because here the number of small buyers is large and that of large buyers is small (Bandes Noires,⁶³ Rubichon; Newman^{**}). For all these reasons, the price of land rises here with a relatively high rate of interest. The relatively low interest, which the peasant derives here from the outlay of capital for the purchase of land (Mounier), corresponds here, on the other side, to the high usurious interest rate which he himself has to pay to his mortgage creditors. The Irish system bears out the same thing, only in another form.

* [Massie] *An Essay on the Governing Causes of the Natural Rate of Interest*, London, 1750, pp. 23-24.—Ed.

** Newman, *Lectures on Political Economy*, London, 1851, pp. 180-81.—Ed.

The price of land, this element foreign to production in itself, may therefore rise here to such a point that it makes production impossible (Dombasle).

The fact that the price of land plays such a role, that purchase and sale, the circulation of land as a commodity, develops to this degree, is practically a result of the development of the capitalist mode of production in so far as a commodity is here the general form of all products and all instruments of production. On the other hand, this development takes place only where the capitalist mode of production has a limited development and does not unfold all of its peculiarities, because this rests precisely upon the fact that agriculture is no longer, or not yet, subject to the capitalist mode of production, but rather to one handed down from extinct forms of society. The disadvantages of the capitalist mode of production, with its dependence of the producer upon the money-price of his product, coincide here therefore with the disadvantages occasioned by the imperfect development of the capitalist mode of production. The peasant turns merchant and industrialist without the conditions enabling him to produce his products as commodities.

The conflict between the price of land as an element in the producers' cost-price and no element in the price of production (even though the rent enters as a determining factor into the price of the agricultural product, the capitalised rent, which is advanced for 20 years or more, by no means enters as a determinant) is but one of the forms manifesting the general contradiction between private landownership and a rational agriculture, the normal social utilisation of the soil. But on the other hand, private landownership, and thereby expropriation of the direct producers from the land—private landownership by the one, which implies lack of ownership by others—is the basis of the capitalist mode of production.

Here, in small-scale agriculture, the price of land, a form and result of private landownership, appears as

a barrier to production itself. In large-scale agriculture, and large estates operating on a capitalist basis, ownership likewise acts as a barrier, because it limits the tenant farmer in his productive investment of capital, which in the final analysis benefits not him, but the landlord. In both forms, exploitation and squandering of the vitality of the soil (apart from making exploitation dependent upon the accidental and unequal circumstances of individual producers rather than the attained level of social development) takes the place of conscious rational cultivation of the soil as eternal communal property, an inalienable condition for the existence and reproduction of a chain of successive generations of the human race. In the case of small property, this results from the lack of means and knowledge of applying the social labour productivity. In the case of large property, it results from the exploitation of such means for the most rapid enrichment of farmer and proprietor. In the case of both through dependence on the market-price.

All critique of small landed property resolves itself in the final analysis into a criticism of private ownership as a barrier and hindrance to agriculture. And similarly all counter-criticism of large landed property. In either case, of course, we leave aside all secondary political considerations. This barrier and hindrance, which are erected by all private landed property vis-à-vis agricultural production and the rational cultivation, maintenance and improvement of the soil itself, develop on both sides merely in different forms, and in wrangling over the specific forms of this evil its ultimate cause is forgotten.

Small landed property presupposes that the overwhelming majority of the population is rural, and that not social, but isolated labour predominates; and that, therefore, under such conditions wealth and development of reproduction, both of its material and spiritual prerequisites, are out of the question, and thereby also the prerequisites for rational cultivation. On the other hand, large

landed property reduces the agricultural population to a constantly falling minimum, and confronts it with a constantly growing industrial population crowded together in large cities. It thereby creates conditions which cause an irreparable break in the coherence of social interchange prescribed by the natural laws of life. As a result, the vitality of the soil is squandered, and this prodigality is carried by commerce far beyond the borders of a particular state (Liebig).*

While small landed property creates a class of barbarians standing halfway outside of society, a class combining all the crudeness of primitive forms of society with the anguish and misery of civilised countries, large landed property undermines labour-power in the last region, where its prime energy seeks refuge and stores up its strength as a reserve fund for the regeneration of the vital force of nations—on the land itself. Large-scale industry and large-scale mechanised agriculture work together. If originally distinguished by the fact that the former lays waste and destroys principally labour-power, hence the natural force of human beings, whereas the latter more directly exhausts the natural vitality of the soil, they join hands in the further course of development in that the industrial system in the country-side also enervates the labourers, and industry and commerce on their part supply agriculture with the means for exhausting the soil.

Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1971, pp. 325-27, 593-613, 615-18, 633-34, 782-813

* Liebig, *Die Chemie in ihrer Anwendung auf Agricultur und Physiologie*, Braunschweig, 1862.—Ed.

KARL MARX
THEORIES OF SURPLUS-VALUE

Part I

From ADDENDA
[(f) THE LABOUR OF HANDICRAFTSMEN AND PEASANTS
IN CAPITALIST SOCIETY]

What then is the position of independent handicraftsmen or peasants who employ no labourers and therefore do not produce as capitalists? Either, as always in the case of peasants < but for example not in the case of a gardener whom I get to come to my house >, they are *producers of commodities*, and I buy the *commodity* from them—in which case for example it makes no difference that the craftsman produces it to order while the peasant produces his supply according to his means. In this capacity they confront me as sellers of commodities, not as sellers of labour, and this relation therefore has nothing to do with the exchange of capital for labour; therefore also it has nothing to do with the distinction between *productive and unproductive labour*, which depends entirely on whether the labour is exchanged for money as money or for money as capital. They therefore belong neither to the category of *productive* nor of *unproductive labourers*, although they are producers of commodities. But their production does not fall under the capitalist mode of production.

It is possible that these producers, working with their own means of production, not only reproduce their labour-power but create surplus-value, while their position enables them to appropriate for themselves their own surplus-labour or a part of it (since a part of it is taken away from them in the form of taxes, etc.). And here we

come up against a peculiarity that is characteristic of a society in which one definite mode of production predominates, even though not all productive relations have been subordinated to it. In feudal society, for example (as we can best observe in England because the system of feudalism was introduced here from Normandy ready made and its form was impressed on what was in many respects a different social foundation), relations which were far removed from the nature of feudalism were given a feudal form; for example, simple money relations in which there was no trace of mutual personal service as between lord and vassal. It is for instance a fiction that the small peasant held his land in fief.

Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, Moscow, 1975, pp. 407-08

KARL MARX
THEORIES OF SURPLUS-VALUE

Part III

From CHAPTER XXIV

RICHARD JONES

Jones traces rent throughout all its changes, from its crudest form, performance of labour services, to modern farmer's rent. He finds that everywhere a specific form of rent, i.e., of landed property, corresponds to a definite form of labour and of the conditions of labour. Thus, labour rents or serf rents, the change from labour rent to produce rent, metayer rents, ryot⁶⁴ rents, etc., are examined in turn, a development the details of which do not concern us here. In all previous forms, it is the landed proprietor, not the capitalist, who directly appropriates the *surplus labour* of other people. *Rent* (as the Physiocrats conceive it by *reminiscence* [of feudal conditions]) appears historically (and still on the largest scale among the Asiatic peoples) as the general form of *surplus labour*, of labour performed without payment in return. The appropriation of this surplus labour is here not mediated by exchange, as is the case in capitalist society, but its basis is the forcible domination of one section of society over the other. (There is, accordingly, direct slavery, serfdom or political dependence.) . . .

The reconversion of revenue into capital. If *capital* (i.e., the separation of the conditions of production from the labourer) is the source of profit (i.e., of the fact that surplus labour appears as the revenue of capital and not of

labour) then profit becomes the source of capital, of new capital formation, i.e., of the fact that the additional conditions of production confront the worker as capital, as a means for maintaining him as a worker and of appropriating his surplus labour anew. The original unity between the worker and the conditions of production (abstracting from slavery, where the labourer himself belongs to the objective conditions of production) has two main forms: the Asiatic communal system (primitive communism) and small-scale agriculture based on the family (and linked with domestic industry) in one form or another. Both are embryonic forms and both are equally unfitted to develop labour as *social* labour and the productive power of social labour. Hence the necessity for the separation, for the rupture, for the antithesis of labour and property (by which property in the conditions of production is to be understood). The most extreme form of this rupture, and the one in which the productive forces of social labour are also most powerfully developed, is capital. The original unity can be re-established only on the material foundation which capital creates and by means of the revolutions which, in the process of this creation, the working class and the whole society undergo.

Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part III, Moscow, 1975, pp. 400, 422-23

FREDERICK ENGELS
ANTI-DÜHRING

From MORALITY AND LAW. EQUALITY

The idea that all men, as men, have something in common, and that to that extent they are equal, is of course primeval. But the modern demand for equality is something entirely different from that; this consists rather in deducing from that common quality of being human, from that equality of men as men, a claim to equal political and social status for all human beings, or at least for all citizens of a state or all members of a society. Before that original conception of relative equality could lead to the conclusion that men should have equal rights in the state and in society, before that conclusion could even appear to be something natural and self-evident, thousands of years had to pass and did pass. In the most ancient, primitive communities, equality of rights could apply at most to members of the community; women, slaves and foreigners were excluded from this equality as a matter of course. Among the Greeks and Romans the inequalities of men were of much greater importance than their equality in any respect. It would necessarily have seemed insanity to the ancients that Greeks and barbarians, freemen and slaves, citizens and peregrines, Roman citizens and Roman subjects (to use a comprehensive term) should have a claim to equal political status. Under the Roman Empire all these distinctions gradually disappeared, except the distinction between freemen and slaves, and in this way

there arose, for the freemen at least, that equality as between private individuals on the basis of which Roman law developed—the completest elaboration of law based on private property which we know. But so long as the antithesis between freemen and slaves existed, there could be no talk of drawing legal conclusions from general equality of *mankind*; we saw this even recently, in the slave-owning states of the North American Union.

Christianity knew only *one* point in which all men were equal: that all were equally born in original sin—which corresponded perfectly to its character as the religion of the slaves and the oppressed. Apart from this it recognised, at most, the equality of the elect, which however was only stressed at the very beginning. The traces of common ownership which are also found in the early stages of the new religion can be ascribed to solidarity among the proscribed rather than to real equalitarian ideas. Within a very short time the establishment of the distinction between priests and laymen put an end even to this incipient Christian equality.

The overrunning of Western Europe by the Germans abolished for centuries all ideas of equality, through the gradual building up of such a complicated social and political hierarchy as had never existed before. But at the same time the invasion drew Western and Central Europe into the course of historical development, created for the first time a compact cultural area, and within this area also for the first time a system of predominantly national states exerting mutual influence on each other and mutually holding each other in check. Thereby it prepared the ground on which alone the question of the equal status of men, of the rights of man, could at a later period be raised.

The feudal Middle Ages also developed in its womb the class which was destined, in the course of its further development, to become the standard-bearer of the modern demand for equality: the bourgeoisie. Originally itself a feudal estate, the bourgeoisie developed the pre-

dominantly handicraft industry and the exchange of products within feudal society to a relatively high level, when at the end of the fifteenth century the great maritime discoveries opened to it a new career of wider scope. Trade beyond the confines of Europe, which had previously been carried on only between Italy and the Levant, was now extended to America and India, and soon surpassed in importance both the mutual exchange between the various European countries and the internal trade within each individual country. American gold and silver flooded Europe and forced its way like a disintegrating element into every fissure, rent and pore of feudal society. Handicraft industry could no longer satisfy the rising demand; in the leading industries of the most advanced countries it was replaced by manufacture.

But this mighty revolution in the conditions of the economic life of society was, however, not followed by any immediate corresponding change in its political structure. The political order remained feudal, while society became more and more bourgeois. Trade on a large scale, that is to say, particularly international and, even more so, world trade, requires free owners of commodities who are unrestricted in their movements and as such enjoy equal rights; who may exchange their commodities on the basis of laws that are equal for them all, at least in each particular place. The transition from handicraft to manufacture presupposes the existence of a number of free workers—free on the one hand from the fetters of the guild and on the other from the means whereby they could themselves utilise their labour-power—workers who can contract with the manufacturer for the hire of their labour-power, and hence, as parties to the contract, have rights equal to his. And finally the equality and equal status of all human labour, because and in so far as it is *human* labour,⁶⁵ found its unconscious but clearest expression in the law of value of modern bourgeois political economy, according to which the value of a com-

modity is measured by the socially necessary labour embodied in it.*

However, where economic relations required freedom and equality of rights, the political system opposed them at every step with guild restrictions and special privileges. Local privileges, differential duties, exceptional laws of all kinds affected in trade not only foreigners and people living in the colonies, but often enough also whole categories of the nationals of the country concerned; everywhere and ever anew the privileges of the guilds barred the development of manufacture. Nowhere was the road clear and the chances equal for the bourgeois competitors—and yet that this be so was the prime and ever more pressing demand.

The demand for liberation from feudal fetters and the establishment of equality of rights by the abolition of feudal inequalities was bound soon to assume wider dimensions, once the economic advance of society had placed it on the order of the day. If it was raised in the interests of industry and trade, it was also necessary to demand the same equality of rights for the great mass of the peasantry who, in every degree of bondage, from total serfdom onwards, were compelled to give the greater part of their labour-time to their gracious feudal lord without compensation and in addition to render innumerable other dues to him and to the state. On the other hand, it was inevitable that a demand should also be made for the abolition of the feudal privileges, of the freedom from taxation of the nobility, of the political privileges of the separate estates. And as people were no longer living in a world empire such as the Roman Empire had been, but in a system of independent states dealing with each other on an equal footing and at approximately the

* This derivation of the modern ideas of equality from the economic conditions of bourgeois society was first demonstrated by Marx in *Capital*. [Note by Engels.]

same level of bourgeois development, it was a matter of course that the demand for equality should assume a general character reaching out beyond the individual state, that freedom and equality should be proclaimed *human rights*. And it is significant of the specifically bourgeois character of these human rights that the American constitution, the first to recognise the rights of man, in the same breath confirms the slavery of the coloured races existing in America: class privileges are proscribed, race privileges sanctioned.

From THE FORCE THEORY (CONCLUSION)

As men originally made their exit from the animal world—in the narrower sense of the term—so they made their entry into history: still half animal, brutal, still helpless in face of the forces of nature, still ignorant of their own strength; and consequently as poor as the animals and hardly more productive than they. There prevailed a certain equality in the conditions of existence, and for the heads of families also a kind of equality of social position—at least an absence of social classes—which continued among the primitive agricultural communities of the civilised peoples of a later period. In each such community there were from the beginning certain common interests the safeguarding of which had to be handed over to individuals, true, under the control of the community as a whole: adjudication of disputes; repression of abuse of authority by individuals; control of water supplies, especially in hot countries; and finally, when conditions were still absolutely primitive, religious functions. Such offices are found in aboriginal communities of every period—in the oldest German marks⁶⁶ and even today in India. They are naturally endowed with a certain measure of authority and are the beginnings of state power. The productive forces gradually increase; the increasing density of the population creates at one point

common interests, at another conflicting interests, between the separate communities, whose grouping into larger units brings about in turn a new division of labour, the setting up of organs to safeguard common interests and combat conflicting interests. These organs which, if only because they represent the common interests of the whole group, hold a special position in relation to each individual community—in certain circumstances even one of opposition—soon make themselves still more independent, partly through heredity of functions, which comes about almost as a matter of course in a world where everything occurs spontaneously, and partly because they become increasingly indispensable owing to the growing number of conflicts with other groups. It is not necessary for us to examine here how this independence of social functions in relation to society increased with time until it developed into domination over society; how he who was originally the servant, where conditions were favourable, changed gradually into the lord; how this lord, depending on the conditions, emerged as an Oriental despot or satrap, the dynast of a Greek tribe, chieftain of a Celtic clan, and so on; to what extent he subsequently had recourse to force in the course of this transformation; and how finally the individual rulers united into a ruling class. Here we are only concerned with establishing the fact that the exercise of a social function was everywhere the basis of political supremacy; and further that political supremacy existed for any length of time only when it discharged its social functions. However great the number of despotisms which rose and fell in Persia and India, each was fully aware that above all it was the entrepreneur responsible for the collective maintenance of irrigation throughout the river valleys, without which no agriculture was possible there. It was reserved for the enlightened English to lose sight of this in India; they let the irrigation canals and sluices fall into decay, and are now at last discovering, through

the regularly recurring famines, that they have neglected the one activity which might have made their rule in India at least as legitimate as that of their predecessors.

But alongside this process of formation of classes another was also taking place. The natural division of labour within the family cultivating the soil made possible, at a certain level of well-being, the incorporation of one or more strangers as additional labour forces. This was especially the case in countries where the old common ownership of the land had already disintegrated or at least the former joint cultivation had given place to the separate cultivation of parcels of land by the respective families. Production had developed so far that the labour-power of a man could now produce more than was necessary for its mere maintenance; the means of maintaining additional labour forces existed; likewise the means of employing them; labour-power acquired a *value*. But the community itself and the association to which it belonged yielded no available, superfluous labour forces. On the other hand, such forces were provided by war, and war was as old as the simultaneous existence alongside each other of several groups of communities. Up to that time one had not known what to do with prisoners of war, and had therefore simply killed them; at an even earlier period, eaten them. But at the "economic" stage which had now been attained the prisoners acquired a value; one therefore let them live and made use of their labour. Thus force, instead of controlling the economic situation, was on the contrary pressed into the service of the economic situation. *Slavery* had been invented. It soon became the dominant form of production among all peoples who were developing beyond the old community, but in the end was also one of the chief causes of their decay. It was slavery that first made possible the division of labour between agriculture and industry on a larger scale, and thereby also Hellenism, the flowering of the ancient world. Without slavery, no Greek state, no Greek art and

science; without slavery, no Roman Empire. But without the basis laid by Grecian culture, and the Roman Empire, also no modern Europe. We should never forget that our whole economic, political and intellectual development presupposes a state of things in which slavery was as necessary as it was universally recognised. In this sense we are entitled to say: without the slavery of antiquity no modern socialism.

It is very easy to inveigh against slavery and similar things in general terms, and to give vent to high moral indignation at such infamies. Unfortunately all that this conveys is only what everyone knows, namely, that these institutions of antiquity are no longer in accord with our present conditions and our sentiments, which these conditions determine. But it does not tell us one word as to how these institutions arose, why they existed, and what role they played in history. And when we examine these questions, we are compelled to say—however contradictory and heretical it may sound—that the introduction of slavery under the conditions prevailing at that time was a great step forward. For it is a fact that man sprang from the beasts, and had consequently to use barbaric and almost bestial means to extricate himself from barbarism. Where the ancient communities have continued to exist, they have for thousands of years formed the basis of the cruelest form of state, Oriental despotism, from India to Russia. It was only where these communities dissolved that the peoples made progress of themselves, and their next economic advance consisted in the increase and development of production by means of slave labour. It is clear that so long as human labour was still so little productive that it provided but a small surplus over and above the necessary means of subsistence, any increase of the productive forces, extension of trade, development of the state and of law, or foundation of art and science, was possible only by means of a greater division of labour. And the necessary basis for

this was the great division of labour between the masses discharging simple manual labour and the few privileged persons directing labour, conducting trade and public affairs, and, at a later stage, occupying themselves with art and science. The simplest and most natural form of this division of labour was in fact slavery. In the historical conditions of the ancient world, and particularly of Greece, the advance to a society based on class antagonisms could be accomplished only in the form of slavery. This was an advance even for the slaves; the prisoners of war, from whom the mass of the slaves was recruited, now at least saved their lives, instead of being killed as they had been before, or even roasted, as at a still earlier period.

We may add at this point that all historical antagonisms between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes to this very day find their explanation in this same relatively undeveloped productivity of human labour. So long as the really working population were so much occupied with their necessary labour that they had no time left for looking after the common affairs of society—the direction of labour, affairs of state, legal matters, art, science, etc.—so long was it necessary that there should constantly exist a special class, freed from actual labour, to manage these affairs; and this class never failed, for its own advantage, to impose a greater and greater burden of labour on the working masses. Only the immense increase of the productive forces attained by modern industry has made it possible to distribute labour among all members of society without exception, and thereby to limit the labour-time of each individual member to such an extent that all have enough free time left to take part in the general—both theoretical and practical—affairs of society. It is only now, therefore, that every ruling and exploiting class has become superfluous and indeed a hindrance to social development, and it is only now, too, that it will be inexorably abolished, however much it may be in possession of "direct force".

THEORETICAL

The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production [of the means to support human life]* and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the *philosophy*, but in the *economics* of each particular epoch. The growing perception that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason, and right wrong,⁶⁷ is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange changes have silently taken place with which the social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping. From this it also follows that the means of getting rid of the incongruities that have been brought to light must also be present, in a more or less developed conditions, within the changed modes of production themselves. These means are not to be *invented*, spun out of the head, but *discovered* with the aid of the head in the existing material facts of production.**

* The passages in square brackets are additions made subsequently by Engels to the text of three chapters from *Anti-Dühring* reworked for his *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*.—Ed.

** In *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* this passage reads as follows: "These means are not to be invented by deduction from fundamental principles, but are to be discovered in the stubborn facts of the existing system of production."—Ed.

What is, then, the position of modern socialism in this connection?

The present structure of society—this is now pretty generally conceded—is the creation of the ruling class of today, of the bourgeoisie. The mode of production peculiar to the bourgeoisie, known, since Marx, as the capitalist mode of production, was incompatible with the local privileges and the privileges of estate as well as with the reciprocal personal ties of the feudal system.* The bourgeoisie broke up the feudal system and built upon its ruins the capitalist order of society, the kingdom of free competition, of personal liberty, of the equality, before the law, of all commodity owners, of all the rest of the capitalist blessings. Thenceforward the capitalist mode of production could develop in freedom. Since steam, machinery, and the making of machines by machinery transformed the older manufacture into modern industry, the productive forces evolved under the guidance of the bourgeoisie developed with a rapidity and in a degree unheard of before. But just as the older manufacture, in its time, and handicraft, becoming more developed under its influence, had come into collision with the feudal trammels of the guilds, so now modern industry, in its more complete development, comes into collision with the bounds within which the capitalistic mode of production holds it confined. The new productive forces have already outgrown the capitalistic mode of using them. And this conflict between productive forces and modes of production is not a conflict engendered in the mind of man, like that between original sin and divine justice. It exists, in

* In *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* this passage reads as follows: "The mode of production peculiar to the bourgeoisie, known, since Marx, as the capitalist mode of production, was incompatible with the feudal system, with the privileges it conferred upon individuals, entire social ranks and local corporations, as well as with the hereditary ties of subordination which constituted the framework of its social organisation."—Ed.

fact, objectively, outside us, independently of the will and actions even of the men that have brought it on. Modern socialism is nothing but the reflex, in thought, of this conflict in fact; its ideal reflection in the minds, first, of the class directly suffering under it, the working class.

Now, in what does this conflict consist?

Before capitalistic production, i.e., in the Middle Ages, the system of petty industry obtained generally, based upon the private property of the labourers in their means of production; [in the country,] the agriculture of the small peasant, freeman or serf; in the towns, the handicrafts [organised in guilds]. The instruments of labour—land, agricultural implements, the workshop, the tool—were the instruments of labour of single individuals, adapted for the use of one worker, and, therefore, of necessity, small, dwarfish, circumscribed. But, for this very reason they belonged, as a rule, to the producer himself. To concentrate these scattered, limited means of production, to enlarge them, to turn them into the powerful levers of production of the present day—this was precisely the historic role of capitalist production and of its upholder, the bourgeoisie. In the fourth section of *Capital* Marx has explained in detail, how since the fifteenth century this has been historically worked out through the three phases of simple cooperation, manufacture and modern industry. But the bourgeoisie, as is also shown there, could not transform these puny means of production into mighty productive forces without transforming them, at the same time, from means of production of the individual into *social* means of production only workable by a *collectivity of men*. The spinning-wheel, the handloom, the blacksmith's hammer, were replaced by the spinning-machine, the power-loom, the steam-hammer; the individual workshop by the factory implying the cooperation of hundreds and thousands of workmen. In like manner, production itself changed from a series of individual into a series of social acts, and the products from

individual to social products. The yarn, the cloth, the metal articles that now came out of the factory were the joint product of many workers, through whose hands they had successively to pass before they were ready. No one person could say of them: "I made that; this is *my* product."

But where, in a given society, the fundamental form of production is that spontaneous division of labour [which creeps in gradually and not upon any preconceived plan], there the products take on the form of *commodities* whose mutual exchange, buying and selling, enable the individual producers to satisfy their manifold wants. And this was the case in the Middle Ages. The peasant, e.g., sold to the artisan agricultural products and bought from him the products of handicraft. Into this society of individual producers, of commodity producers, the new mode of production thrust itself. In the midst of the old division of labour, grown up spontaneously and upon *no definite plan*, which had governed the whole of society, now arose division of labour upon a *definite plan*, as organised in the factory; side by side with *individual* production appeared *social* production. The products of both were sold in the same market, and, therefore, at prices at least approximately equal. But organisation upon a definite plan was stronger than spontaneous division of labour. The factories working with the combined social forces of a collectivity of individuals produced their commodities far more cheaply than the individual small producers. Individual production succumbed in one department after another. Socialised production revolutionised all the old methods of production. But its revolutionary character was, at the same time, so little recognised that it was, on the contrary, introduced as a means of increasing and developing the production of commodities. When it arose, it found ready-made, and made liberal use of, certain machinery for the production and exchange of commodities: merchants' capital, handicraft, wage-labour.

Socialised production thus introducing itself as a new form of the production of commodities, it was a matter of course that under it the old forms of appropriation remained in full swing, and were applied to its products as well.

In the mediaeval stage of evolution of the production of commodities, the question as to the owner of the product of labour could not arise. The individual producer, as a rule, had, from raw material belonging to himself, and generally his own handiwork, produced it with his own tools, by the labour of his own hands or of his family. There was no need for him to appropriate the new product. It belonged wholly to him, as a matter of course. His property in the product was, therefore, based *upon his own labour*. Even where external help was used, this was, as a rule, of little importance, and very generally was compensated by something other than wages. The apprentices and journeymen of the guilds worked less for board and wages than for education, in order that they might become master craftsmen themselves.

Then came the concentration of the means of production [and of the producers] in large workshops and manufactories, their transformation into actual socialised means of production [and socialised producers]. But the socialised [producers and] means of production and their products were still treated, after this change, just as they had been before, i.e., as the means of production and the products of individuals. Hitherto, the owner of the instruments of labour had himself appropriated the product, because, as a rule, it was his own product and the assistance of others was the exception. Now the owner of the instruments of labour always appropriated to himself the product, although it was no longer *his* product but exclusively the product of the *labour of others*. Thus, the products now produced socially were not appropriated by those who had actually set in motion the means of production and actually produced the commodities, but by the *capitalists*.

The means of production, and production itself, had become in essence socialised. But they were subjected to a form of appropriation which presupposes the private production of individuals, under which, therefore, everyone owns his own product and brings it to market. The mode of production is subjected to this form of appropriation, although it abolishes the conditions upon which the latter rests.*

This contradiction, which gives to the new mode of production its capitalistic character, *contains the germ of the whole of the social antagonisms of today*. The greater the mastery obtained by the new mode of production over all decisive fields of production and in all economically decisive countries,** the more it reduced individual production to an insignificant residuum, *the more clearly was brought out the incompatibility of socialised production with capitalistic appropriation*.

The first capitalists found, as we have said, [alongside other forms of labour,] wage-labour ready-made for them [on the market]. But it was exceptional, complementary, accessory, transitory wage-labour. The agricultural labourer, though, upon occasion, he hired himself out by the day, had a few acres of his own land on which he could at all events live at a pinch. The guilds were so organised that the journeyman of today became the master of tomor-

* It is hardly necessary in this connection to point out that, even if the *form* of appropriation remains the same, the *character* of the appropriation is just as much revolutionised as production is by the changes described above. It is, of course, a very different matter whether I appropriate to myself my own product or that of another. Note in passing that wage-labour, which contains the whole capitalistic mode of production in embryo, is very ancient; in a sporadic, scattered form it existed for centuries alongside slave-labour. But the embryo could duly develop into the capitalistic mode of production only when the necessary historical preconditions had been furnished. [Note by Engels.]

** *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* reads: "in all manufacturing countries."—Ed.

row. But all this changed, as soon as the means of production became socialised and concentrated in the hands of capitalists. The means of production, as well as the product, of the individual producer became more and more worthless; there was nothing left for him but to turn wage-worker under the capitalist. Wage-labour, aforesaid the exception and accessory, now became the rule and basis of all production; aforesaid complementary, it now became the sole remaining function of the worker. The wage-worker for a time became a wage-worker for life. The number of these permanent wage-workers was further enormously increased by the breaking-up of the feudal system that occurred at the same time, by the disbanding of the retainers of the feudal lords, the eviction of the peasants from their homesteads, etc. The separation was made complete between the means of production concentrated in the hands of the capitalists, on the one side, and the producers, possessing nothing but their labour-power, on the other. *The contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation manifested itself as the antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie.*

We have seen that the capitalistic mode of production thrust its way into a society of commodity-producers, of individual producers, whose social bond was the exchange of their products. But every society based upon the production of commodities has this peculiarity: that the producers have lost control over their own social interrelations. Each man produces for himself with such means of production as he may happen to have, and for such exchange as he may require to satisfy his remaining wants. No one knows how much of his particular article is coming on the market, nor how much of it will be wanted. No one knows whether his individual product will meet an actual demand, whether he will be able to make good his costs of production or even to sell his commodity at all. Anarchy reigns in socialised production.

But the production of commodities, like every other

form of production, has its peculiar, inherent laws inseparable from it; and these laws work, despite anarchy, in and through anarchy. They reveal themselves in the only persistent form of social interrelations, i.e., in exchange, and here they affect the individual producers as compulsory laws of competition. They are, at first, unknown to these producers themselves, and have to be discovered by them gradually and as the result of experience. They work themselves out, therefore, independently of the producers, and in antagonism to them, as inexorable natural laws of their particular form of production. The product governs the producers.

In mediaeval society, especially in the earlier centuries, production was essentially directed towards satisfying the wants of the individual. It satisfied, in the main, only the wants of the producer and his family. Where relations of personal dependence existed, as in the country, it also helped to satisfy the wants of the feudal lord. In all this there was, therefore, no exchange; the products, consequently, did not assume the character of commodities. The family of the peasant produced almost everything they wanted: clothes and furniture, as well as means of subsistence. Only when it began to produce more than was sufficient to supply its own wants and the payments in kind to the feudal lord, only then did it also produce commodities. This surplus, thrown into socialised exchange and offered for sale, became commodities.

The artisans of the towns, it is true, had from the first to produce for exchange. But they, also, themselves supplied the greatest part of their own individual wants. They had gardens and plots of land. They turned their cattle out into the communal forest, which, also, yielded them timber and firing. The women spun flax, wool, and so forth. Production for the purpose of exchange, production of commodities, was only in its infancy. Hence, exchange was restricted, the market narrow, the methods of production stable; there was local exclusiveness without,

local unity within; the mark in the country; in the town, the guild.

But with the extension of the production of commodities, and especially with the introduction of the capitalist mode of production, the laws of commodity-production, hitherto latent, came into action more openly and with greater force. The old bonds were loosened, the old exclusive limits broken through, the producers were more and more turned into independent, isolated producers of commodities. The anarchy of social production became apparent and grew to greater and greater height.* But the chief means by aid of which the capitalist mode of production intensified this anarchy of socialised production was the exact opposite of anarchy. It was the increasing organisation of production, upon a social basis, in every individual productive establishment. By this, the old, peaceful, stable condition of things was ended. Wherever this organisation of production was introduced into a branch of industry, it brooked no other method of production by its side. Where it laid hold of a handicraft, that old handicraft was wiped out.** The field of labour became a battle-ground. The great geographical discoveries, and the colonisation following upon them, multiplied markets and quickened the transformation of handicraft into manufacture. The war did not simply break out between the individual producers of particular localities. The local struggles begat in their turn national conflicts, the commercial wars of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.⁶⁸

Finally, modern industry and the opening of the world market made the struggle universal, and at the same

* In *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* this passage reads as follows: "It became apparent that the production of society at large was ruled by absence of plan, by accident, by anarchy; and this anarchy grew to greater and greater height."—Ed.

** This sentence was omitted by Engels in *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*.—Ed.

time gave it an unheard-of virulence. Advantages in natural or artificial conditions of production now decide the existence or non-existence of individual capitalists, as well as of whole industries and countries. He that falls is remorselessly cast aside. It is the Darwinian struggle of the individual for existence transferred from nature to society with intensified violence. The conditions of existence natural to the animal appear as the final term of human development. The contradiction between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation now presents itself as *an antagonism between the organisation of production in the individual workshop, and the anarchy of production in society generally.*

The capitalistic mode of production moves in these two forms of the antagonism immanent to it from its very origin. It is never able to get out of that "vicious circle" which Fourier had already discovered. What Fourier could not, indeed, see in his time is that this circle is gradually narrowing; that the movement becomes more and more a spiral, and must come to an end, like the movement of the planets, by collision with the centre. It is the compelling force of anarchy in the production of society at large that more and more completely turns the great majority of men into proletarians; and it is the masses of the proletariat again who will finally put an end to anarchy in production. It is the compelling force of anarchy in social production that turns the limitless perfectibility of machinery under modern industry into a compulsory law by which every individual industrial capitalist must perfect his machinery more and more, under penalty of ruin.

But the perfecting of machinery is making human labour superfluous. If the introduction and increase of machinery means the displacement of millions of manual by a few machine-workers, improvement in machinery means the displacement of more and more of the machine-workers themselves. It means, in the last instance, the production of a number of available wage-workers in excess of the

average needs of capital, the formation of a complete industrial reserve army, as I called it in 1845,* available at the times when industry is working at high pressure, to be cast out upon the street when the inevitable crash comes, a constant dead weight upon the limbs of the working class in its struggle for existence with capital, a regulator for the keeping of wages down to the low level that suits the interests of capital. Thus it comes about, to quote Marx, that machinery becomes the most powerful weapon in the war of capital against the working class; that the instruments of labour constantly tear the means of subsistence out of the hands of the labourer; that the very product of the worker is turned into an instrument for his subjugation.⁶⁹ Thus it comes about that the economising of the instruments of labour becomes at the same time, from the outset, the most reckless waste of labour-power, and robbery based upon the normal conditions under which labour functions⁷⁰; that machinery, the most powerful instrument for shortening labour-time, becomes the most unflinching means for placing every moment of the labourer's time and that of his family at the disposal of the capitalist for the purpose of expanding the value of his capital. Thus it comes about that the overwork of some becomes the preliminary condition for the idleness of others, and that modern industry, which hunts after new consumers over the whole world, forces the consumption of the masses at home down to a starvation minimum, and in doing this destroys its own home market. "The law that always equilibrates the relative surplus-population, or industrial reserve army, to the extent and energy of accumulation, this law rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock. It establishes an accumulation of misery, corresponding with

* *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (Sonnenschein & Co.), p. 84. [Note by Engels.] K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Britain*, Moscow, 1962, p. 119.—Ed.

accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole, i.e., on the side of the class that produces *its own product in the form of capital.*" (Marx's *Capital* [Sonnenschein & Co.], p. 671.)⁷¹ And to expect any other division of the products from the capitalistic mode of production is the same as expecting the electrodes of a battery not to decompose acidulated water, not to liberate oxygen at the positive, hydrogen at the negative pole, so long as they are connected with the battery.

We have seen that the ever increasing perfectibility of modern machinery is, by the anarchy of social production, turned into a compulsory law that forces the individual industrial capitalist always to improve his machinery, always to increase its productive force. The bare possibility of extending the field of production is transformed for him into a similar compulsory law. The enormous expansive force of modern industry, compared with which that of gases is mere child's play, appears to us now as a *necessity* for expansion, both qualitative and quantitative, that laughs at all resistance. Such resistance is offered by consumption, by sales, by the markets for the products of modern industry. But the capacity for extension, extensive and intensive, of the markets is primarily governed by quite different laws that work much less energetically. The extension of the markets cannot keep pace with the extension of production. The collision becomes inevitable, and as this cannot produce any real solution so long as it does not break in pieces the capitalist mode of production, the collisions become periodic. Capitalist production has begotten another "vicious circle."

As a matter of fact, since 1825, when the first general crisis broke out, the whole industrial and commercial world, production and exchange among all civilised peoples and their more or less barbaric hangers-on, are thrown

out of joint about once every ten years. Commerce is at a standstill, the markets are glutted, products accumulate, as multitudinous as they are unsaleable, hard cash disappears, credit vanishes, factories are closed, the mass of the workers are in want of the means of subsistence, because they have produced too much of the means of subsistence; bankruptcy follows upon bankruptcy, execution upon execution. The stagnation lasts for years; productive forces and products are wasted and destroyed wholesale, until the accumulated mass of commodities finally filter off, more or less depreciated in value, until production and exchange gradually begin to move again. Little by little the pace quickens. It becomes a trot. The industrial trot breaks into a canter, the canter in turn grows into the headlong gallop of a perfect steeplechase of industry, commercial credit, and speculation, which finally, after break-neck leaps, ends where it began—in the ditch of a crisis. And so over and over again. We have now, since the year 1825, gone through this five times, and at the present moment (1877) we are going through it for the sixth time. And the character of these crises is so clearly defined that Fourier hit all of them off when he described the first as *crise pléthorique*, a crisis from plethora.⁷²

In these crises, the contradiction between socialised production and capitalist appropriation ends in a violent explosion. The circulation of commodities is, for the time being, stopped. Money, the means of circulation, becomes a hindrance to circulation. All the laws of production and circulation of commodities are turned upside down. The economic collision has reached its apogee. *The mode of production is in rebellion against the mode of exchange, the productive forces are in rebellion against the mode of production which they have outgrown.**

* In *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* this phrase reads as follows: "The mode of production is in rebellion against the mode of exchange."—Ed.

The fact that the socialised organisation of production within the factory has developed so far that it has become incompatible with the anarchy of production in society, which exists side by side with and dominates it, is brought home to the capitalists themselves by the violent concentration of capital that occurs during crises, through the ruin of many large, and a still greater number of small, capitalists. The whole mechanism of the capitalist mode of production breaks down under the pressure of the productive forces, its own creations. It is no longer able to turn all this mass of means of production into capital. They lie fallow, and for that very reason the industrial reserve army must also lie fallow. Means of production, means of subsistence, available labourers, all the elements of production and of general wealth, are present in abundance. But "abundance becomes the source of distress and want" (Fourier), because it is the very thing that prevents the transformation of the means of production and subsistence into capital. For in capitalistic society the means of production can only function when they have undergone a preliminary transformation into capital, into the means of exploiting human labour-power. The necessity of this transformation into capital of the means of production and subsistence stands like a ghost between these and the workers. It alone prevents the coming together of the material and personal levers of production; it alone forbids the means of production to function, the workers to work and live. On the one hand, therefore, the capitalistic mode of production stands convicted of its own incapacity to further direct these productive forces. On the other, these productive forces themselves, with increasing energy, press forward to the removal of the existing contradiction, to the abolition of their quality as capital, to the *practical recognition of their character as social productive forces*.

This rebellion of the productive forces, as they grow more and more powerful, against their quality as capital,

this stronger and stronger command that their social character shall be recognised, forces the capitalist class itself to treat them more and more as social productive forces, so far as this is possible under capitalist conditions. The period of industrial high pressure, with its unbounded inflation of credit, not less than the crash itself, by the collapse of great capitalist establishments, tends to bring about that form of the socialisation of great masses of means of production which we meet with in the different kinds of joint-stock companies. Many of these means of production and of distribution are, from the outset, so colossal that, like the railways, they exclude all other forms of capitalistic exploitation. At a further stage of evolution this form also becomes insufficient. [The producers on a large scale in a particular branch of industry in a particular country unite in a "Trust", a union for the purpose of regulating production. They determine the total amount to be produced, parcel it out among themselves, and thus enforce the selling price fixed beforehand. But trusts of this kind, as soon as business becomes bad, are generally liable to break up, and on this very account compel a yet greater concentration of association. The whole of the particular industry is turned into one gigantic joint-stock company; internal competition gives place to the internal monopoly of this one company. This has happened in 1890 with the English alkali production, which is now, after the fusion of 48 large works, in the hands of one company, conducted upon a single plan, and with a capital of £6,000,000.

In the trusts, freedom of competition changes into its very opposite—into monopoly; and the production without any definite plan of capitalistic society capitulates to the production upon a definite plan of the invading socialistic society. Certainly this is so far still to the benefit and advantage of the capitalists. But in this case the exploitation is so palpable that it must break down. No nation will put up with production conducted by trusts, with so

barefaced an exploitation of the community by a small band of dividend-mongers.

In any case, with trusts or without,) the official representative of capitalist society—the state—will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production.* This necessity for conversion into state property is felt first in the great institutions for intercourse and communication—the post office, the telegraphs, the railways.

If the crises demonstrate the incapacity of the bourgeoisie for managing any longer modern productive forces, the transformation of the great establishments for production and distribution into joint-stock companies [, trusts], and state property shows how unnecessary the bourgeoisie are for that purpose. All the social functions

* I say "have to". For only when the means of production and distribution have *actually* outgrown the form of management by joint-stock companies, and when, therefore, the taking them over by the state has become *economically* inevitable, and then—even if it is the state of today that effects this—is there an economic advance, the attainment of another step preliminary to the taking over of all productive forces by society itself. But of late, since Bismarck went in for state-ownership of industrial establishments, a kind of spurious socialism has arisen, degenerating, now and again, into something of flunkeyism, that without more ado declares *all* state ownership, even of the Bismarckian sort, to be socialistic. Certainly, if the taking over by the state of the tobacco industry is socialistic, then Napoleon and Metternich must be numbered among the founders of socialism. If the Belgian state, for quite ordinary political and financial reasons, itself constructed its chief railway lines; if Bismarck, not under any economic compulsion, took over for the state the chief Prussian lines, simply to be the better able to have them in hand in case of war, to bring up the railway employees as voting cattle for the government, and especially to create for himself a new source of income independent of parliamentary votes—this was, in no sense, a socialistic measure, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously. Otherwise, the Royal Maritime Company,⁷³ the Royal porcelain manufacture, and even the regimental tailor of the army would also be socialistic institutions [,or even, as was seriously proposed by a sly dog in Frederick William III's reign, the taking over by the state of the brothels]. [Note by Engels.]

of the capitalist are now performed by salaried employees. The capitalist has no further social function than that of pocketing dividends, tearing off coupons, and gambling on the Stock Exchange, where the different capitalists despoil one another of their capital. At first the capitalist mode of production forces out the workers. Now it forces out the capitalists, and reduces them, just as it reduced the workers, to the ranks of the surplus population, although not immediately into those of the industrial reserve army.

But the transformation, either into joint-stock companies [and trusts], or into state ownership, does not do away with the capitalistic nature of the productive forces. In the joint-stock companies [and trusts] this is obvious. And the modern state, again, is only the organisation that bourgeois society takes on in order to support the general external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against the encroachments as well of the workers as of individual capitalists. The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of the productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers—proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head. But, brought to a head, it topples over. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution.

This solution can only consist in the practical recognition of the social nature of the modern forces of production, and therefore in the harmonising of the modes of production, appropriation, and exchange with the socialised character of the means of production. And this can only come about by society openly and directly taking possession of the productive forces which have outgrown all control except that of society as a whole. The social

character of the means of production and of the products today reacts against the producers, periodically disrupts all production and exchange, acts only like a law of nature working blindly, forcibly, destructively. But with the taking over by society of the productive forces, the social character of the means of production and of the products will be utilised by the producers with a perfect understanding of its nature, and instead of being a source of disturbance and periodical collapse, will become the most powerful lever of production itself.

Active social forces work exactly like natural forces: blindly, forcibly, destructively, so long as we do not understand, and reckon with, them. But when once we understand them, when once we grasp their action, their direction, their effects, it depends only upon ourselves to subject them more and more to our own will, and by means of them to reach our own ends. And this holds quite especially of the mighty productive forces of today. As long as we obstinately refuse to understand the nature and the character of these social means of action—and this understanding goes against the grain of the capitalist mode of production and its defenders—so long these forces are at work in spite of us, in opposition to us, so long they master us, as we have shown above in detail.

But when once their nature is understood, they can, in the hands of the producers working together, be transformed from master demons into willing servants. The difference is as that between the destructive force of electricity in the lightning of the storm, and electricity under command in the telegraph and the voltaic arc; the difference between a conflagration, and fire working in the service of man. With this recognition, at last, of the real nature of the productive forces of today, the social anarchy of production gives place to a social regulation of production upon a definite plan, according to the needs of the community and of each individual. Then the capitalist mode of appropriation, in which the product enslaves first the pro-

ducer and then the appropriator, is replaced by the mode of appropriation of the products that is based upon the nature of the modern means of production; upon the one hand, direct social appropriation, as means to the maintenance and extension of production—on the other, direct individual appropriation, as means of subsistence and of enjoyment.

Whilst the capitalist mode of production more and more completely transforms the great majority of the population into proletarians, it creates the power which, under penalty of its own destruction, is forced to accomplish this revolution. Whilst it forces on more and more the transformation of the vast means of production, already socialised, into state property, it shows itself the way to accomplishing this revolution. *The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production in the first instance into state property.**

But, in doing this, it abolishes itself as proletariat, abolishes all class distinctions and class antagonisms, abolishes also the state as state. Society thus far, based upon class antagonisms, had need of the state, that is, of an organisation of the particular class, which was *pro tempore* the exploiting class, for the maintenance of its external conditions of production,** and, therefore, especially, for the purpose of forcibly keeping the exploited classes in the condition of oppression corresponding with the given mode of production (slavery, serfdom, wage-labour). The state was the official representative of society as a whole; the gathering of it together into a visible embodiment. But it was this only in so far as it was the state of that class which itself represented, for the time being, society as a

* In *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* this phrase reads as follows: "The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into state property."—Ed.

** In *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* this phrase reads as follows: "for the purpose of preventing any interference from without with the existing conditions of production."—Ed.

whole: in ancient times, the state of slave-owning citizens; in the Middle Ages, the feudal lords; in our own time, the bourgeoisie. When at last it becomes the real representative of the whole of society, it renders itself unnecessary. As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection; as soon as class rule, and the individual struggle for existence based upon our present anarchy in production, with the collisions and excesses arising from these, are removed, nothing more remains to be repressed, and a special repressive force, a state, is no longer necessary. The first act by virtue of which the state really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society—the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society—this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a state. State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself; the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. The state is not “abolished”. *It dies out*. This gives the measure of the value of the phrase “a free state”,⁷⁴ both as to its justifiable use at times by agitators, and as to its ultimate scientific insufficiency; and also of the demands of the so-called anarchists for the abolition of the state out of hand.

Since the historical appearance of the capitalist mode of production, the appropriation by society of all the means of production has often been dreamed of, more or less vaguely, by individuals, as well as by sects, as the ideal of the future. But it could become possible, could become a historical necessity, only when the actual conditions for its realisation were there. Like every other social advance, it becomes practicable, not by men understanding that the existence of classes is in contradiction to justice, equality, etc., not by the mere willingness to abolish these classes, but by virtue of certain new economic conditions. The separation of society into an exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class,

was the necessary consequence of the deficient and restricted development of production in former times. So long as the total social labour only yields a produce which but slightly exceeds that barely necessary for the existence of all; so long, therefore, as labour engages all or almost all the time of the great majority of the members of society—so long, of necessity, this society is divided into classes. Side by side with the great majority, exclusively bond slaves to labour, arises a class freed from directly productive labour, which looks after the general affairs of society: the direction of labour, state business, law, science, art, etc. It is, therefore, the law of division of labour that lies at the basis of the division into classes. But this does not prevent this division into classes from being carried out by means of violence and robbery, trickery and fraud. It does not prevent the ruling class, once having the upper hand, from consolidating its power at the expense of the working class, from turning its social leadership into an [intensified] exploitation of the masses.

But if, upon this showing, division into classes has a certain historical justification, it has this only for a given period, only under given social conditions. It was based upon the insufficiency of production. It will be swept away by the complete development of modern productive forces. And, in fact, the abolition of classes in society presupposes a degree of historical evolution at which the existence, not simply of this or that particular ruling class, but of any ruling class at all, and, therefore, the existence of class distinction itself has become an obsolete anachronism. It presupposes, therefore, the development of production carried out to a degree at which appropriation of the means of production and of the products, and, with this, of political domination, of the monopoly of culture, and of intellectual leadership by a particular class of society, has become not only superfluous but economically, politically, intellectually a hindrance to development.

This point is now reached. Their political and intellec-

tual bankruptcy is scarcely any longer a secret to the bourgeoisie themselves. Their economic bankruptcy recurs regularly every ten years. In every crisis, society is suffocated beneath the weight of its own productive forces and products, which it cannot use, and stands helpless, face to face with the absurd contradiction that the producers have nothing to consume, because consumers are wanting. The expansive force of the means of production bursts the bonds that the capitalist mode of production had imposed upon them. Their deliverance from these bonds is the one precondition for an unbroken, constantly-accelerated development of the productive forces, and therewith for a practically unlimited increase of production itself. Nor is this all. The socialised appropriation of the means of production does away, not only with the present artificial restrictions upon production, but also with the positive waste and devastation of productive forces and products that are at the present time the inevitable concomitants of production, and that reach their height in the crises. Further, it sets free for the community at large a mass of means of production and of products, by doing away with the senseless extravagance of the ruling classes of today and their political representatives. The possibility of securing for every member of society, by means of socialised production, an existence not only fully sufficient materially, and becoming day by day more full, but an existence guaranteeing to all the free development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties—this possibility is now for the first time here, but *it is here*.*

* A few figures may serve to give an approximate idea of the enormous expansive force of the modern means of production, even under capitalist pressure. According to Mr. Giffen,⁷⁵ the total wealth of Great Britain and Ireland amounted, in round numbers, in

1814 to £2,200,000,000,
1865 to £6,100,000,000.
1875 to £8,500,000,000.

With the seizing of the means of production by society, production of commodities is done away with, and, simultaneously, the mastery of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by systematic, definite organisation. The struggle for individual existence disappears. Then for the first time, man, in a certain sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom, and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now comes under the dominion and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of nature, because he has now become master of his own social organisation. The laws of his own social action, hitherto standing face to face with man as laws of nature foreign to, and dominating him, will then be used with full understanding, and so mastered by him. Man's own social organisation, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by nature and history, now becomes the result of his own free action. The extraneous objective forces that have hitherto governed history pass under the control of man himself. Only from that time will man himself, with full consciousness,* make his own history—only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him. It is the humanity's leap from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom.**

As an instance of the squandering of means of production and of products during a crisis, the total loss in the German iron industry alone, in the crisis of 1873-78 was given at the second German industrial Congress (Berlin, February 21, 1878),⁷⁶ as £22,750,000. [Note by Engels.]

* *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* reads: "more and more consciously."—Ed.

** In *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* this phrase reads as follows: "It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom."—Ed.

[Let us briefly sum up our sketch of historical evolution.

I. *Mediaeval Society*—individual production on a small scale. Means of production adapted for individual use; hence primitive, ungainly, petty, dwarfed in action. Production for immediate consumption, either of the producer himself or of his feudal lord. Only where an excess of production over this consumption occurs is such excess offered for sale, enters into exchange. Production of commodities, therefore, only in its infancy. But already it contains within itself, in embryo, *anarchy in the production of society at large*.

II. *Capitalist Revolution*—transformation of industry, at first by means of simple co-operation and manufacture. Concentration of the means of production, hitherto scattered, into great workshops. As a consequence, their transformation from individual to social means of production—a transformation which does not, on the whole, affect the form of exchange. The old forms of appropriation remain in force. The capitalist appears. In his capacity as owner of the means of production, he also appropriates the products and turns them into commodities. Production has become a *social* act. Exchange and appropriation continue to be *individual* acts, the acts of individuals. *The social product is appropriated by the individual capitalist*. Fundamental contradiction, whence arise all the contradictions in which our present-day society moves, and which modern industry brings to light.

A. Severance of the producer from the means of production. Condemnation of the worker to wage-labour for life. *Antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie*.

B. Growing predominance and increasing effectiveness of the laws governing the production of commodities. Unbridled competition. *Contradiction between socialised organisation in the individual factory and social anarchy in production as a whole*.

C. On the one hand, perfecting of machinery, made by

competition compulsory for each individual manufacturer, and complemented by a constantly growing displacement of labourers: *industrial reserve-army*. On the other hand, unlimited extension of production, also compulsory under competition, for every manufacturer. On both sides, unheard-of development of productive forces, excess of supply over demand, over-production, glutting of the markets, crises every ten years, the vicious circle: excess here, of means of production and products—excess there, of labourers, without employment and without means of existence. But these two levers of production and of social well-being are unable to work together, because the capitalist form of production prevents the productive forces from working and the products from circulating, unless they are first turned into capital—which their very superabundance prevents. The contradiction has grown into an absurdity: *the mode of production rises in rebellion against the form of exchange*. The bourgeoisie are convicted of incapacity further to manage their own social productive forces.

D. Partial recognition of the social character of the productive forces forced upon the capitalists themselves. Taking over of the great institutions for production and communication, first by joint-stock companies, later on by trusts, then by the state. The bourgeoisie demonstrated to be a superfluous class. All its social functions are now performed by salaried employees.

III. *Proletarian Revolution*—solution of the contradictions. The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialised means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property. By this act, the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital they have thus far borne, and gives their socialised character complete freedom to work itself out. Socialised production upon a predetermined plan becomes henceforth possible. The development of production makes the existence of different

classes of society thenceforth an anachronism. In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the state dies out. Man, at last the master of his own form of social organisation, becomes at the same time the lord over nature, his own master-free.]

To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and thus the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed [proletarian] class a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, scientific socialism.

Written in September 1876-
June 1878

Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1975,
pp. 121-24, 205-09, 305-27

FREDERICK ENGELS

From PREPARATORY WRITINGS
FOR ANTI-DÜHRING

Wherever *slavery* is the main form of production it turns labour into servile activity, consequently makes it dishonourable for freemen. Thus the way out of such a mode of production is barred, while on the other hand slavery is an impediment to more developed production, which urgently requires its removal. This contradiction spells the doom of all production based on slavery and of all communities based on it. A solution comes about in most cases through the forcible subjection of the deteriorating communities by other, stronger ones (Greece by Macedonia and later Rome). As long as these themselves have slavery as their foundation there is merely a shifting of the centre and a repetition of the process on a higher plane until (Rome) finally a people conquers that replaces slavery by another form of production. Or slavery is abolished by compulsion or voluntarily, whereupon *the former mode of production perishes* and large-scale cultivation is displaced by small-peasant squatters, as in America. For that matter Greece too perished on account of slavery, Aristotle having already said that intercourse with slaves was demoralising the citizens, not to mention the fact that slavery makes work impossible for the latter. (Domestic slavery, such as exists in the Orient, is another matter. Here it forms the basis of production not directly but indirectly, as a constituent part of the family, and passes imperceptibly into the family (female harem slaves).)

Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 399

KARL MARX

LETTER TO THE EDITORIAL BOARD
OF THE *OTEHESTVENNIYE ZAPISKI*⁷⁷

To the Editor,

The author* of the article *Karl Marx Before the Tribunal of Mr. Zhukovsky* is evidently a clever man and if, in my account of primitive accumulation, he had found a single passage to support his conclusions he would have quoted it. In the absence of any such passage he finds himself obliged to seize upon an *hors-d'oeuvre*, a sort of polemic against a Russian "literary man,"** published in the appendix to the first German edition of *Capital*. What is my complaint against this writer there? That he discovered the Russian community not in Russia but in the book written by Haxthausen, Prussian Counsellor of State, and that in his hands the Russian community only serves as an argument to prove that rotten old Europe should be regenerated by the victory of Pan-Slavism.⁷⁸ My estimate of this writer may be right or it may be wrong, but it cannot in any case furnish a clue to my views regarding the efforts "of Russians to find a path of development for their country which will be different from that which Western Europe pursued and still pursues," etc.***

In the Afterword to the second German edition of

* N. K. Mikhailovsky.—*Ed.*

** Alexander Herzen.—*Ed.*

*** Marx gives the quotation from Mikhailovsky's article in Russian.—*Ed.*

Capital—which the author of the article on Mr. Zhukovsky knows, because he quotes it—I speak of a “great Russian scholar and critic”* with the high consideration he deserves. In his remarkable articles this writer has dealt with the question whether, as her liberal economists maintain, Russia must begin by destroying the village community in order to pass to the capitalist regime, or whether, on the contrary, she can without experiencing the tortures of this regime appropriate all its fruits by developing the historical conditions specifically her own. He pronounces in favour of this latter solution. And my honourable critic would have had at least as much reason for inferring from my consideration for this “great Russian scholar and critic” that I shared his views on the question, as for concluding from my polemic against the “literary man” and Pan-Slavist that I rejected them.

To conclude, as I am not fond of leaving “anything to guesswork” I shall come straight to the point. In order that I might be specially qualified to estimate the economic development in Russia, I learnt Russian and then for many years studied the official publications and others bearing on this subject. I have arrived at this conclusion: If Russia continues to pursue the path she has followed since 1861,⁷⁹ she will lose the finest chance ever offered by history to a people and undergo all the fatal vicissitudes of the capitalist regime.

II

The chapter on primitive accumulation does not pretend to do more than trace the path by which, in Western Europe, the capitalist order of economy emerged from the womb of the feudal order of economy. It therefore describes the historical movement which by divorcing the producers from their means of production converts them

* N. G. Chernyshevsky.—*Ed.*

into wage workers (proletarians in the modern sense of the word) while it converts those who possess the means of production into capitalists. In that history "all revolutions are epoch-making that act as levers for the advancement of the capitalist class in course of formation; above all those which, by stripping great masses of men of their traditional means of production and subsistence, suddenly hurl them on the labour market. But the basis of this whole development is the expropriation of the agricultural producer. This has been accomplished in radical fashion only in England . . . but all the countries of Western Europe are going through the same movement," etc. (*Capital*, French edition, p. 315.) At the end of the chapter the historical tendency of production is summed up thus: That it "itself begets its own negation with the inexorability which governs the metamorphoses of nature"; that it has itself created the elements of a new economic order, by giving the greatest impulse at once to the productive forces of social labour and to the integral development of every individual producer; that capitalist property, resting already, as it actually does, on a collective mode of production, cannot but transform itself into social property. At this point I have not furnished any proof, for the good reason that this statement is itself nothing else but a general summary of long expositions previously given in the chapters on capitalist production.

Now what application to Russia could my critic make of this historical sketch? Only this: If Russia is tending to become a capitalist nation after the example of the West-European countries—and during the last few years she has been taking a lot of trouble in this direction—she will not succeed without having first transformed a good part of her peasants into proletarians; and after that, once taken to the bosom of the capitalist regime, she will experience its pitiless laws like other profane peoples. That is all. But that is too little for my critic. He feels he absolutely must metamorphose my historical sketch of

the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into an historico-philosophic theory of the general path every people is fated to tread, whatever the historical circumstances in which it finds itself, in order that it may ultimately arrive at the form of economy which ensures, together with the greatest expansion of the productive powers of social labour, the most complete development of man. But I beg his pardon. (He is both honouring and shaming me too much.) Let us take an example.

In several parts of *Capital* I allude to the fate which overtook the plebeians of ancient Rome. They were originally free peasants, each cultivating his own piece of land on his own account. In the course of Roman history they were expropriated. The same movement which divorced them from their means of production and subsistence involved the formation not only of big landed property but also of big money capital. And so one fine morning there were to be found on the one hand free men, stripped of everything except their labour power, and on the other, in order to exploit this labour, those who held all the acquired wealth in their possession. What happened? The Roman proletarians became not wage labourers but a *mob* of do-nothings more abject than the former "poor whites" in the South of the United States, and alongside of them there developed a mode of production which was not capitalist but based on slavery. Thus events strikingly analogous but taking place in different historical surroundings led to totally different results. By studying each of these forms of evolution separately and then comparing them one can easily find the clue to this phenomenon, but one will never arrive there by using as one's master key a general historico-philosophical theory, the supreme virtue of which consists in being supra-historical.

Written by K. Marx
about November 1877

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 291-94

FREDERICK ENGELS

THE MARK

In a country like Germany, in which quite half the population live by agriculture, it is necessary that the socialist working-men, and through them the peasants, should learn how the present system of landed property, large as well as small, has arisen. It is necessary to contrast the misery of the agricultural labourers of the present time and the mortgage-servitude of the small peasants, with the old common property of all free men in what was then in truth their "fatherland", the free common possession of all by inheritance. I shall give, therefore, a short historical sketch of the primitive agrarian conditions of the German tribes. A few traces of these have survived until our own time, but all through the Middle Ages they served as the basis and as the type of all public institutions, and permeated the whole of public life, not only in Germany, but also in the north of France, England, and Scandinavia. And yet they have been so completely forgotten, that recently G. L. Maurer has had to rediscover their real significance.

Two fundamental facts, that arose spontaneously, govern the primitive history of all, or of almost all, nations; the grouping of the people according to kindred, and common property in the soil. And this was the case with the Germans. As they had brought with them from Asia the method of grouping by tribes and gentes, as they even in the time of the Romans so drew up their battle

array, that those related to each other always stood shoulder to shoulder, this grouping also governed the partitioning of their new territory east of the Rhine and north of the Danube. Each tribe settled down upon the new possession, not according to whim or accident, but, as Caesar expressly states,⁸⁰ according to the gens-relationship between the members of the tribe. A particular area was apportioned to each of the nearly related larger groups, and on this again the individual gentes, each including a certain number of families, settled down by villages. A number of allied villages formed a hundred (old high German, *huntari*; old Norse, *heradh*). A number of hundreds formed a *gau* or shire. The sum total of the shires was the people itself. The land which was not taken possession of by the village remained at the disposal of the hundred. What was not assigned to the latter remained for the shire. Whatever after that was still to be disposed of—generally a very large tract of land—was the immediate possession of the whole people. Thus in Sweden we find all these different stages of common holding side by side. Each village had its village common land (*bys almänningar*), and beyond this was the hundred common land (*härads*), the shire common land (*lands*), and finally the people's common land. This last, claimed by the king as representative of the whole nation, was known therefore as *konungs almänningar*. But all of these, even the royal lands, were named, without distinction, *almänningar*, common land.

This old Swedish arrangement of the common land, in its minute subdivision, evidently belongs to a later stage of development. If it ever did exist in Germany, it soon vanished. The rapid increase in the population led to the establishment of a number of daughter-villages on the *Mark*, i.e., on the large tract of land attributed to each individual mother-village. These daughter-villages formed a single mark-association with the mother-village, on the basis of equal or of restricted rights. Thus we find eve-

rywhere in Germany, so far as research goes back, a larger or smaller number of villages united in *one* mark-association. But these associations were, at least at first, still subject to the great federations of the marks of the hundred, or of the shire. And, finally, the people, as a whole, originally formed one single great mark-association, not only for the administration of the land that remained the immediate possession of the people, but also as a supreme court over the subordinate local marks.

Until the time when the Frankish kingdom subdued Germany east of the Rhine, the centre of gravity of the mark-association seems to have been in the *gau* or shire—the shire seems to have formed the unit mark-association. For, upon this assumption alone is it explicable that, upon the official division of the kingdom, so many old and large marks reappear as shires. Soon after this time began the decay of the old large marks. Yet even in the code known as the *Kaiserrecht*, the "Emperor's Law" of the thirteenth or fourteenth century, it is a general rule that a mark includes from six to twelve villages.⁸¹

In Caesar's time a great part at least of the Germans, the Suevi, to wit, who had not yet got any fixed settlement, cultivated their fields in common. From analogy with other peoples we may take it that this was carried on in such a way that the individual gentes, each including a number of nearly related families, cultivated in common the land apportioned to them, which was changed from year to year, and divided the products among the families. But after the Suevi, about the beginning of our era, had settled down in their new domains, this soon ceased. At all events, Tacitus (150 years after Caesar) only mentions the tilling of the soil by individual families. But the land to be tilled only belonged to these for a year. Every year it was divided up anew and redistributed.

How this was done is still to be seen at the present time on the Moselle and in the Hochwald, on the so-called "Gehöferschaften". There the whole of the land under

cultivation, arable and meadows, not annually, it is true, but every three, six, nine, or twelve years, is thrown together and parcelled out into a number of "Gewanne", or areas, according to situation and the quality of the soil. Each Gewann is again divided into as many equal parts, long, narrow strips, as there are claimants in the association. These are shared by lot among the members, so that every member receives an equal portion in each Gewann. At the present time the shares have become unequal by divisions among heirs, sales, etc.; but the old full share still furnishes the unit that determines the half, or quarter, or one-eighth shares. The uncultivated land, forest and pasture land is still a common possession for common use.

The same primitive arrangement obtained until the beginning of this century in the so-called assignments by lot (Losgüter) of the Rhine palatinate in Bavaria, whose arable land has since been turned into the private property of individuals. The *Gehöferschaften* also find it more and more to their interest to let the periodical redivision become obsolete and to turn the changing ownership into settled private property. Thus most of them, if not all, have died out in the last forty years and given place to villages with peasant proprietors using the forests and pasture land in common.

The first piece of ground that passed into the private property of individuals was that on which the house stood. The inviolability of the dwelling, that basis of all personal freedom, was transferred from the caravan of the nomadic train to the log house of the stationary peasant, and gradually was transformed into a complete right of property in the homestead. This had already come about in the time of Tacitus. The free German's homestead must, even in that time, have been excluded from the mark, and thereby inaccessible to its officials, a safe place of refuge for fugitives, as we find it described in the regulations of the marks of later times, and to some extent, even in

the "leges Barbarorum",⁸² the codifications of German tribal customary law, written down from the fifth to the eighth century. For the sacredness of the dwelling was not the effect but the cause of its transformation into private property.

Four or five hundred years after Tacitus, according to the same law-books, the cultivated land also was the hereditary, although not the absolute freehold property of individual peasants, who had the right to dispose of it by sale or any other means of transfer. The causes of this transformation, as far as we can trace them, are twofold.

First, from the beginning there were in Germany itself, besides the close villages already described, with their complete ownership in common of the land, other villages where, besides homesteads, the fields also were excluded from the mark, the property of the community, and were parcelled out among the individual peasants as their hereditary property. But this was only the case where the nature of the place, so to say, compelled it: in narrow valleys, as in the Berg region, and on narrow, flat ridges between marshes, as in Westphalia; later on, in the Odenwald, and in almost all the Alpine valleys. In these places the village consisted, as it does now, of scattered individual dwellings, each surrounded by the fields belonging to it. A periodical redivision of the arable land was in these cases hardly possible, and so what remained within the mark was only the circumjacent untilled land. When, later, the right to dispose of the homestead by transfer to a third person became an important consideration, those who were free owners of their fields found themselves in an advantageous position. The wish to attain these advantages may have led in many of the villages with common ownership of the land to letting the customary method of partition die out and to the transformation of the individual shares of the members into hereditary and transferable freehold property.

But, second, conquest led the Germans on to Roman

territory, where, for centuries, the soil had been private property (the unlimited property of Roman law), and where the small number of conquerors could not possibly altogether do away with a form of holding so deeply rooted. The connection of hereditary private property in fields and meadows with Roman law, at all events on territory that had been Roman, is supported by the fact that such remains of common property in arable land as have come down to our time are found on the left bank of the Rhine, i.e., on conquered territory, but territory *thoroughly Germanised*. When the Franks settled here in the fifth century, common ownership in the fields must still have existed among them, otherwise we should not find there *Gehöferschaften* and *Losgüter*. But here also private ownership soon got the mastery, for this form of holding only do we find mentioned, insofar as arable land is concerned, in the ripuarian law of the sixth century.⁸³ And in the interior of Germany, as I have said, the cultivated land also soon became private property.

But if the German conquerors adopted private ownership in fields and meadows, i.e., gave up at the first division of the land, or soon after, any repartition (for it was nothing more than this), they introduced, on the other hand, everywhere their German mark system, with common holding of woods and pastures, together with the overlordship of the mark in respect to the partitioned land. This happened not only with the Franks in the north of France and the Anglo-Saxons in England, but also with the Burgundians in Eastern France, the Visigoths in the south of France and Spain, and the Ostrogoths and Lombardians in Italy. In these last named countries, however, as far as is known, traces of the mark government have lasted until the present time almost exclusively in the higher mountain regions.

The form that the mark government has assumed after the periodical partition of the cultivated land had fallen into disuse, is that which now meets us, not only in the

old popular laws of the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, but also in the English and Scandinavian law-books of the Middle Ages, in the many German mark regulations (the so-called *Weistümer*) from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, and in the customary laws (*coûtumes*) of Northern France.

Whilst the association of the mark gave up the right of, from time to time, partitioning fields and meadows anew among its individual members, it did not give up a single one of its other rights over these lands. And these rights were very important. The association had only transferred their fields to individuals with a view to their being used as arable and meadow land, and with that view alone. Beyond that the individual owner had no right. Treasures found in the earth, if they lay deeper than the ploughshare goes, did not, therefore, originally belong to him, but to the community. It was the same thing with digging for ores, and the like. All these rights were, later on, stolen by the princes and landlords for their own use.

But, further, the use of arable and meadow lands was under the supervision and direction of the community and that in the following form. Wherever three-field farming obtained—and that was almost everywhere—the whole cultivated area of the village was divided into three equal parts, each of which was alternately sown one year with winter seed, the second with spring seed, and the third lay fallow. Thus the village had each year its winter field, its spring field, its fallow field. In the partition of the land care was taken that each member's share was made up of equal portions from each of the three fields, so that everyone could, without difficulty, accommodate himself to the regulations of the community, in accordance with which he would have to sow autumn seed only in his winter field, and so on.

The field whose turn it was to lie fallow returned, for the time being, into the common possession, and served the community in general for pasture. And as soon as the

two other fields were reaped, they likewise became again common property until seed-time, and were used as common pasturage. The same thing occurred with the meadows after the aftermath. The owners had to remove the fences upon all fields given over to pasturage. This compulsory pasturage, of course, made it necessary that the time of sowing and of reaping should not be left to the individual, but be fixed for all by the community or by custom.

All other land, i.e., all that was not house and farm-yard, or so much of the mark as had been distributed among individuals, remained, as in early times, common property for common use; forests, pasture lands, heaths, moors, rivers, ponds, lakes, roads and bridges, hunting and fishing grounds. Just as the share of each member in so much of the mark as was distributed was of equal size, so was his share also in the use of the "common mark". The nature of this use was determined by the members of the community as a whole. So, too, was the mode of partition, if the soil that had been cultivated no longer sufficed, and a portion of the common mark was taken under cultivation. The chief use of the common mark was in pasturage for the cattle and feeding of pigs on acorns. Besides that, the forest yielded timber and firewood, litter for the animals, berries and mushrooms, whilst the moor, where it existed, yielded turf. The regulations as to pasture, the use of wood, etc., make up the most part of the many mark records written down at various epochs, between the thirteenth and the eighteenth centuries at the time when the old unwritten law of custom began to be contested. The common woodlands that are still met with here and there, are the remnants of these ancient unpartitioned marks. Another relic, at all events in West and South Germany, is the idea, deeply rooted in the popular consciousness, that the forest should be common property, wherein everyone may gather flowers, berries, mushrooms, beechnuts and the like, and generally so long

as he does no mischief, act and do as he will. But this also Bismarck remedies, and with his famous berry-legislation⁸⁴ brings down the Western Provinces to the level of the old Prussian squirearchy.

Just as the members of the community originally had equal shares in the soil and equal rights of usage, so they had also an equal share in the legislation, administration, and jurisdiction within the mark. At fixed times and, if necessary, more frequently, they met in the open air to discuss the affairs of the mark and to sit in judgment upon breaches of regulations and disputes concerning the mark. It was, only in miniature, the primitive assembly of the German people, which was, originally, nothing other than a great assembly of the mark. Laws were made, but only in rare cases of necessity. Officials were chosen, their conduct in office examined, but chiefly judicial functions were exercised. The president had only to formulate the questions. The judgment was given by the aggregate of the members present.

The unwritten law of the mark was, in primitive times, pretty much the only public law of those German tribes which had no kings; the old tribal nobility, which disappeared during the conquest of the Roman Empire, or soon after, easily fitted itself into this primitive constitution, as easily as all other spontaneous growths of the time, just as the Celtic clan-nobility, even as late as the seventeenth century, found its place in the Irish holding of the soil in common. And this unwritten law has struck such deep roots into the whole life of the Germans, that we find traces of it at every step and turn in the historical development of our people. In primitive times, the whole public authority in time of peace was exclusively judicial, and rested in the popular assembly of the hundred, the shire, or of the whole tribe. But this popular tribunal was only the popular tribunal of the mark adapted to cases that did not purely concern the mark, but came within the scope of the public authority. Even when the Frankish

kings began to transform the self-governing shires into provinces governed by royal delegates, and thus separated the royal shire-courts from the common mark tribunals, in both the judicial function remained vested in the people. It was only when the old democratic freedom had been long undermined, when military service and tribunals had become a severe burden upon the impoverished free men, that Charlemagne, in his shire-courts, could introduce judgment by Schöffen, lay assessors, appointed by the king's judge, in the place of judgment by the whole popular assembly.* But this did not seriously touch the tribunals of the mark. These, on the contrary, still remained the model even for the feudal tribunals in the Middle Ages. In these, too, the feudal lord only formulated the issues, whilst the vassals themselves found the verdict. The institutions governing a village during the Middle Ages are but those of an independent village mark, and passed into those of a town as soon as the village was transformed into a town, i.e., was fortified with walls and trenches. All later constitutions of cities have grown out of these original town mark regulations. And, finally, from the assembly of the mark were copied the arrangements of the numberless free associations of medieval times not based upon common holding of the land, and especially those of the free guilds. The rights conferred upon the guild for the exclusive carrying on of a particular trade were dealt with just as if they were rights in a common mark. With the same jealousy, often with precisely the same means in the guilds as in the mark, care was taken that the share of each member in the common benefits and advantages should be equal, or as nearly equal as possible.

* Not to be confused with the Schöffen courts⁸⁵ after the manner of Bismarck and Leonhardt, in which lawyers and lay assessors combined find verdict and judgment. In the old judicial courts there were no lawyers at all, the presiding judge had no vote at all, and the Schöffen or lay assessors gave the verdict independently. [*Note by Engels.*]

All this shows the mark organisation to have possessed an almost wonderful capacity for adaptation to the most different departments of public life and to the most various ends. The same qualities it manifested during the progressive development of agriculture and in the struggle of the peasants with the advance of large landed property. It had arisen with the settlement of the Germans in Germania Magna, that is, at a time when the breeding of cattle was the chief means of livelihood, and when the rudimentary, half-forgotten agriculture which they had brought with them from Asia was only just put into practice again. It held its own all through the Middle Ages in fierce, incessant conflicts with the landholding nobility. But it was still such a necessity that wherever the nobles had appropriated the peasants' land, the villages inhabited by these peasants, now turned into serfs, or at best into *coloni* or dependent tenants, were still organised on the lines of the old mark, in spite of the constantly increasing encroachments of the lords of the manor. Farther on we will give an example of this. It adapted itself to the most different forms of holding the cultivated land, so long as only an uncultivated common was still left, and in like manner to the most different rights of property in the common mark, as soon as this ceased to be the free property of the community. It died out when almost the whole of the peasants' lands, both private and common, were stolen by the nobles and the clergy, with the willing help of the princes. But economically obsolete and incapable of continuing as the prevalent social organisation of agriculture it became only when the great advances in farming of the last hundred years made agriculture a science and led to altogether new systems of carrying it on.

The undermining of the mark organisation began soon after the conquest of the Roman Empire. As representatives of the nation, the Frankish kings took possession of the immense territories belonging to the people as a whole, especially the forests, in order to squander them

away as presents to their courtiers, to their generals, to bishops and abbots. Thus they laid the foundation of the great landed estates, later on, of the nobles and the Church. Long before the time of Charlemagne, the Church had a full third of all the land in France, and it is certain that, during the Middle Ages, this proportion held generally for the whole of Catholic Western Europe.

The constant wars, internal and external, whose regular consequences were confiscations of land, ruined a great number of peasants, so that even during the Merovingian dynasty, there were very many free men owning no land. The incessant wars of Charlemagne broke down the mainstay of the free peasantry. Originally every freeholder owed service, and not only had to equip himself, but also to maintain himself under arms for six months. No wonder that even in Charlemagne's time scarcely one man in five could be actually got to serve. Under the chaotic rule of his successors, the freedom of the peasants went still more rapidly to the dogs. On the one hand, the ravages of the Northmen's invasions, the eternal wars between kings, and feuds between nobles, compelled one free peasant after another to seek the protection of some lord. Upon the other hand, the covetousness of these same lords and of the Church hastened this process; by fraud, by promises, threats, violence, they forced more and more peasants and peasants' land under their yoke. In both cases, the peasants' land was added to the lord's manor, and was, at best, only given back for the use of the peasant in return for tribute and service. Thus the peasant, from a free owner of the land, was turned into a tribute-paying, service-rendering appanage of it, into a serf. This was the case in the Western Frankish kingdom,⁸⁶ especially west of the Rhine. East of the Rhine, on the other hand, a large number of free peasants, for the most part scattered, occasionally united in villages entirely composed of free men, still held their own. Even here, however, in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, the overwhelm-

ing power of the nobles and the Church was constantly forcing more and more peasants into serfdom.

When a large landowner—clerical or lay—got hold of a peasant's holding, he acquired with it, at the same time, the rights in the mark that appertained to the holding. The new landlords were thus members of the mark and, within the mark, they were, originally, only regarded as on an equality with the other members of it, whether free or serfs, even if these happened to be their own bondsmen. But soon, in spite of the dogged resistance of the peasants, the lords acquired in many places special privileges in the mark, and were often able to make the whole of it subject to their own rule as lords of the manor. Nevertheless the old organisation of the mark continued, though now it was presided over and encroached upon by the lord of the manor.

How absolutely necessary at that time the constitution of the mark was for agriculture, even on large estates, is shown in the most striking way by the colonisation of Brandenburg and Silesia by Frisian and Saxon settlers, and by settlers from the Netherlands and the Frankish banks of the Rhine. From the twelfth century, the people were settled in villages on the lands of the lords according to German law, i.e., according to the old mark law, so far as it still held on the manors owned by lords. Every man had house and homestead; a share in the village fields, determined after the old method by lot, and of the same size for all; and the right of using the woods and pastures, generally in the woods of the lord of the manor, less frequently in a special mark. These rights were hereditary. The fee simple of the land continued in the lord, to whom the colonists owned certain hereditary tributes and services. But these dues were so moderate that the condition of the peasants was better here than anywhere else in Germany. Hence, they kept quiet when the peasants' war broke out. For this apostasy from their own cause they were sorely chastised.

About the middle of the thirteenth century there was everywhere a decisive change in favour of the peasants. The crusades had prepared the way for it. Many of the lords, when they set out to the East, explicitly set their peasant serfs free. Others were killed or never returned. Hundreds of noble families vanished, whose peasants serfs frequently gained their freedom. Moreover, as the needs of the landlords increased, the command over the payments in kind and services of the peasants became much more important than that over their persons. The serfdom of the earlier Middle Ages, which still had in it much of ancient slavery, gave to the lords rights which lost more and more their value; it gradually vanished, the position of the serfs narrowed itself down to that of simple hereditary tenants. As the method of cultivating the land remained exactly as of old, an increase in the revenues of the lord of the manor was only to be obtained by the breaking up of new ground, the establishing of new villages. But this was only possible by a friendly agreement with the colonists, whether they belonged to the estate or were strangers. Hence, in the documents of this time, we meet with a clear determination and a moderate scale of the peasants' dues, and good treatment of the peasants, especially by the spiritual landlords. And, lastly, the favourable position of the new colonists reacted again on the condition of their neighbours, the bondmen, so that in all the North of Germany these also, whilst they continued their services to the lords of the manor, received their personal freedom. The Slav and Lithuanian-Prussian peasants alone were not freed. But this was not to last.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the towns rose rapidly, and became rapidly rich. Their artistic handicraft, their luxurious life, throve and flourished, especially in South Germany and on the Rhine. The profusion of the town patricians aroused the envy of the coarsely fed, coarsely clothed, roughly furnished country lords. But

whence to obtain all these fine things? Lying in wait for travelling merchants became more and more dangerous and unprofitable. But to buy them, money was requisite. And that the peasants alone could furnish. Hence, renewed oppression of the peasants, higher tributes, and more *corvée*; hence renewed and always increasing eagerness to force the free peasants to become bondmen, the bondmen to become serfs, and to turn the common mark land into land belonging to the lord. In this the princes and nobles were helped by the Roman jurists, who, with their application of Roman jurisprudence to German conditions, for the most part not understood by them, knew how to produce endless confusion, but yet that sort of confusion by which the lord always won and the peasant always lost. The spiritual lords helped themselves in a more simple way. They forged documents, by which the rights of the peasants were curtailed and their duties increased. Against these robberies by the landlords, the peasants, from the end of the fifteenth century, frequently rose in isolated insurrections, until, in 1525, the great Peasant War overflowed Swabia, Bavaria, Franconia, extending into Alsace, the Palatinate, the Rheingau, and Thuringia. The peasants succumbed after hard fighting. From that time dates the renewed predominance of serfdom amongst the German peasants generally. In those places where the fight had raged, all remaining rights of the peasants were now shamelessly trodden underfoot, their common land turned into the property of the lord, they themselves into serfs. The North German peasants, being placed in more favourable conditions, had remained quiet; their only reward was that they fell under the same subjection, only more slowly. Serfdom is introduced among the German peasantry from the middle of the sixteenth century in Eastern Prussia, Pomerania, Brandenburg, Silesia, and from the end of that century in Schleswig-Holstein, and henceforth becomes more and more their general condition.

— However, this new act of violence had an economic

cause as well. From the wars consequent upon the Protestant Reformation, only the German princes had gained greater power. It was now all up with the nobles' favourite trade of highway robbery. If the nobles were not to go to ruin, greater revenues had to be got out of their landed property. But the only way to effect this was to work at least a part of their own estates on their own account, upon the model of the large estates of the princes, and especially of the monasteries. That which had hitherto been the exception now became a necessity. But this new agricultural plan was stopped by the fact that almost everywhere the soil had been given to tribute-paying peasants. As soon as the tributary peasants, whether free men or *coloni*, had been turned into serfs, the noble lords had a free hand. Part of the peasants were, as it is technically known, "evicted" ["gelegt"], i.e., either driven away or degraded to the level of cottars, with mere huts and a bit of garden land, whilst the ground belonging to their homestead was made part and parcel of the demesne of the lord, and was cultivated by the new cottars and such peasants as were still left, in *corvée* labour. Not only were many peasants thus actually driven away, but the *corvée* service of those still left was enhanced considerably, and at an ever increasing rate. The capitalistic period announced itself in the country districts as the period of agricultural industry on a large scale, based upon the *corvée* labour of serfs.

This transformation took place at first rather slowly. But then came the Thirty Years' War.⁸⁷ For a whole generation Germany was overrun in all directions by the most licentious soldiery known to history. Everywhere was burning, plundering, rape, and murder. The peasant suffered most where, apart from the great armies, the smaller independent bands, or rather the freebooters, operated uncontrolled, and upon their own account. The devastation and depopulation were beyond all bounds. When peace came Germany lay on the ground helpless, down-

trodden, cut to pieces, bleeding; but, once again, the most pitiable, miserable of all was the peasant.

The land-owning noble was now the only lord in the country districts. The princes, who just at that time were reducing to nothing his political rights in the assemblies of Estates, by way of compensation left him a free hand against the peasants. The last power of resistance on the part of the peasants had been broken by the war. Thus the noble was able to arrange all agrarian conditions in the manner most conducive to the restoration of his ruined finances. Not only were the deserted homesteads of the peasants, without further ado, united with the lord's demesne; the eviction of the peasants was carried on wholesale and systematically. The greater the lord of the manor's demesne, the greater, of course, the *corvée* required from the peasants. The system of "unlimited *corvée*" was introduced anew. The noble lord was able to command the peasant, his family, his cattle, to labour for him, as often and as long as he pleased. Serfdom was now general; a free peasant was now as rare as a white crow. And in order that the noble lord might be in a position to nip in the bud the very smallest resistance on the part of the peasants, he received from the princes of the land the right of patrimonial jurisdiction, i.e., he was nominated sole judge in all cases of offence and dispute among the peasants, even if the peasant's dispute was with him, the lord himself, so that the lord was judge in his own case! From that time, the stick and the whip ruled the agricultural districts. The German peasant, like the whole of Germany, had reached his lowest point of degradation. The peasant, like the whole of Germany, had become so powerless that all self-help failed him, and deliverance could only come from without.

And it came. With the French Revolution came for Germany also and for the German peasant the dawn of a better day. No sooner had the armies of the Revolution conquered the left bank of the Rhine than all the old

rubbish vanished, as at the stroke of an enchanter's wand—*corvée* service, rent dues of every kind to the lord, together with the noble lord himself. The peasant of the left bank of the Rhine was now lord of his own holding; moreover, in the Code Civil,⁸⁸ drawn up at the time of the Revolution and only baffled and botched by Napoleon, he received a code of laws adapted to his new conditions, that he could not only understand, but also carry comfortably in his pocket.

But the peasant on the right bank of the Rhine had still to wait a long time. It is true that in Prussia, after the well-deserved defeat at Jena,⁸⁹ some of the most shameful privileges of the nobles were abolished, and the so-called redemption of such peasants' burdens as were still left was made legally possible. But to a great extent and for a long time this was only on paper. In the other German states, still less was done. A second French Revolution, that of 1830, was needed to bring about the "redemption" in Baden and certain other small states bordering upon France. And at the moment when the third French Revolution, in 1848, at last carried Germany along with it, the redemption was far from being completed in Prussia, and in Bavaria had not even begun. After that, it went along more rapidly and unimpeded; the *corvée* labour of the peasants, who had this time become rebellious on their own account, had lost all value.

And in what did this redemption consist? In this, that the noble lord, on receipt of a certain sum of money or of a piece of land from the peasant, should henceforth recognise the peasant's land, as much or as little as was left to him, as the peasant's property, free of all burdens; though all the land that had at any time belonged to the noble lord was nothing but land stolen from the peasants. Nor was this all. In these arrangements, the government officials charged with carrying them out almost always took the side, naturally, of the lords, with whom they lived and caroused, so that the peasants, even against the

letter of the law, were again defrauded right and left.

And thus, thanks to three French revolutions, and to the German one, that has grown out of them, we have once again a free peasantry. But how very inferior is the position of our free peasant of today compared with the free member of the mark of the olden time! His homestead is generally much smaller, and the unpartitioned mark is reduced to a few very small and poor bits of communal forest. But, without the use of the mark, there can be no cattle for the small peasant; without cattle, no manure; without manure, no agriculture. The tax-collector and the officer of the law threatening in the rear of him, whom the peasant of today knows only too well, were people unknown to the old members of the mark. And so was the mortgagee, into whose clutches nowadays one peasant's holding after another falls. And the best of it is that these modern free peasants, whose property is so restricted, and whose wings are so clipped, were created in Germany, where everything happens too late, at a time when scientific agriculture and the newly invented agricultural machinery make cultivation on a small scale a method of production more and more antiquated, less and less capable of yielding a livelihood. As spinning and weaving by machinery replaced the spinning-wheel and the handloom, so these new methods of agricultural production must inevitably replace the cultivation of land in small plots by landed property on a large scale, provided that the time necessary for this be granted.

For already the whole of European agriculture, as carried on at the present time, is threatened by an overpowering rival, *viz.*, the production of corn on a gigantic scale by America. Against this soil, fertile, manured by nature for a long range of years, and to be had for a bagatelle, neither our small peasants, up to their eyes in debt, nor our large landowners, equally deep in debt, can fight. The whole of the European agricultural system is being beaten by American competition. Agriculture, as far as Europe

is concerned, will only be possible if carried on upon socialised lines, and for the advantage of society as a whole.

This is the outlook for our peasants. And the restoration of a free peasant class, starved and stunted as it is, has this value—that it has put the peasant in a position, with the aid of his natural comrade, the worker, to help himself, as soon as he once understands *how*.*

Written in mid-September-
first half of December 1882

Frederick Engels, *The
Peasant War in Germany*,
Moscow, 1965, pp. 131-48

* In the separate printing, released in 1883 under the title, *German Peasant. What Was He? What Is He? What Could He Have Been?*, Engels made the following addition: "But how?—By means of reviving the mark, not in its old, outdated form, but in a rejuvenated form: by rejuvenating common landownership under which the latter would not only provide the small-peasant community with all the prerogatives of big farming and the use of agricultural machinery, but will also give them means to organise, along with agriculture, major industries utilising steam and water power, and to organise them without capitalists by the community itself.

"To organise big farming and utilise agricultural machines means, in other words, to make superfluous the agricultural labour of most small peasants who today work their land themselves. And so that these people, made superfluous in agriculture, would not be left unemployed and would not have to go to towns and cities, it would be necessary to employ them in industry in the village itself, and that can only be profitably organised on a large scale with the aid of steam and water power.

"How to arrange this? Think well on it, German peasants. Only the *Social-Democrats* can help you."—*Ed.*

KARL MARX

From REPLY TO A LETTER FROM VERA
ZASULICH

(Draft)

Not all primitive communities are cast in the same mould. On the contrary, taken together they form a series of social groups, which differ both in character and age and denote successive evolutionary phases. The *Russian community* belongs to a type usually called *agricultural community*. Its equivalent in the West is the *German community*, which arose very late. It had not yet come into being in Caesar's time, and it did no longer exist when the Germanic tribes conquered Italy, Gaul, Spain, etc. As early as the time of Caesar arable land was divided annually among groups—*gentes* and *tribes*—but not yet among the separate families of the community, and cultivation was probably also carried on collectively by groups. In the German lands themselves this more archaic community developed in the natural course of events into the *agricultural community* as described by Tacitus. After that we lose sight of it. It vanished unnoticed during the incessant wars and migrations, and was perhaps destroyed by force. But its natural viability is proved by two incontestable facts. A few scattered examples of this type of community have survived all the vicissitudes of the Middle Ages and endured till the present day, e.g., in the region of Trier in my country. But the most important point is that the features of these "agricultural communities" are so clearly imprinted on the new community which arose on its basis that Maurer, who investigated the latter, was able to reconstruct the former. The new community, whose

arable land was the *private property* of the peasants, while woodlands, pastures, wasteland, etc. still remained *communal property*, was introduced by the Germans into all the countries they conquered. Owing to the characteristics the community took over from its prototype, it remained the sole centre of the liberty and the life of the people throughout the Middle Ages.

The "village community" is also found in Asia, among the Afghans, etc. but it always corresponds to *the most recent* pattern, and represents, so to speak, the most up to date *archaic social formation*. In order to emphasise this fact I am giving a number of details concerning the German community.

We must now examine the most characteristic features which distinguish the "agricultural community" from the older communities.

1) All other communities depend on ties of consanguinity between their members. Only real or adopted relatives belong to such a community. It has the structure of a family tree. The "agricultural community" is the first social group of free human beings not held together by ties of kinship.

2) The house and the farmyard belonging to it are the private property of the peasant in the agricultural community. *The communal house* and *collective dwelling*, on the other hand, constituted an economic basis of the more primitive communities, and this was the case long before pastoralism and farming arose. It is true that one finds agricultural communities where the occupants of the houses change periodically, though the houses are no longer collective habitations. Individual use is thus combined with common ownership. But these communities still show their birth mark, they represent a transitional stage between the more ancient community and the agricultural community properly speaking.

3) The arable land, which constitutes inalienable and common property, is periodically divided between the

members of the agricultural community in such a way that each one cultivates the fields allocated to him for his own account and appropriates their produce to himself. In the more primitive communities the work is performed in common and the common product is distributed in accordance with the needs of the consumers, except for a part reserved for reproduction.

It is understandable that the *dualism* inherent in the structure of the agricultural community can give it great vigour. Communal property in land and the social relations arising from it provide a firm basis for the agricultural community, which has been freed from the strong but restrictive ties of consanguinity, while the house and farmyard, which are the exclusive possession of the individual family, and small-scale farming together with private appropriation of the produce it yields give far greater scope to the individual than would have been compatible with the organisation of the more primitive communities.

But it is no less evident that in the course of time this dualism could become a source of disintegration. Quite apart from harmful influences coming from without, the community contains destructive elements within itself. Private ownership of land has already been introduced in the shape of a house with its farmyard, and this can be turned into a stronghold from which an attack upon communal land can be launched. Such things have happened. But the essential point is that work performed separately on small plots is the source of private appropriation. This leads to the accumulation of personal property, for example livestock, money, and sometimes even slaves or serfs. This movable property, which is beyond the control of the community and becomes the object of individual exchange, where trickery and chance play a considerable part, will put an increasing amount of pressure on the whole rural economy. This is the solvent that corrodes the original economic and social equality. It introduces heterogeneous elements into the community, which call

forth conflicting interests and passions capable of making inroads into the common ownership first of arable land and then of forests, pastures, wasteland, etc.; once these are converted into *communal appendages* of private property, they will be absorbed by the latter in the long run.

The agricultural community, which represents the last phase of the primitive social formation, is at the same time a transitional phase leading to the second formation, thus it is transitional between a society based on communal property and a society based on private property. The second formation comprises of course the series of societies which depend on slavery and servitude.

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French
Published in English for
the first time

FREDERICK ENGELS
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE EARLY HISTORY
OF THE GERMANS

CAESAR AND TACITUS

The Germans are by no means the first inhabitants of the territory in which they now live.* They were preceded by at least three races.

The oldest human remains in Europe have been found in a few strata of Southern England. It has not yet been possible to ascertain their exact age, but they probably fall between the two glacial periods of what is known as the Ice Age.

After the second glacial period, when gradually the climate grew warmer, man appears in the whole of Europe, North Africa and Southwest Asia including India together with the now extinct large pachyderms (mammoth, straight-toothed elephant, woolly rhinoceros) and beasts of prey (cave-lion, cave-bear) and also with still existing animals (reindeer, horse, hyena, lion, bison, aurochs). A very low cultural level is indicated by the tools belonging to this period: extremely crude stone knives, pear-shaped stone hoes or axes, which were used without a handle, scrapers to clean animal skins, awls, all made of flint, indicating roughly the stage of development of present-day Australian aborigines. The fragments of bones found up to now do not enable us to draw conclusions about the bodily structure of these men, whose wide distribution and cultural similarity everywhere suggest that this era lasted for a very long time.

* In this section I am mainly following Boyd Dawkins, *Early Man in Britain*, London, 1880. [Note by Engels.]

We do not know what became of these early palaeolithic men. In none of the countries where they existed, including India, have any human races survived that can be regarded as their present-day representatives.

The tools of these extinct men are usually found only in the lowest strata of deposits in the caves of Britain, France, Switzerland, Belgium and southern Germany. Above this, the lowest, culture stratum—and often separated from it by a thinner or thicker layer of limestone—we find another layer containing tools. These tools, which belong to a later period, are far more skilfully made and their material too is more varied. Although the stone instruments are still not polished, their design and execution are already more efficient. We find moreover arrow-heads and spearheads of stone, reindeer antler or bone; daggers and needles of bone or horn, necklaces of pierced animal teeth, etc. Some pieces are covered with very vivid drawings of animals, reindeer, mammoths, aurochs, seals, whales, also hunting scenes with nude humans, and we even find the beginnings of sculpture in horn.

While early palaeolithic men are accompanied by animals of predominantly southern origin, late palaeolithic men appear on the scene together with animals of northern origin—two still extant species of northern bear, the arctic fox, the glutton and the snowy owl. These men probably immigrated from the north-east together with the animals, and the Eskimos seem to be the last remainder of those men in the modern world. The tools of the two groups correspond entirely with one another not only in detail but also as regards their range, this applies to their drawings as well, and the food of the two groups is provided by almost exactly the same animals. Their way of life, as far as we have been able to establish it for the extinct race, tallies exactly.

These Eskimos, whose existence has so far only been proved north of the Pyrenees and Alps, have vanished from Europe. Just as in the last century, the American

Red Indians by waging a merciless internecine war forced the Eskimos back to the extreme North, so the newly emerging race seems to have gradually driven them back and finally exterminated them in Europe too, without intermingling with them.

This new race came from the south, at least to Western Europe, probably advancing from Africa into Europe at a time when the two continents were still linked by land-bridges both at Gibraltar and Sicily. These people had reached a considerably higher cultural level than their predecessors. They cultivated plants and had domestic animals (dogs, horses, sheep, goats, pigs, and cattle). They were familiar with hand pottery, spinning and weaving. Their tools, though still of stone, were manufactured with great care and for the most part well polished (they are called neolithic to distinguish them from the previous periods). Their axes have handles and can thus for the first time be used for woodcutting, and hence it becomes possible to hollow out tree trunks thus making boats that could be used to cross over to the British Isles, which were now separated from the mainland owing to the gradual sinking of the land.

In contrast to their predecessors, these people carefully buried their dead. Thus a sufficient number of skeletons and skulls has been preserved to enable us to determine their bodily structure. Their long skulls, small stature (the women average about 1.46 metres, the men 1.65 metres), low forehead, aquiline nose, heavy brows, delicate cheek-bones and moderate jaw-bones indicate a race whose last modern representatives seem to be the *Basques*. The neolithic inhabitants not only of Spain, but also of France, Britain and the whole region at least up to the Rhine very probably belonged to the Iberian race. Before the arrival of the Aryans⁹⁰ Italy too was inhabited by a similar small, black-haired race, it is difficult today to say how close its kinship to the Basques was.

Virchow has traced the long skulls of the Basques far into Northern Germany and Denmark, and the earliest

neolithic pile-dwellings on the northern slopes of the Alps belong to them as well.

On the other hand Schaaffhausen declares that a number of skulls found near the Rhine definitely belong to the Finnish, and in particular the Lappic type. And earliest history knows only the Finns as the northern neighbours of the Germans in Scandinavia and of the Lithuanians and Slavs in Russia. These two small, dark-haired races, one coming from the other side of the Mediterranean, the other direct from Asia north of the Caspian Sea, therefore seem to have met in Germany. The circumstances under which they met remain completely obscure.

After these different immigrations, finally—still in prehistoric times—followed the last large principal group of peoples, the *Aryans*, whose languages are grouped around Sanskrit, the most ancient of them. The earliest immigrants were the Greeks and Latins, who took possession of the two south-eastern European peninsulas, and presumably also the Scythians, who have now vanished, and who inhabited the steppes north of the Black Sea and were probably mainly related to the Medo-Persian tribes. Then followed the Celts. All we know about their migration is the fact that their route lay north of the Black Sea and through Germany. Their foremost groups penetrated into France, conquered the country up to the Garonne and even subjugated parts of Western and Central Spain. The ocean in one case, the resistance of the Iberians in the other, brought them to a halt, while behind them other Celtic tribes were still pressing forward from both sides of the Danube. There, at the very brink of the ocean and at the sources of the Danube, they are mentioned by Herodotus. But they must have arrived much earlier. Tombs and other findings in France and Belgium prove that when the Celts entered the country they had as yet no metal tools, but in Britain they used bronze tools from their very arrival. Hence between their conquest of Gaul and their migration to Britain a certain amount of time must

have passed during which the Celts, as a result of their trade with Italy and Marseilles, became familiar with bronze and began to use it.

Meanwhile, the Celtic tribes further back, who were themselves pushed by the Germans, were pressing forward with increasing force. Since the way forward was blocked a back flow in a south-easterly direction ensued, similar to the movement recurring later during the migrations of the Germanic and Slav tribes. Celtic tribes crossed the Alps, invaded Italy, Thrace and Greece, some of them perished and some settled down in the Po valley and in Asia Minor. At that time (-400 to -300*) we find the bulk of the Celts in Gaul up to the Garonne, in Britain and Ireland and north of the Alps, on both sides of the Danube up to the Main and the Riesengebirge, and perhaps even further. For although Celtic names for mountains and rivers are less frequent and more open to doubt in Northern Germany than in the south, it can hardly be assumed that the Celts should have chosen only the more difficult route through the mountainous south of Germany without at the same time using the more convenient way through the open plain of Northern Germany.

The previous inhabitants were only partially ousted by the Celtic immigration, and especially in the south and west of Gaul they still constituted the majority of the population, though they were an oppressed race, and the present-day population has inherited their bodily structure. The custom of yellowing their hair with soap, which prevailed both among the Celtic and the Germanic tribes in the territories they recently inhabited, shows that they ruled the dark-haired population they had found there. Fair hair was the sign of the ruling race and where as a result of intermarriage it had been lost they had recourse to soap.

* For the sake of brevity, I am using the negative sign in the manner of the mathematicians, to indicate dates *before* the present chronology. [Note by Engels.]

The Germans followed the Celts, and in this case we can, at least approximately, establish the time of their immigration with some degree of credibility. It could hardly have begun long before the year -400 and was not quite completed in Caesar's time.

The first reliable information about the Germans is given in Pytheas' account of his journey about the year -325. He sailed from Marseilles to the Amber Coast and mentions that Guttons and Teutons, undoubtedly German tribes, were living there. But where was that Amber Coast? One usually thinks only of East Prussia, and that the Guttons are said to have lived in the neighbourhood of that coast does certainly fit. But the dimensions given by Pytheas do not correspond to those of this area, whereas they match fairly well those of the large North Sea bay between the North German coast and the Cimbric Peninsula. The Teutons who are also said to have lived in the neighbourhood would likewise fit in there. There is also an Amber Coast on the west side of Schleswig and Jutland and a considerable trade in locally found amber is being carried on in Ringkjöbing even now. It seems moreover highly improbable that at so early a date Pytheas should have advanced so far into quite unknown waters, and furthermore that the very complicated voyage from the Kattegat to East Prussia should not only have been omitted from his very careful narrative, but that it would not have fitted in at all. Accordingly one would definitely have to support the opinion, first advanced by Lelewel, that Pytheas' Amber Coast must be situated on the North Sea, if it were not for his mentioning the Guttons, who can only be found on the Baltic Sea. Müllenhoff has taken an important step towards the removal of this last difficulty; he considers that the word Guttons is a distortion of Teutons.

Approximately in 180 B.C., the Bastarnae, undoubtedly Germans, appear on the lower Danube, and a few years later we meet them as mercenaries—the first lansquenets—

in the army of Perseus, King of Macedon, fighting against the Romans. They were wild warriors,

"men not suited to farming or to navigation, nor do they gain their livelihood by cattle-breeding, on the contrary, they go in for one kind of work and one art only—always to fight and to overcome whatever stands in their way".

It is Plutarch who gives us this, the first report on the way of life of a German tribe.⁹¹ We still find these Bastarnae north of the Danube, although in a more westerly region, several centuries later. The Cimbri and Teutons invaded the Celtic area of the Danube fifty years later; after being repulsed by the Boii, a Celtic tribe who lived in Bohemia, they marched in several groups towards Gaul, entered Spain, defeating one Roman army after the other, until finally Marius put an end to their migrations, which had lasted for almost twenty years, by annihilating their probably already decimated hosts—the Teutons in a battle at Aix-en-Provence (-102) and the Cimbri near Vercelli in Northern Italy (-101).

Caesar encountered two new Germanic armies in Gaul half a century later. First that of Ariovistus on the Upper Rhine, whose warriors comprised men from seven different tribes including Marcomanni and Suevi, and soon afterwards on the Lower Rhine the host of the Usipetes and Tencteri, who had left their former territory because they were harassed by the Suevi and after three years of wanderings had reached the Rhine. Both armies were defeated by the disciplined warfare of the Romans, but in the case of the Usipetes and Tencteri this was also due to the Romans committing a breach of contract. Dio Cassius speaks of an invasion of Thrace by the Bastarnae in the first years of Augustus' rule; they were defeated by Marcus Crassus on the Hebrus (now known as Maritsa). The same historian also mentions a migration of the Hermunduri, who for unknown reasons left their homeland at the beginning of our era and are said to have been allowed by the Roman

general Domitius Ahenobarbus to settle "in a part of the territory of the Marcomanni".⁹² These are the last migrations of that period. The consolidation of Roman power on the Rhine and the Danube checked them for a considerable time, but very many signs indicate that the peoples in the north-east, beyond the Elbe and the Riesengebirge, acquired permanent homesteads only much later.

These movements of Germanic tribes form the first act of the *Völkerwanderung* which, arrested by Roman resistance for three hundred years, surged irrepressibly across the two border rivers at the end of the third century, inundated Southern Europe and Northern Africa and ended only with the conquest of Italy by the Langobardi in 568—that is it ended only as far as the Germanic tribes were concerned, but the Slavs who came behind them kept moving for a considerable time. It was literally a migration of peoples. Whole tribes, or at any rate large sections of them, set out including women and children and their goods and chattels. Waggons covered with animal skins served as homes and provided transport for the women and children and their scanty household goods; the cattle were driven along. The men were armed and prepared to overcome all resistance and repulse surprise attacks; a warlike march during the day, and a war camp behind the barricade of waggons at night. These migrations must have involved enormous losses of life caused by constant fighting, hardship, hunger and disease. It was a life-and-death venture. If it was successful the survivors settled on alien land; if it failed the tribe which had set out disappeared from the face of the earth. Those who were not killed in the carnage on the battlefield perished in slavery. The Helvetii and their allies whose march was checked by Caesar counted at the start 368,000 people, including 92,000 capable of bearing arms; after their defeat by the Romans only 110,000 remained, and they were by way of exception sent back to their country by Caesar for political reasons. The Usipetes and Tencteri comprising 180,000

people crossed the Rhine, almost all of them were killed either during the fight or when fleeing. It is not surprising that entire tribes disappeared often without leaving a trace, during this long period of migration.

The conditions Caesar found on the Rhine correspond entirely to this unsettled way of life of the Germanic peoples. The Rhine was by no means a clear-cut boundary between Gauls and Germans. The Belgian-Gallic Menapii had villages and fields on the right bank of the Rhine in the region of Wesel, the Germanic Batavi on the other hand occupied the Meuse delta to the left of the Rhine, and the Germanic Vangiones, Tribocci and Nemetes lived in an area reaching roughly from Worms to Strasbourg—whether only since Ariovistus' time or even earlier is uncertain. The Belgians waged perpetual wars against the Germans, contested territory still existed everywhere. No Germans lived as yet south of the Main and the Erz Gebirge; only a short time had passed since the Suevi had driven the Helvetii from the territory between the Main, Rhine, Danube and the Bohemian Forest, and the Boii from Bohemia (Boihemum), which is still named after them. But the Suevi however had not occupied the land but turned its 600 Roman (150 German) miles* into a wilderness, which was to protect their southern flank. Further to the east Caesar mentions Celts (Volcae Tectosages) north of the Danube, where later Tacitus places the Germanic Quadi. It was only in Augustus' time that Maroboduus led his Suevian Marcomanni into Bohemia, while the Romans sealed off the area between the Rhine and the Danube by fortifications and settled Gallic peoples there. The territory beyond this boundary wall seems then to have been occupied by Hermunduri. This undoubtedly shows that the Germanic tribes entered Germany through the plain north of the Carpathians and of the Bohemian

* The Roman mile equals 1.5 km. and the German one, 7.42 km.
-Ed.

mountain chain. Only after they had occupied the lowlands in the north did they drive the Celts who lived further south in the mountainous area, across the Danube.

The way of life of the Germanic people, as described by Caesar, also proves that they had not yet become sedentary in their country. They lived primarily on the products of stock-breeding, cheese, milk and meat, and to a smaller degree grain. The chief occupation of the men was hunting and military exercises. They did also a little tilling but only as a sideline and in an extremely primitive manner. Caesar reports that they cultivated their field one year only and in the next year invariably ploughed up new land.⁹³ It seems to have been burn-beating, which is still practised in Northern Scandinavia and Finland. The forest—and apart from forest there were only swamps and peat bogs which at that time could not be used for cultivation—was burnt down, the roots were to some extent removed and also burnt together with the scarified top soil, and the seed was sown in the soil which had been fertilised by the ashes. But even if this was the case Caesar's statement that new fields were used each year is not to be taken literally and should be modified by adding that in general it was their custom to resort to new land after at least two or three harvests. The entire passage, the un-German division of the land by princes and officials and especially the motives he imputes to the Germanic people for the rapid changing of land are permeated by Roman concepts. This changing of land was quite inexplicable to the Romans. To the Germans in the Rhineland, who were already in a state of transition to permanent settlement, it may have seemed to be a custom which they had inherited and which was gradually losing its purpose and meaning. But on the other hand, for the Germans from the interior, for the Suevi who were just arriving at the Rhine, to whom it primarily applied, it was still an essential element of their way of life which enabled the whole tribe to move slowly ahead in the di-

rection and at the rate permitted by the resistance they encountered. Their constitution too was geared to this life. The Suevi were divided into a hundred districts, each of which annually provided one thousand men for the army, while the rest of the menfolk remained at home, looked after the livestock and the fields and in the next year took the place of those in the armed forces. The bulk of the people including the women and children followed the army only when it had conquered new territory. This is already a step towards a sedentary life compared with the campaigns at the time of the Cimbri.

A German custom, which Caesar mentions repeatedly, was to protect themselves from their enemies, i.e. any alien people, by wide stretches of impassable forests. This custom still prevailed even in the late mediaeval period. The Saxons on the northern Elbe were protected from the Danes by a forest (old Danish Jarnwidhr) running along the border between Eider and Schlei, and from the Slavs by the Sachsenwald which stretched from the Kiel Fjord to the Elbe; and the Slavonic name Brandenburg, Brani-bor, simply denotes such a protective forest (in Czech *braniti* means to defend, and *bor* both pine and pine forest).

Accordingly there can be no doubt about the stage of civilisation reached by the Germans whom Caesar met. They were certainly not nomads like the modern Asiatic tribes of horsemen. This requires steppes and the Germans lived in primaeval forests. But they were just as certainly not sedentary peasant people. Even sixty years later Strabo writes about them:

"What all these" (Germanic) "tribes have in common is the easiness with which they *migrate* because of their simple way of life, for they do not till the land and do not accumulate wealth, but live in huts which they can build in one day and they live mainly on the products of their livestock as the nomads do, and like the nomads they take their belongings with them in waggons and together with their herds they move wherever they like."⁹⁴

They had brought the knowledge of the cultivation of the soil with them from Asia, as comparative philology proves, and that they had not yet forgotten it is evident from Caesar. But the semi-nomadic warrior tribes who slowly rolled across the central European wooded plain used cultivation as a makeshift and a subordinate source of food.

It follows from this that in Caesar's time the immigration of the Germans into their new land situated between the Danube, the Rhine and the North Sea was not yet completed, or at any rate just about to be completed. This is by no means contradicted by the circumstance that at the time of Pytheas Teutons and perhaps also Cimbri may have reached Jutland, and the front rank of the Germans may have advanced to the Rhine—as one can infer from the absence of any information about their arrival. Their way of life which is compatible only with constant migration, their repeated westward and southward treks, and finally the fact that Caesar found the Suevi, the largest group known to him, still in full movement, permit only one conclusion: these were evidently the last moments of the great German migration into their principal European territory presented to us in a fragmentary form. It was the Roman resistance on the Rhine and later on the Danube that checked this migration, confining the Germans to the territory they occupied at the time and thus forcing them to settle permanently.

As for the rest our ancestors, as Caesar saw them, were real barbarians. They permitted merchants to come into their country only because they needed someone to buy their booty from them, but they themselves bought hardly anything from the merchants. And what foreign goods did they need? They even preferred their bad ponies to the beautiful and excellent Gallic horses. No wine at all was permitted to enter the country of the Suevi, because it was supposed to have an enfeebling effect. Their kinsmen, the Bastarnae were after all more civilised; during

their invasion of Thrace* they sent envoys to Crassus, who made them drunk, elicited the required information about the positions and plans of the Bastarnae and then lured the latter into an ambush and destroyed them. As late as the eve of the battle of Idisiavus (A.D. 16) Germanicus told his soldiers that the Germans fought without armour and helmet, equipped only with shields consisting of wickerwork or weak boards and only the first rank had real spears, those further back simply used sticks which were pointed and hardened in fire. Metal working therefore was hardly known to the people living along the Weser, and the Romans will have taken good care that merchants did not bring weapons into Germany.

Over a century and a half after Caesar, Tacitus gives us his famous description of the Germans. Many things had changed by then. The restless tribes had settled down permanently up to the Elbe and even beyond it. There could of course be no mention of towns for a long time to come. Some of them lived in villages, which sometimes consisted of separate farmsteads, and sometimes of adjoining farmsteads, but even in the latter case each house was built separately and surrounded by unoccupied land. The houses, as yet without any rubble-work or tiles, were crudely constructed from undressed trunks (*materia informi* must have this meaning here, in contrast to *caementa* and *tegulae*); they were log huts, of the type still found in Northern Scandinavia, but no longer huts that could be built in one day, as in Strabo's time. We shall return later to their agricultural system. The Germans already had subterranean store-rooms, a sort of cellar, in which they lived during the winter because it was warm there, and where according to Pliny the women were engaged in weaving. Tilling the land had thus become more important, but their principal wealth still consisted of livestock, which were numerous but of inferior breed, the horses

* See this book, p. 304.—Ed.

were ungainly and no racers, the sheep and cattle were small and the latter had no horns. Meat, milk and crab-apples are mentioned as food, but not bread. They no longer did much hunting, the game population must therefore have been considerably reduced since Caesar's time. Their clothing too was still very primitive, the bulk of the people wearing a coarse blanket, apart from that they were naked (almost like the Zulu Kaffirs). But the wealthiest already wore closely fitting garments; animal skins were also used; the women were dressed like the men but linen garments without sleeves were already found more frequently among them. All the children were running around naked. Reading and writing was unknown, but a passage indicates that the priests were already using runes, derived from Latin characters and carved in wooden rods. Gold and silver was of no particular interest to the Germans in the interior, silver vessels presented by Romans to German princes and envoys were used in the same way as earthenware. The small amount of trade they did was simple exchange.

The men still followed the custom—common to all primitive peoples—of considering work in house and field as unfit for men and leaving it to women, old men, and children. They had on the other hand acquired two civilised habits, drinking and gambling, and they carried on both with all the immoderation peculiar to raw barbarians, even going as far as gambling away their own freedom. In the interior they drank beer made of barley or wheat; if spirits had already been invented, the history of the world would perhaps have taken a different course.

Still more advances were made near the frontiers of the Roman territory, there they drank imported wine and had to some extent already got used to money, preferring of course silver, which was more convenient for their limited exchange, and—as is usual among barbarians—coins with long-familiar designs. How well-founded this precaution was, will be seen later. Commerce with the

Germans was carried on solely along the banks of the Rhine, and only the Hermunduri who lived beyond the palisaded ditch visited Gaul and Rhaetia for trading purposes.

Hence it is the period between Caesar and Tacitus that contains the first great phase of German history: the final transition from migratory life to permanent settlement, at least as regards the major part of the people, from the Rhine to far beyond the Elbe. The names of individual tribes begin to be, to some extent, associated with certain regions. But since the information given by the ancients is contradictory and since the names vary and change it is often impossible to assign a definite area to each tribe. This would moreover take us too far from our subject. The general statement which we find in Pliny will suffice here:

"There are five principal groups of German peoples: the *Vindili* to whom the Burgundians, Varini, Carini and Guttons belong; the *Ingaevones* form the second group, which includes the Cimbri, Teutons and Chauci. The *Istaevoines* including the Sugambri live close to the Rhine. The *Hermiones* comprising the Suevi, Hermunduri, Chatti and Cherusci, live in the centre of the country. The fifth group consists of the Peucini and Bastarnae, whose neighbours are the Dacians."⁹⁵

In addition there is a sixth branch, the Hilleviones, who live in Scandinavia.

Of all the information that has come down from the ancients this agrees best with later data and with the surviving linguistic remains.

The Vindili comprise the *Gothic*-speaking people, who lived between the Elbe and Vistula from the Baltic coast till far into the interior of the country, beyond the Vistula, the Guttons (Goths) had settled near the Frische Haff. The few remaining linguistic vestiges make it perfectly clear that the Vandals (who must certainly have belonged to Pliny's Vindili, for he gives their name to the entire group) and Burgundians spoke Gothic dialects. Uncer-

tainty can only arise regarding the Warni, or Varini, who are usually ranked among the Thuringians, on the basis of reports from the fifth and sixth centuries; we know nothing about their language.

The second group, the Ingaevones, first of all comprises the *Frisian*-speaking people, the inhabitants of the North Sea coast and the Cimbric Peninsula, and very probably also the Saxon-speaking people living between the Elbe and Weser, in which case the Cherusci should be included as well.

The Istaevones, since the Sugambri are classed with them, immediately stand out as the future Franks, the inhabitants of the right bank of the Rhine from the Tainus up to the sources of the Lahn, Sieg, Ruhr, Lippe and Ems, bounded in the north by Frisians and Chauci.

The Hermiones, or Herminones as they are more aptly called by Tacitus, are the future High Germans—the Hermunduri (Thuringians), Suevi (Swabians and Marcomanni, Bavarians), Chatti (Hessians), etc. It is quite indubitable that the Cherusci were placed here by mistake. This is the only definitely ascertained mistake which Pliny made in the entire account.

The fifth group, the Peucini and Bastarnae, has disappeared. Jacob Grimm is undoubtedly correct when he classes them among the Goths.

Finally the sixth group, the Hilleviones, comprises the inhabitants of the Danish islands and the large Scandinavian peninsula.

Pliny's classification thus corresponds with surprising accuracy to the disposition of the German tongues actually existing later. We know of no dialect that does not belong to the Gothic, Frisian-Low Saxon, Franconian, High German or Scandinavian languages, and even today we can accept this classification of Pliny as exemplary. The arguments that can perhaps be advanced against it, I shall examine in the note on the German tribes.*

* See this book, pp. 346-51.—*Ed.*

We therefore have to assume that the original immigration of the Germans into their new country proceeded approximately thus: first of all the Istaevones advanced in the centre of the North German plain, between the mountains in the south and the Baltic and North Sea, close behind them, but keeping closer to the coast, came the Ingaevones. These seem to have been followed by the Hilleviones, who however turned towards the islands. The Goths (the Vindili of Pliny) followed them, leaving behind the Peucini and Bastarnae in the south-east; the Gothic names in Sweden prove that some of their groups joined the migrating Hilleviones. Finally to the south of the Goths came the Herminones, and it was only during the time of Caesar or even Augustus that the bulk of them at any rate entered the territory where they remained up to the *Völkerwanderung*.

THE FIRST BATTLES WITH ROME

Romans and Germans confronted one another on the Rhine since Caesar's time, and on the Danube since Augustus conquered Rhaetia, Noricum and Pannonia. Roman rule had meanwhile been consolidated in Gaul. Agrippa had covered the whole country with a network of military roads, fortresses had been built, a new generation, born under the Roman yoke, had grown up. Gaul, which was directly connected with Italy by the Alpine roads across the Little and the Great St. Bernard built under Augustus, could serve as a basis for the conquest of Germania from the Rhine. Augustus entrusted this conquest, which was to be accomplished with the eight legions that were stationed on the Rhine, to his stepson (or real son?) Drusus.

Constant friction among the borderers, German incursions into Gaul, and an alleged or real conspiracy of dissatisfied Belgians with the Sugambri, who were to cross the Rhine and bring about a general uprising, served as a pretext. Drusus secured the assistance of the

Belgian chiefs, (-12), went across the Rhine above the delta, close to the Batavian Island, devastated the territory of the Usipetes and in part that of the Sugambri, sailed down the Rhine, compelled the Frisians to provide him with infantry reinforcements, and sailed with his fleet along the coast and into the Ems estuary in order to make war on the Chauci. But his Roman seamen, who were not used to tides, let the fleet run aground when the tide was out, and it was only with the help of his Frisian allies, who were more familiar with these matters, that he got it afloat again and sailed home.

This first campaign was merely a reconnaissance in force. Next year (-11) he really began the conquest. He crossed the Rhine, again below the influx of the Lippe, subdued the Usipetes who lived there, bridged the Lippe and invaded the territory of the Sugambri, who were just fighting against the Chatti because the latter refused to join an alliance against the Romans led by the Sugambri. He then built a fortified encampment Aliso at the confluence of the Lippe and the Eliso, and when winter approached he again withdrew across the Rhine. During this withdrawal his army was attacked by the Germans in a narrow ravine and could only with difficulty escape annihilation. In the same year he set up another fortified camp "in the land of the Chatti, close to the Rhine".⁹⁶

This second campaign of Drusus already contains the entire plan of conquest which was afterwards consistently carried out. The territory to be conquered first of all was fairly clearly demarcated, it was the part of the interior inhabited by the Istaevones up to the border with the Cherusci and Chatti, and the corresponding coastal strip up to the Ems, and perhaps up to the Weser. The conquest of the coastal region was for the main part left to the fleet. Mainz, which was founded by Agrippa and extended by Drusus, was to serve as the basis of operations in the south; and it is in the neighbourhood of Mainz that we have to look for the fortress which was built "in the land

of the Chatti" (people now believe that it is Saalburg near Homburg). From there the course of the lower Main leads to the open terrain of the Wetterau and the upper Lahn region, the occupation of which would separate the Istaevones from the Chatti. The flat country through which the Lippe flows and especially the low mountain ridge between the Lippe and the Ruhr in the centre of their offensive operations provided a most convenient line of advance for the main forces of the Romans, and by taking possession of this area they divided the country they intended to subjugate into two approximately equal parts and at the same time separated the Bructeri from the Sugambri. From this position they could on the left co-operate with the fleet, and on the right together with the column coming from the Wetterau, isolate the Istaevonian Slate Mountains, and keep the Cherusci in check in the centre. The fortress Aliso was the outermost fortified position on this front. It was situated near the sources of the Lippe, either at Elsen near Paderborn, where the Alme flows into the Lippe, or at Lippstadt, where a large Roman fortress has recently been discovered.

In the next year (-10) the Chatti, realising the danger that threatened them all, at last joined the Sugambri. But Drusus overran their country and forced them at least partially into submission. But this cannot have outlasted the winter, for in the next spring (-9) he again descended upon them advancing as far as the land of the Suevi (that is probably the Thuringians, or according to Florus and Orosius the Marcomanni, who at that time still lived north of the Erz Gebirge); then he attacked the Cherusci, crossed the Weser and turned back only at the Elbe. He devastated the entire territory through which he passed, but encountered fierce resistance everywhere. He died—at the age of thirty—on the way back, before reaching the Rhine.

We add to the above account, which is taken from Dio Cassius, that according to Suetonius, Drusus had a canal

dug from the Rhine to the Ijssel, through which he led his fleet across Friesland and the Flevo (the Vlie stream—now the channel between Vlieland and Terschelling which is an outlet of the Zuider Zee) to the North Sea; and that according to Florus Drusus built over fifty fortresses along the Rhine and a bridge near Bonn and that he also fortified the line along the Maas, thus securing the position of the legions on the Rhine both against Gallic revolts and against German invasions. Florus' tales about fortresses and fortifications along the Weser and Elbe are mere boasting. Drusus may have thrown up some entrenchments during his marches there, but he was too good a soldier to leave even one man behind to garrison them. On the other hand it seems certain that he equipped his line of operation along the Lippe with fortified posts. He also fortified the passes across the Taunus.

Drusus' successor on the Rhine, Tiberius, crossed the river in the following year (-8). The Germans, with the exception of the Sugambri, sent peace negotiators; Augustus, who was in Gaul, refused to negotiate so long as the Sugambri were not represented. When at last they sent envoys, "numerous and respected men", says Dio, Augustus had them seized and interned in various cities in the interior of the empire, "grief of this caused them to take their own life".⁹⁷ In the next year (-7) Tiberius again went with his army into Germania, where apart from a few small disturbances, there was very little for him to combat. Describing this period, Velleius says,

"Tiberius has subjugated the country" (Germania) "so thoroughly that it hardly differs from a tax-paying province."⁹⁸

This success was probably due not only to Roman arms and the often extolled diplomatic "skill" of Tiberius, but especially to the transplantation of Germans to the Roman bank of the Rhine. Already Agrippa had re-settled the Ubii, who were always faithful to the Romans, with their consent to the left bank of the Rhine near Co-

logne. Tiberius forced 40,000 Sugambri to emigrate and thus broke the resistance of this powerful tribe for a considerable time.

Tiberius then withdrew from all public affairs for some time, and for several years we hear nothing about events in Germany. A fragment of Dio's mentions an expedition of Domitius Ahenobarbus from the Danube to the Elbe and beyond. But soon afterwards, around the first year of our era, the Germans rose up in arms. According to Velleius, Marcus Vinicius, the Roman supreme commander, fought on the whole successfully against them and in recognition of his services he received several rewards. However in order to restore the weakened Roman rule, Tiberius had once more to cross the Rhine immediately after his adoption by Augustus in the year 4. He subjugated the Canninefates and Chatti who lived near the river, and then the Bructeri and "won over" the Cherusci. Velleius, who took part in this and the following campaign, gives no further details. Because of the mild winter the legions were able to operate till December, then they moved into winter quarters in Germany itself—probably near the sources of the Lippe.

The campaign in the next year (5) was designed to complete the subjugation of Western Germany. While Tiberius advanced from Aliso defeating the Langobardi on the Lower Elbe, the fleet sailed along the coast and "won over" the Chauci. On the Lower Elbe the land forces met the fleet, which was sailing up the river. It seemed, according to Velleius, that with the successes of this campaign the work of the Romans in the North had been completed. In the following year Tiberius went to the Danube, where the border was threatened by the Marcomanni, who led by Maroboduus had settled in Bohemia a short time ago. Maroboduus, who had been brought up in Rome and was familiar with Roman tactics, had organised an army of 70,000 foot-soldiers and 4,000 cavalrymen according to the Roman model. He was faced in the front

by Tiberius along the Danube, while Sentius Saturninus was to lead the legions from the Rhine through the country of the Chatti to the enemy's rear and flank. But at that moment the Pannonians in Tiberius' own rear revolted, and the army had to turn back to reconquer its basis of operation. The struggles continued for three years, but when the Pannonians were vanquished things in Northern Germany had changed to such an extent that the Romans could no longer think of conquering the land of the Marcomanni.

Drusus' plan of conquest had been retained in its entirety, and the land and sea campaigns up to the Elbe were simply required for its safe implementation. The idea of moving the boundaries to the Little Carpathians, the Riesengebirge and along the Elbe up to its estuary is discernible in the plan of operation against Maroboduus, but at the time it was still a distant prospect and soon it became quite impracticable. We do not know how far Roman fortified positions extended into the Wetterau at that time, it seems that this line of operation was neglected compared with the more important one along the Lippe, where evidently the Romans had firmly established themselves on a fairly large area. The plain on the right bank of the Rhine from Bonn downstream belonged to them. The Westphalian lowlands from the Ruhr northwards to the country beyond the Ems, up to the border of the Frisians and Chauci remained occupied by the army. The Batavi and Frisians in the rear were at that time still reliable friends. The Chauci, Cherusci and Chatti further to the west could be regarded as sufficiently subdued after their repeated defeats, and after the blow which they as well as the Langobardi suffered. And in any case there existed a fairly strong party among these three tribes which sought salvation only in association with Rome. For the time being the power of the Sugambri in the south was broken. A part of their territory, i.e., between the Lippe and the Ruhr and also in the Rhine

valley, was occupied, the rest was on three sides surrounded by Roman positions on the Rhine, on the Ruhr, and in the Wetterau, and Roman columns must certainly have often marched through it. Roman roads leading to the sources of the Lippe, from Neuwied to the Sieg, from Deutz and Neuss to the Wupper running along dominant mountain ridges at least as far as the borders of Berg and Mark have recently been discovered. Further away the Hermunduri, who with the assent of Domitius Ahenobarbus had occupied a part of the territory abandoned by the Marcomanni, maintained peaceful relations with the Romans. And finally in view of the well-known discord among the German tribes, the Romans were justified in expecting that they would only have to wage such separate wars as they themselves considered desirable in order to turn their allies step by step into subjects of Rome.

The hub of the Roman position was the country on both sides of the Lippe up to the Osning. It was here that the constant presence of the legions in fortified encampments accustomed the barbarians to Roman rule and Roman habits, thus, according to Dio, "apparently transforming" the barbarians.⁹⁹ Around the permanent military camps developed the towns and markets which the same historian mentions, and the peaceful relations obtaining within them contributed greatly to the consolidation of the foreign rule. Everything seemed fine, but things were to work out differently.

Quintilius Varus was appointed commander-in-chief of the troops in Germany. He was a Roman typical of the beginning decline, phlegmatic and easy-going, inclined to rest on the laurels of his predecessors, and even more to exploit these laurels for his own ends.

"Syria, which he had administered, proved that he certainly did not despise money, he was poor when he arrived in this rich country and was rich when he left it, a poor country" (Velleius).¹⁰⁰

Otherwise he had "a gentle nature", but this gentle

nature must have been greatly enraged by being transferred to a country where extortion was made so difficult, because there was hardly anything there worth taking. Varus nevertheless made the attempt, using a method customarily applied by Roman proconsuls and *propraetors*. The essential thing was as quickly as possible to organise the occupied part of Germany as a Roman province, to substitute Roman control for the local public authority which up to then continued to exist under military rule, and thus to turn the country into a source of income—for the public treasury as well as for the proconsul. Accordingly Varus tried "to transform the Germans with great speed and vigour", he "ordered them about as if they were slaves and demanded payments from them as if they were his subjects" (Dio).¹⁰¹ The well-tryed means of subjugation and extortion which he used there was the supreme judicial power of the Roman provincial governor which he arrogated to himself and by virtue of which he intended to impose Roman law on the Germans.

Varus and his civilising mission were unfortunately almost one and a half millennium ahead of history, for it took approximately that time to prepare Germany for the "acceptance of Roman law". Roman law with its classical dissection of private property relations must indeed have seemed quite preposterous to the Germans, who possessed the scanty private property their society produced only by virtue of their common property in land. The Germans, who were used to administer justice and pronounce sentence themselves according to established tradition in an open people's court in the course of a few hours, were bound to regard the solemn forms and challenges, and the constant adjournments of Roman litigation merely as means for denying justice, and the multitude of legal advisers and pettifoggers surrounding the proconsul as downright cut-throats, which they indeed were. And the Germans were now supposed to give up their free Thing, where a compatriot was judged by his

compatriots, and to submit to the decision of a single man, who conducted the proceedings in a foreign language, who at best based his judgment on laws that were quite unfamiliar to them and moreover completely inapplicable, and who was himself an interested party. The free German, whom according to Tacitus only the priest had the right to strike on rare occasions, who could forfeit life and limb only by committing treason against his people, but apart from that was able to expiate every offence, even murder, by a fine (*wergeld*), and who in addition was used to taking blood revenge for himself and his relatives—he was now to submit to the rods and the ax of the lictors. And all this merely to enable the Romans to suck the country dry, by means of taxes for the benefit of the public treasury, and by means of extortion and bribery for the benefit of the proconsul and his henchmen.

But Varus had miscalculated. The Germans were no Syrians. The Roman civilisation he had imposed on them impressed them only in one way. It simply showed the neighbouring tribes who had been compelled to join the alliance how unbearable a yoke awaited them as well, and thus forced the unity on them which they had previously failed to achieve.

Varus had three legions in Germany, *Asprenas* another two on the Lower Rhine, only five or six days' march from *Aliso*, the hub of the position. Only a sudden decisive stroke, which had however to be slowly and carefully prepared, was likely to succeed against such a force. Conspiracy therefore was the prescribed method. *Arminius* undertook to organise it.

Arminius, who belonged to the Cheruscan tribal nobility, was the son of *Segimerus*, apparently a tribal lord. He spent his early youth in the Roman military service, knew the language and customs of the Romans, and was a frequent and welcome guest in the headquarters of the Romans, whose loyalty was beyond all doubt. *Varus'*

trust in him was unshakeable even on the eve of the attack. Velleius describes him as

"a young man of noble descent, valiant and quick-witted, more so than most barbarians are, a young man whose face and eyes were radiant with spiritual ardour, who had been our constant companion during the previous campaigns" (that is against Germans) "and who in addition to Roman citizenship held the rank of a Roman knight".

But Arminius was more than all this, he was a great statesman and an outstanding general. Having decided to put an end to Roman rule on the right bank of the Rhine, he unhesitatingly employed all the requisite means. It was necessary to win at least the majority of the Cheruscan military nobility, who were already largely under the sway of Roman influence, and to involve the Chatti and Chauci in the conspiracy, and especially the Bructeri and Sugambri, who were directly subjected to the Roman yoke. All this required time, however much Varus' extortions had prepared the ground, and Varus had to be lulled into security during this time. They did this by playing on his favourite pursuit, the holding of courts of law, and fooled him completely. Velleius tells us,

"anyone who has not seen it himself will hardly believe that the Germans, although extremely savage, are utterly cunning people and born liars". The Germans "deluded him with a whole series of fictitious legal actions, sometimes they accused one another without cause, and sometimes they thanked him for deciding everything with Roman impartiality, and asserted that their savage nature was already beginning to abate as a result of the new and unaccustomed discipline and that matters which used to be settled by recourse to arms were now resolved in accordance with law and justice. Thus they lured him into extreme carelessness, to such an extent that he imagined he was a city praetor dispensing justice in the forum, and forgot he was commanding an army in the interior of Germany."¹⁰²

Thus the summer of the year 9 passed. To make success even more certain, they induced Varus to disperse

his troops by detailing off detachments for various purposes, this should not have been difficult in view of the character of the man and the circumstances.

As Dio says, "Varus did not keep his army properly together as one ought to do in a hostile country, he lent groups of soldiers to people who needed help and asked for it, either to guard a fortified place, to hunt for robbers, or to accompany grain transports".¹⁰³

In the meantime the main conspirators, and in particular Arminius and Segimerus, were constantly near him and often dined with him. According to Dio, Varus was already at that time warned, but his trust was quite unlimited. Finally in the autumn, when everything was ready for the attack and Varus with the bulk of his troops had been enticed into the land of the Cherusci as far as the Weser, the signal, a sham uprising some distance away, was given. Even when Varus received this news and gave orders for the departure, he was warned by another Cheruscan chief, Segestes, who seemed to have had a sort of clan feud with Arminius' family. But Varus did not believe him. Segestes thereupon suggested that Varus should put Segestes himself, Arminius and the other Cheruscan chiefs in irons before marching off, the result would show who was right. But Varus' confidence was unshakable, even though when he departed the conspirators stayed behind under the pretext of intending to rally allies and to join him then.

They did this indeed, but not as Varus expected. The Cheruscan warriors were already assembled. The first thing they did was to kill the Roman detachments stationed in their area, these detachments had been sent at their own request. They then attacked the marching columns of Varus in the flank. Varus moved along bad forest paths, for there were as yet no paved Roman military roads in the land of the Cherusci. When he was attacked he at last realised his position, pulled himself together and from then on acted like a Roman military leader, but it was too

late. He ordered his troops to close the ranks, to put the long train of women, children, vehicles, pack animals, etc., in order and to defend it as well as the narrow paths and the dense forests permitted, and moved towards his base of operation, which we have to assume was Aliso. Heavy rain made the ground sodden, impeded the march and again and again upset the orderly arrangement of the excessively large train. Varus, who suffered heavy losses, managed to reach a densely forested mountain, which nevertheless offered sufficient free space for a makeshift camp, and this was set up and fortified in fairly good order and according to the rules. Germanicus' army visiting the spot six years later could clearly recognise there "the fortifications of three legions".¹⁰⁴ With a determination proper to the situation, Varus had all vehicles and pieces of luggage not absolutely necessary burnt. On the next day he passed through open terrain, but again suffered considerable losses so that his troops were even more strung out and the camp in the evening could no longer be duly fortified. Germanicus found only a wall, which had partly collapsed, and a shallow trench. The course of the march on the third day lay again through wooded hills and there Varus and most of the leaders lost heart. Varus took his own life, the legions were almost totally annihilated. Only the cavalry, commanded by Vala Numonius, escaped. A few fleeing infantrymen seem to have also reached Aliso. Aliso itself held out for some time at least, for the Germans were not familiar with the proper battering technique. Either the entire garrison or some of the troops later fought their way through. The intimidated Asprenas seems to have confined his efforts to a short advance to meet them. The Bructeri, Sugambri and all the smaller tribes revolted and the Roman forces were once more thrown back across the Rhine.

There has been a great deal of discussion about the location of this campaign. It seems most likely that before the battle Varus was in the Rinteln basin, somewhere

between Hausberge and Hameln, and that the withdrawal, decided upon after the sham rising and the first attack, was made towards the Dören gorge near Detmold, which formed an even and wide pass through the Osning. This is in general also the traditional view, and concurs with the available sources and the military necessity of the strategic situation. Whether Varus reached the Dören gorge is uncertain, the fact that the cavalry broke through and perhaps also the vanguard of the infantry seems to indicate this.

The news of the destruction of the three legions and the uprising throughout the west of Germany struck Rome like a thunderbolt. People already saw Arminius crossing the Rhine and causing Gaul to revolt, and on the other side Maroboduus moving across the Danube and rousing the hardly pacified Pannonians to join him in an expedition across the Alps. And Italy was already so exhausted that it was scarcely able to provide any more soldiers. Dio tells us that only very few young men capable of bearing arms remained among the citizens, and the older ones refused to join, so that as a punishment Augustus confiscated their property and had even some of them put to death, in the end the Emperor managed to assemble a few makeshift units, consisting of freedmen and veterans, for the defence of Rome, then he disarmed his German bodyguard and expelled all Germans from the city.

But Arminius did not cross the Rhine and Maroboduus did not think of attacking, and Rome could thus indulge undisturbed in fits of rage against the "treacherous Germans". We have already seen that Velleius describes them as "utterly cunning people and born liars". Strabo does likewise. He does not speak of "German loyalty" and "French treachery", on the contrary, while he describes the Celts as "naive and guileless" and so simple-minded that they "rush into battle in full view of everybody and without any circumspection so that they make

it easy for their enemies to carry the day",¹⁰⁵ he says of the Germans:

"When dealing with them it was always advisable not to trust them, for those we trusted have caused great harm, e.g. the Cherusci in whose country, in violation of agreements, three legions together with their commander Varus perished in an ambush."¹⁰⁶

Not to mention the angry and vindictive poems of Ovid. One almost believes to be reading French writers of the most chauvinistic period who pour out vials of wrath up on Yorck's perfidy and the treachery of the Saxons at Leipzig.¹⁰⁷ The Germans got to know the honesty of the Romans and their loyal observance of agreements, when Caesar attacked the Usipetes and Tencteri while negotiations were carried on and an armistice was in existence; they came to know them when the envoys of the Sugambri were imprisoned by Augustus who had refused to negotiate with the German tribes unless these envoys were sent. Outwitting their enemies in every possible way is a characteristic common to all conquering peoples, and they think that this is perfectly all right, if however their enemies presume to do the same they call it disloyalty and treachery. But the means used to impose the yoke must also be granted to those who want to throw off the yoke. As long as there are exploiting and ruling nations and classes on the one hand and exploited and ruled ones on the other, the use of cunning as well as force will be necessary on both sides, and all sermonising against this will remain ineffective.

However childish the fantastic Arminius statue set up near Detmold may be—its only positive effect was to induce Louis Napoleon to set up an equally ridiculous and fantastic colossus of Vercingetorix on a mountain near Aliso [Sainte-Reine]—it remains correct that Varus' battle was one of the most important historical turning-points. It decided Germany's independence from Rome once and for all. Whether this independence was a great advantage

for the Germans themselves can be debated at great length and to no purpose, it is however certain that without it history as a whole would have taken a different course. And though the entire subsequent history of the Germans consisted in fact almost exclusively of a long series of national misfortunes—for the most part self-inflicted—so that even the most brilliant successes almost invariably turned out to be detrimental to the people, one must nevertheless say that then, at the beginning of their history, the Germans were undoubtedly fortunate.

Caesar had used the last vital forces of the dying republic to subjugate Gaul. The legions, which since Marius consisted of mercenaries, but still exclusively of Italic people, were since Caesar literally dying out, in the same measure as the Italic people themselves were dying out as a result of the rapidly spreading system of latifundia based on slave labour. The 150,000 men who constituted the compact infantry of the 25 legions could only be held together by the use of extreme means. The twenty-year period of service was not observed, veterans who had served their time were forced to remain on active service for an indefinite period. This was the main reason for the mutiny of the Rhenish legions after Augustus' death. The strange mixture of rebelliousness and discipline of this mutiny, which Tacitus so graphically describes, reminds one strongly of the mutinies of the Spanish soldiers of Philip II in the Netherlands, in both cases they demonstrated the firm structure of the army which realised that the ruler had broken his word. We saw that after Varus' battle Augustus tried, but without success, to reintroduce the old conscription laws, which had fallen into disuse long since, and that he had to fall back on soldiers who had already completed their service and even on freedmen—he had done this once before during the Pannonian revolt.¹⁰⁸ The possibility of recruiting free Italic peasant sons as replacements had vanished together with the free Italic peasants. Every new contingent sent to the army

lowered its quality. And since nevertheless these legions which, difficult though they were to maintain, formed the core of the whole military force, had to be conserved as much as possible the auxiliary troops were more and more placed in the forefront and had to fight the battles while the legions merely remained in reserve, so that as early as Claudius' time the Batavi could say, the provinces were conquered with the blood of the provinces.

With such troops, to whom old Roman discipline and staunchness became more and more alien, and therefore also the old Roman mode of combat, and who consisted to an increasing extent of men from the provinces, and in the end even mainly of barbarians not belonging to the empire—with such troops it was already then hardly possible to wage large-scale wars of aggression, and soon not even large-scale offensive battles could any longer be fought. The degeneration of the army restricted the state to defensive operations, which at first were still actively conducted but soon became more and more passive, until finally the focus of attack had altogether shifted to the German side, and an irresistible offensive across the Rhine and the Danube was launched along the entire line from the North Sea to the Black Sea.

Meanwhile it was imperative that the superiority of Roman arms was once more demonstrated to the Germans on their own territory, this was required even for the security of the Rhine border. With this end in view Tiberius hurried to the Rhine, by his personal example and stiff penalties he restored slackened discipline, reduced the train of the mobile army to the absolutely indispensable and marched in two expeditions through Western Germany (in the years 10 and 11). The Germans did not accept any decisive battles and the Romans did not dare to move into winter quarters on the right bank of the Rhine. Whether Aliso and the fort at the mouth of the Ems in the land of the Chauci had permanent garrisons even in winter is not mentioned, but seems likely.

Augustus died on August 14. The legions on the Rhine, which had neither been permitted to leave the colours after completing their period of service nor received the payment due to them, refused to recognise Tiberius and proclaimed Germanicus, son of Drusus, emperor. Germanicus quelled the rebellion, restored discipline among the troops and led them in three campaigns, described by Tacitus, into Germany. There he was confronted by Arminius, who proved that as a general he was completely equal to his adversary. He tried to avoid all decisive battles in open terrain, to impede the march of the Romans as much as possible and to attack them only in swamps and defiles, where they were unable to deploy their forces. But the Germans did not always follow his instructions. Their eagerness to fight often induced them to accept combats under unfavourable conditions, and lust for booty more than once saved the Romans who were caught in a trap. Germanicus thus won two futile victories, on the Idisiavisus and at the Angrivarian frontier wall, during his withdrawal he escaped with difficulty along narrow paths leading through swamps, lost a number of ships and men on the Frisian coast as a result of storms and flood-tides, and finally after the campaign of the year 16 he was recalled by Tiberius. This brought to an end the expeditions of the Romans into the interior of Germany.

But the Romans knew very well that one controls a river line only if one also controls the crossing to the other bank. Far from retreating passively behind the Rhine, the Romans moved their defences to the right bank. The Roman entrenchments, large groups of which cover the territory of the lower Lippe, the Ruhr and the Wupper, and which at least in some cases correspond to districts which existed later, and the military roads that lead from the Rhine to the County of Mark seem to indicate that a system of fortifications had been constructed there, whose route from the Ijssel to the Sieg corresponded to the present boundary between Franks and Saxons.

and apart from a few deviations to the boundary between the Rhine Province and Westphalia. It is presumably this system which, having evidently still retained some of its defensive capacity in the seventh century, prevented the advancing Saxons from reaching the Rhine and thus determined their present boundary with the Franks. The most interesting discoveries in this area have only been made during the last few years (by J. Schneider); further discoveries can therefore be still expected.

Gradually the great Roman frontier wall was further extended up the Rhine, especially under Domitian and Hadrian. It runs from below Neuwied over the Montabaur hills to the Ems, crosses the Lahn there, turns westward at Adolfseck, follows the northern slope of the Taunus encompassing Grüningen in the Wetterau, which forms its most northerly point, and proceeds from there in a south-easterly direction reaching the Main south of Hanau. From there the wall follows the left bank of the Main up to Miltenberg, then it runs in a straight line, broken only once, to the Rems near the Hohenstaufen castle in Württemberg. The wall—the construction of which was later continued, probably under Hadrian—turns here to the east and passing through Dinkelsbühl, Gunzenhausen, Ellingen and Kipfenberg reaches the Danube at Irnsing above Kelheim. Smaller entrenchments were situated behind the wall and further away were larger fortified sites serving as supporting points. Since the expulsion of the Helvetii by the Suevi, the area to the right of the Rhine thus enclosed—or at least the part south of the Main—which had been desolate, was according to Tacitus inhabited by Gallic vagabonds and camp-followers.

More peaceful and stable conditions were thus gradually brought about on the Rhine, the fortified wall and the Danube. Combats and raids continued but the territorial boundaries remained unchanged for several hundred years.

PROGRESS UP TO THE *VÖLKERWANDERUNG*

Written sources of information about conditions and events in the interior of Germany disappear after Tacitus and Ptolemy. But we obtain various other and much more vivid sources instead—discoveries of ancient remains in so far as they can be attributed to the period in question.

We have seen that trade between the Romans and the interior of Germany was almost non-existent in Pliny's and Tacitus' time. But we find nevertheless in Pliny an allusion to an old trade route, which was still occasionally used in his time, it led from Carnuntum (opposite the influx of the March into the Danube) along the March and Oder to the Amber coast. This route as well as another one through Bohemia and along the Elbe were probably used at a very early age by the Etruscans, whose presence in the valleys of the northern Alps has been attested by numerous finds, in particular those at Hallstatt.⁴⁰⁹ The invasion of Northern Italy by the Gauls is said to have put an end to this trade (about -400) (Boyd Dawkins). If this supposition is confirmed, one would have to assume that the Etruscan trade—mainly import of bronze articles—was carried on with the people who lived in the country on the Vistula and the Elbe before the Germans, that is probably with the Celts, and in that case the immigration of the Germans is likely to have contributed as much to the interruption of this trade as the return of the Celts to Italy. It seems that only after this disruption did the more eastern trade route, from the Greek cities on the Black Sea along the Dniester and the Dnieper to the vicinity of the Vistula estuary, come into use. Ancient Greek coins found near Bromberg, on the island of Ösel and elsewhere support this view; some of the coins were minted in Greece, Italy, Sicily, Cyrene, etc. in the fourth and perhaps the fifth century before our era.

The interrupted trade routes along the Oder and the Elbe were bound to be restored spontaneously as soon as

the migrating peoples settled down. It seems that in Ptolemy's time not only these but also several other routes across Germany were re-established, and when Ptolemy's evidence ends, the finds continue to speak.

Through careful classification of the finds in this region, C. F. Wiberg* has clarified many points and proved that the trade routes through Silesia down the Oder and through Bohemia down the Elbe were again in use in the second century of our era. As regards Bohemia Tacitus already mentions that

"avarice and lack of patriotism has led traders in booty and merchants" (*lixæ ac negotiatores*) "from our provinces into enemy territory and to Maroboduus' army camp".¹¹⁰

The Hermunduri, who maintained friendly relations with the Romans for a long time and, according to Tacitus, travelled unimpeded in the Tithelands and Rhaetia as far as Augsburg, will certainly also have helped to distribute Roman goods and coins from the upper reaches of the Main to the Saale and Werra. Traces of a trade route into the interior have also been discovered further along the Roman wall, on the Lahn.

The most important route seems to have remained the one through Moravia and Silesia. The watershed between the March, or Bečva, and Oder, the only one that has to be crossed, runs through open hilly country and always remains below 325 m above sea level, even now the railway passes that way. From Lower Silesia, the North German plain unfolds and allows roads to branch off in all directions towards the Vistula and Elbe. Roman merchants must have lived in Silesia and Brandenburg in the second and third centuries. We find not only glass vessels, lachrymal vases and funeral urns with Latin inscriptions

* *Bidrag till Kännedomen om Grekers och Romares förbindelse med Norden.* Deutsch von J. Mestorf: *Der Einfluß der klass[ischen] Völker*, etc. Hamburg, 1867. [Note by Engels.]

there (at Massel near Trebnitz in Silesia and elsewhere) but even entire Roman burial vaults with niches for cinerary urns (*columbaria*) (Nacheln near Glogau). Tombs which are indubitably Roman were also found near Warin in Mecklenburg. Find of coins, Roman metal-ware, earthenware lamps, etc., also show that trade went along this route. In fact the whole of Eastern Germany, although Roman armies never set foot there, is strewn with Roman coins and manufactures, the origin of the latter is frequently attested by the same trademarks as those occurring on articles found in the provinces of the Roman empire. Earthenware lamps found in Silesia bear the same trademark as lamps found in Dalmatia, Vienna, etc. For example two bronze vases, one found in Mecklenburg, another in Bohemia, are marked: *Ti. Robilius Sitalcis*, this indicates that one trade route went along the Elbe.

Moreover, Roman merchant ships sailed to the North Sea in the first centuries after Augustus. This is proved by the discovery at Neuhaus on the Oste (Elbe estuary) of 344 Roman silver coins from the reign of Nero to Marcus Aurelius and parts of a ship, which probably sank there. Ships also sailed along the south coast of the Baltic as far as the Danish Isles, Sweden and Gotland, we shall afterwards take a closer look at this traffic. The distances of various coastal points from each other which Ptolemy and Marcianus (about 400) mention can only be based on reports by merchants who sailed along those coasts. They extend from the coast of Mecklenburg to Danzig and from there to Scandia. This is proved finally by numerous other discoveries of Roman origin in Holstein, Schleswig, Mecklenburg, Western Pomerania, the Danish Isles and Southern Sweden: they were found in places that were situated close together and not far from the coast.

It is hardly possible to determine in how far this Roman trade also comprised import of arms into Germany. The numerous Roman weapons found in Germany can just as well have been taken as booty, and the Roman

authorities along the frontier will of course have done everything in their power to stop the supply of arms to the Germans. However some supplies may have arrived by sea, reaching especially the peoples living further away, e.g. those on the Cimbric Peninsula.

Other Roman goods which were brought to Germany along various routes were household utensils, jewellery, toilet articles, etc. Among the household utensils were bowls, gauges, beakers, vessels, pots and pans, sieves, spoons, scissors, and ladles made of bronze, there were some gold or silver vessels and earthenware lamps, which were widespread. There was jewellery of bronze, silver or gold consisting of necklaces, diadems, bracelets and rings, and clasps similar to our brooches. We find among the toilet requisites combs, tweezers, ear-picks, etc., not to mention articles whose use is uncertain. Most of these goods were, as Worsaae admits, produced under the influence of the taste prevailing in Rome in the first century.

There is a great difference between the Germans as described by Caesar, and also by Tacitus, and the people who used these articles, even if one acknowledges that only the more distinguished and richer families used them. The "simple food" which, according to Tacitus, the Germans consumed "without much preparation (*sine apparatu*) and seasoning to satisfy their hunger"¹¹¹ has been superseded by a cuisine which already employed a fairly complex equipment, and together with this equipment the requisite spices were probably also obtained from the Romans. The contempt for gold and silver has been replaced by the desire to adorn themselves with jewellery, and the indifference towards Roman money by its distribution throughout German territory. And especially the toilet requisites, the mere presence of these articles reveals a beginning transformation in the habits of a people that, so far as we know, invented soap, but were not able to find any other use for it than the yellowing of their hair.

In order to determine what the Roman traders received

from the Germans in exchange for all these coins and goods we must rely in the first place on information given by the ancients, and as we said, they have let us down almost completely. Pliny mentions that the empire imported vegetables, goosefeathers, woollen fabrics and soap from Germany. But that incipient trade along the border cannot provide a yardstick for later times.

An important item, as we know, was amber, but this is insufficient to explain the spread of commerce throughout the country. Cattle, which formed the Germans' principal wealth, will probably have also been the most important export item, and the legions posted on the border ensured that there was a strong demand for meat. Animal skins and furs, which in Jornandes' times were sent from Scandinavia to the estuary of the Vistula and from there into the Roman territories, certainly found their way there from the east German forests in earlier times as well. Wiberg thinks that Roman seafarers brought back wild animals for the circus from the North. But apart from bears, wolves and possibly aurochs they could find nothing there, and it was easier and simpler to get lions and leopards and even bears from Africa and Asia.

Finally and almost shamefacedly, Wiberg asks: perhaps slaves? and with that he has probably hit on the right thing. Apart from cattle, slaves were in fact the only item Germany could export in sufficient quantities to pay for her commercial transactions with Rome. The cities and latifundia of Italy alone consumed a huge multitude of slaves, who were able to propagate themselves only to a very insignificant extent. The entire economy of the large Roman estates presupposed an enormous supply of saleable prisoners of war, such as Italy obtained during the incessant wars of conquest waged by the declining republic and by Augustus as well. That had now come to an end. The empire was now on the defensive within fixed borders. Conquered enemies, who provided the bulk of the slaves, became more and more scarce in the Roman

armies. It was necessary to purchase them from the barbarians. Is it likely that under the circumstances the Germans should not have appeared on the market as sellers? The Germans, who, according to Tacitus, already then sold slaves (Germania, 24), who constantly waged war against each other, who, e.g. the Frisians, when they were short of money, paid their taxes by handing over their wives and children to the Romans to be turned into slaves, who as early as the third century, if not before, sailed across the Baltic and whose maritime expeditions into the North Sea—from the voyages of the Saxons in the third century to those of the Normans in the tenth—had mostly slave hunting as their direct aim, in addition to other types of piracy. Their hunt for slaves, moreover, was carried on almost exclusively for trading purposes. The same Germans were the foremost slave robbers and slave traders a few centuries later both during the *Völkerwanderung* and during their wars against the Slavs. We must either assume that the Germans in the second and third centuries were quite different from all the other neighbours of the Romans and quite different from their own descendants in the third, fourth and fifth centuries, or we must admit that they too participated extensively in the slave trade with Italy, a trade which at that time was regarded as quite decent and even creditable. Thus disappears the mysterious veil, which otherwise would have shrouded the German export trade of that period.

We must return here to the traffic along the Baltic Sea during those times. Although hardly any Roman finds have been made on the Kattegat coast, there are very many finds on the southern coast of the Baltic up to Livonia, in Schleswig-Holstein, on the southern rim and in the interior of the Danish Isles, and on the south and south-east coast of Sweden, Öland and Gotland. The great bulk of these finds belong to what is known as the denarius period,¹¹² which extends as far as the first years of Septimius Severus rule, that is approximately 200—we

shall examine this period later. Tacitus says already of the Suiones that they were strong because of their fleets of rowing vessels and adds that they held wealth in high regard, they must therefore have been engaged in maritime commerce even then. Navigation which was first developed in the Baltic, the Oresund and Ölandsund and in coastal shipping had to brave the high seas to include Bornholm and Gotland in its orbit. They must already have had considerable experience in handling vessels to establish the brisk traffic whose centre appears to have been Gotland, the island situated farthest from the Continent. In fact over 3,200 Roman silver denarii were found there up to 1873* compared with about 100 on Öland, hardly 50 on the Swedish mainland, 200 on Bornholm, 600 in Denmark and Schleswig (428 of these in a single find at Slagelse on Zealand). The examination of these finds shows that only very few Roman denarii came to Gotland before the year 161, when Marcus Aurelius became Emperor, but from then up to the end of the century large quantities arrived there. Baltic navigation must therefore have reached a considerable extent in the second half of the century. The fact that it already existed earlier is proved by Ptolemy's account, in which he states that the distance from the estuary of the Vistula to Scandia was 1,200 to 1,600 stadia (30 to 40 geographical miles). Both distances are approximately correct from the eastern tip of Blekinge and the southern tip of Öland or Gotland, depending on whether the measurement is taken from Rixhöft, Neufahrwasser or Pillau. These data can only be based on information obtained from sailors, and this applies likewise to the other distances he mentions along the German coast up to the Vistula estuary.

The fact that firstly the notions of the Romans about Scandinavia are all very hazy and secondly that no Roman

* Hans Hildebrand, *Das heidnische Zeitalter in Schweden*. Deutsch von Mestorf, Hamburg, 1873. [Note by Engels.]

coins have been found on the Kattegat and in Norway indicates that navigation on the Baltic was not carried on by the Romans. The Cimbric promontory (Skagen), which the Romans reached under Augustus and from where they saw the boundless sea stretch in front of them, seems to have remained the limit reached by their maritime navigation. Accordingly the Germans themselves must have sailed the Baltic and carried on trade there thus bringing Roman money and Roman goods to Scandinavia. And it could really not have been otherwise. The maritime expeditions of the Saxons to the coast of Gaul and Britain began quite suddenly in the second half of the third century, and they displayed such daring and confidence which they could not have acquired overnight, but which on the contrary presupposed a long and intimate knowledge of navigation on the high seas. And the Saxons—as we use this term here it includes all the tribes of the Cimbric Peninsula, that is also Frisians, Angles and Jutes—could have gained this knowledge only on the Baltic Sea. This large inland sea, without tides, where the southwesterers from the Atlantic only arrive after largely spending themselves over the North Sea, this long basin with its many islands, bays and straits, where when crossing from shore to shore one is out of sight of land only for a short time at most, seems almost to have been especially designed as a training ground for navigation in its early stages. Even the Swedish rock paintings ascribed to the Bronze Age with their numerous representations of rowing boats indicate that shipping here dates back to times immemorial. The find in the Nydam bog in Schleswig has presented us with a boat which is 70 feet long, eight to nine feet wide, made of oak planks at the beginning of the third century and quite suitable for sailing the high seas. It was there that the shipbuilding technique was quietly developed and the nautical experience accumulated which later enabled the Saxons and Normans to undertake their expeditions across the high seas in

search of conquests, and as a result of which the Germanic people are at the head of all seafaring peoples in the world up to the present time.

The Roman coins which were brought to Germany up to the end of the second century were predominantly silver denarii (1 denarius=1.06 mark). And moreover, as Tacitus informs us, the Germans preferred the old, well-known coins with serrated edge and the imprinted design of a two-horse chariot. Among the older coins many of these *serrati bigatique* have in fact been found. These old coins contained only 5 to 10 per cent copper. Trajan already ordered that 20 per cent copper be added to the silver, the Germans seem not to have noticed this. But when Septimius Severus increased the copper admixture to 50-60 per cent from 198 onwards, the Germans thought that this went too far, the later inferior denarii are hardly ever encountered in the finds, the import of Roman money ceased. It was resumed only after Constantine had established the gold solidus (72 solidi to the Roman pound of 327 gr. of fine gold, i.e. 1 solidus=4.55 gr. fine=12.70 marks) as the monetary unit in 312, and it is predominantly gold coins, solidi, that from then on reach Germany, but even more Öland and especially Gotland. The solidus period, the second period in which Roman money was imported, continues as far as Western Roman coins are concerned to the end of the Western Empire, and as regards Byzantine coins up to Anastasius (died 518). The finds occur mostly in Sweden, the Danish Isles and a few on the Baltic coast of Germany, they are very rare in the interior of Germany.

But the counterfeiting of coins by Septimius Severus and his successors is insufficient to explain the sudden interruption of trade between the Germans and Romans. There must have been other reasons as well. One was evidently the political situation. The German aggressive war against the Romans began early in the third century, and about 250 it flared up along the entire line from the estu-

ary of the Danube to the Rhine delta. No normal trade could of course exist under these circumstances between the belligerents. But these sudden and persistent wars of aggression which broke out everywhere must themselves be explained. They were not due to internal conditions in Rome, on the contrary the resistance the empire still put up was everywhere successful, and between periods of wild anarchy it still produced powerful emperors, especially at this time. The attacks therefore must have been caused by changes which took place within Germany. And in this case too the finds provide an explanation.

Finds of exceptional importance were made in two peat bogs in Schleswig in the early sixties of this century. They were carefully excavated by Engelhardt of Copenhagen and after some wanderings they have now been deposited in the Kiel museum. What distinguishes them from other similar finds is the presence of coins, which allow us to determine their date fairly reliably. One find, from the Taschberg (or Thorsbjerg, as the Danes call it) bog near Süderbrarup, contains 37 coins from Nero to Septimius Severus, the other, from the Nydam bog, an inlet of the sea which silted up and became peaty, contains 34 coins from Tiberius to Macrinus (218). There can therefore be hardly any doubt that the finds belong to the period between 220 and 250. They contain however not only articles of Roman origin, but also numerous others which were manufactured in Germany, and since they have been almost completely preserved by the ferruginous water of the bog, they give a surprisingly clear indication of the state of the metal industry, weaving, shipbuilding and, owing to runic inscriptions, also of the use of writing in Northern Germany during the first half of the third century.

And the industrial level attained is even more surprising. The fine fabrics, the elegant sandals and the well made harness show a far higher cultural stage than that of the Germans in Tacitus' times. But the most astonishing are the locally made metal goods.

Comparative philology has demonstrated that the Germans brought a knowledge of the use of metal with them from their homeland in Asia. It is possible that they also possessed a knowledge of the extraction and processing of metal, but it is hardly probable that they still had it when they encountered the Romans. At any rate there is no suggestion in the writers of the first century that iron or bronze was extracted or worked up between the Rhine and the Elbe, they seem rather to imply the contrary. Tacitus does indeed say that the Gotones (in Upper Silesia?) were mining iron, and Ptolemy asserts that their neighbours, the Quadi, had iron works; both tribes may again have acquired a knowledge of the smelting process from the peoples of the Danube. Moreover the finds which are attested by coins to date from the first century never contain locally made iron goods but only Roman ones, and why should large quantities of Roman metal articles have been brought to Germany, if a local metal-working industry had existed there? It is true that old foundry moulds and incomplete and scrapped bronze castings have been found in Germany but never accompanied by coins that could confirm their age. In all probability they are remnants of a pre-German period, vestiges of the activity of itinerant Etruscan bronze casters. Incidentally there is no point in asking whether the Germans who immigrated had *entirely* lost the art of metal-working, all the facts indicate that actually they did not, or practically did not, manufacture metal goods in the first century.

Then suddenly the finds of the Taschberg bog come to light disclosing an unexpectedly high level of the local metal industry. There are buckles, metal plates used as mountings decorated with animal and human heads, a silver helmet providing a complete frame for the face leaving free only eyes, nose and mouth, coats of mail consisting of wire mesh, which required extremely assiduous work, for the wire had first to be hammered out (wire-drawing was not invented till 1306), a golden headring,

not to mention other objects whose local origin may appear doubtful. The pieces found here are matched by others discovered in the Nydam bog and also by finds in bogs in Fyn, and finally by a Bohemian find (Hořovice) excavated likewise in the early sixties, it contains magnificent bronze discs with human heads, buckles, etc., very similar to those of Taschberg, and therefore presumably belonging also to the same period.

From the third century the metal industry must have increasingly improved its performance and spread through the entire German territory: by the time of the *Völkerwanderung*, say the end of the fifth century, it had reached a relatively very high level. Not only iron and bronze but gold and silver too were constantly worked up, the gold bracteates were imitations of Roman coins, base metals were gold-plated, there is also inlaid work, enamel and filigree. Whereas the shape of the whole article is often clumsy, one finds very ingenious and tasteful decorations, which only partially follow Roman examples—this applies especially to buckles and clasps as well as fibulae, among which certain characteristic forms are widespread. The British Museum displays clasps from Kerch on the Sea of Azov side by side with similar ones found in Britain, they could have been made in the same factory. The style is basically the same, though often with strong peculiarities, from Sweden to the Lower Danube and from the Black Sea to France and Britain. This, the first period of the German metal industry disappears on the Continent with the end of the *Völkerwanderung* and the general conversion to Christianity; in Britain and Scandinavia it continues a little longer.

The tribal laws show how widespread these industries were among the Germans in the sixth and seventh centuries and to how large an extent they had already become separate trades. Blacksmiths, sword makers, goldsmiths and silversmiths are frequently mentioned, the Alemanic law even speaks of smiths who were publicly tested

(*publice probati*). The Bavarian law imposes higher penalties for theft committed in a church, the ducal court, a smithy or a mill "because these four buildings are public houses and are always open". The Wergeld of a goldsmith is under Frisian law 25 per cent higher than that of other people of the same social estate. According to Salic law an ordinary serf is worth 12 solidi, but one who is a smith (*faber*) 35 solidi.

We have already spoken of *shipbuilding*. The vessels found at Nydam are rowing boats, the larger one, built of oak, is intended for fourteen pairs of oarsmen, the smaller one is made of pine wood. Oars, rudders and scoops were still inside. It seems that only after the Germans began to navigate the North Sea as well, did they take over the use of sails from the Romans and Celts.

The Germans were familiar with *pottery* as far back as Tacitus' time, but probably only hand pottery. The Romans had large potteries near the frontier, and especially in Swabia and Bavaria within the frontier wall, and Germans were also employed there as the workers' names burnt into their manufactures prove. These men will have brought the knowledge of glass flux and of the potter's wheel as well as a more advanced technique into Germany. The Germans who crossed the Danube also learned to manufacture glass; glass vessels, coloured glass beads and glass insertions in metal articles of German origin are frequently found in Bavaria and Swabia.

Finally we see that the runic script was then widely known and used. The Taschberg find contains the scabbard of a sword and a shield inscribed with runes. We find the same type of runes on a gold ring found in Wallachia, on clasps from Bavaria and Burgundy and finally on the oldest rune stones of Scandinavia. This is the larger runic alphabet, from which the Anglo-Saxon runes later evolved, it contains seven more letters than the nordic runes, which later predominated in Scandinavia, and indicates an older linguistic form than the oldest Norse pre-

served. Incidentally it was an extremely clumsy script, derived from Roman and Greek characters and modified in such a way that they could be easily inscribed (written) on stone or metal and especially wooden rods. The rounded forms had to give way to angular shapes, only vertical or oblique strokes were possible, no horizontal ones, because of the grain of the wood, and it was just this which made the script exceedingly unwieldy when writing on parchment or paper. In fact as far as we can judge, it was used almost exclusively for ritual and magical purposes and for inscriptions and probably also for other short communications. As soon as the need for a script suitable for books arose, for instance among the Goths and later the Anglo-Saxons, it was discarded and a new adaptation of the Greek and Roman alphabets was made and only a few runic characters were retained.

Finally, the Germans must also have made considerable advances in farming and stock-breeding during the period under discussion. This was imperative because they had adopted a settled way of life, and the enormous increase in population, which spilt over during the *Völkerwanderung*, would have been impossible without these advances. Many sections of primæval forest must have been cleared, and most of what are known as "high fields"—stretches of forest showing traces of ancient cultivation—in so far as they are situated in regions that were then German, probably date from that period. There is of course no special proof. But the fact that as early as the close of the third century Probus preferred German horses for his cavalry, and that the large white cattle—which ousted the small black cattle of the Celts from the Saxon regions of Britain—was introduced there by the Anglo-Saxons, as is asserted now, indicates a complete revolution in stock-breeding, and hence also in farming among the Germans.

The result of our analysis is that the Germans had made substantial advances in civilisation in the period from Caesar to Tacitus, but that they advanced much faster from Tacitus to the beginning of the *Völkerwanderung*, approximately 400. Commerce reached them and brought them Roman industrial products and thus at least to some extent Roman needs; it called forth an industry of their own, which though following Roman patterns nevertheless developed quite independently. The finds in the Schleswig bogs represent the first chronologically determinable stage of this industry, the finds from the time of the *Völkerwanderung* the second stage, which shows a higher level of development. A peculiar feature moreover is that the western tribes are definitely more backward than those living in the interior and especially on the Baltic coast. The Franks and Alamanni and later still the Saxons produce metal goods of lower quality than do the Anglo-Saxons, Scandinavians and the peoples that migrated from the interior—the Goths on the Black Sea and the lower Danube, and the Burgundians in France. The influence of the old trade routes from the middle course of the Danube along the Elbe and Oder is quite unmistakable in this respect. At the same time the inhabitants of the coast became adept shipbuilders and daring sailors. The population increased rapidly everywhere and the territory, hemmed in by the Romans, was no longer sufficient. New migrations of tribes looking for land first began in the far east, until finally the surging mass flooded into new territories from all directions, by land and by sea.

NOTE—THE GERMAN TRIBES

It was only along a few routes and during a short time that Roman armies reached the interior of Greater Germany, and even then they went only as far as the Elbe. Merchants and other travellers came only rarely and did not penetrate far into the interior up to Tacitus' times.

No wonder that information of this country and its inhabitants is so scanty and contradictory, it is more surprising that even such an amount of reliable information has reached us.

As regards the sources themselves, the two Greek geographers can be used without reservation only when there is independent confirmation. Both relied on book learning, they collected—and in their way and according to their means also critically examined—material which for the most part has not reached us. They had no personal knowledge of the country. Strabo makes the Lippe—well known to the Romans—flow parallel with the Ems and Weser into the North Sea instead of into the Rhine and he is sufficiently honest to admit that the country beyond the Elbe is completely unknown. Whereas he tries to get rid of the contradictions in his sources and his own doubts by means of a naive rationalism, which often reminds one of the beginning of this century, Ptolemy, the scientific geographer, attempts to assign mathematically determined areas within the inflexible grid of his map to the various German tribes mentioned in his sources. Magnificent as Ptolemy's work as a whole is for his time, his geography of Germania is misleading. In the first place the information available to him is mostly vague and contradictory and frequently even wrong. Secondly however his map is distorted, rivers and mountain ranges are to a large extent entered quite incorrectly. It is just as if a Berlin geographer who had not travelled at all felt obliged to fill in the blank space on a map of Africa, say in 1820, by reconciling the information given in all sources since Leo Africanus and determining the course of every river and every mountain range and allocating a particular territory to every tribe. Such attempts to achieve the impossible are bound to increase the errors of the sources used. Thus Ptolemy puts down many tribes twice, the Laccobardi on the lower Elbe and the Langobardi from the middle course of the Rhine to that of the Elbe, he speaks

of two Bohemias, one inhabited by Marcomanni, the other by Bainochaimi, etc. While Tacitus says explicitly that no cities existed in Germania, Ptolemy, hardly 50 years later, is already able to mention 96 place names. Some of these names may really have been place names. Ptolemy seems to have collected much information from merchants, fairly large numbers of whom already visited Eastern Germany at that time, and they came to know the names which gradually became established of the places they visited. How others arose shows the example of a town allegedly called Siatutanda, that is how our geographer construed Tacitus' words: *ad sua tutanda*,* which he probably saw in a badly written manuscript. We find at the same time information of surprising accuracy and the greatest historical value. For instance, Ptolemy is the only one of the ancients who places the Langobardi, though under the distorted name Laccobardi, just in the spot where even today Bardengau and Bardenwic testify to their presence, and also the Ingrions in Engersgau where even today there is Engers on the Rhine near Neuwied. And he is again the only one who lists the Lithuanian Galindi and Suditi, whose names continue to exist even now in the East Prussian districts of Gelünden and Sudauen. Cases like this, however, only prove his great knowledge, not that his other data are correct. To make matters worse the text, especially with regard to the main point, the names, is terribly corrupted.

The Romans remain the most direct sources, particularly those who themselves visited the country. Velleius served as a soldier in Germany and he writes like a soldier, roughly in the same way as an officer of the *grande armée* would write about the campaigns of 1812 and 1813. His account does not even enable us to establish the localities of the military events, this is not surprising in a country without towns. Pliny too had served as a cavalry

* For its protection.—Ed.

officer in Germany and among other places he had visited the Chaucian coast, he also described all the wars waged against the Germans in twenty volumes, and these were used as a source by Tacitus. Pliny moreover was the first Roman who took a theoretical interest in the things he saw in the country of the barbarians, and not merely a political and military interest. His account of the German tribes must therefore be considered as specially important, since it is based on the personal investigations of Rome's scholarly encyclopaedist. It is customary to assert that Tacitus was in Germany, but I have found no proof. In any case in his time he would have been able to collect first-hand information only near the Rhine and the Danube.

Two classic works, Kaspar Zeuss' *Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme* and Jacob Grimm's *Geschichte der deutschen Sprache* have unsuccessfully attempted to bring the tribal charts of [Tacitus'] *Germania* and of Ptolemy into harmony with each other and with the jumble of other data provided by the ancients. What these two scholars of genius, and others since then, failed to achieve can probably be regarded as impossible with the means at present available to us. The inadequacy of these means is demonstrated by the very fact that these two scholars are obliged to construct wrong auxiliary theories; Zeuss asserting that Ptolemy ought to have the last word in all controversial questions, although no one has described Ptolemy's basic errors better than Zeuss himself; Grimm that the forces that overthrew the Roman empire must have arisen on a broader basis than the territory between the Rhine, Danube and Vistula, and hence that together with the Goths and Dacians the greater part of the land to the north and north-east of the lower Danube has to be considered German. The assumptions of both Zeuss and Grimm are now regarded as obsolete.

Let us try to bring at least some clarity into the matter by restricting the task. If we succeed in making a gen-

eral arrangement of the tribes under a few principal groups, we shall have provided a secure basis for future detailed research. In this context a passage of Pliny gives us a clue, the consistency of which has been increasingly confirmed in the course of this investigation, and which at any rate leads to fewer difficulties and entangles us in fewer contradictions than any other.

It is true that if we take Pliny as the starting point we have to abandon the theory that Tacitus' triad and the old myth of Ing, Isk and Ermin, the three sons of Mannus, are absolutely applicable. But in the first place, Tacitus himself does not know what to do with his Ingaevones, Istaevones and Herminones. He does not make the slightest attempt at arranging the individual tribes, enumerated by him, in those three principal groups. And secondly nobody succeeded later in doing this. Zeuss tries hard to force the Gothic tribes, whom he regards as Istaevones, into the triad, and thus merely brings about an even greater confusion. He does not even attempt to include the Scandinavians and establishes them as the fourth principal group. But the triad is thereby just as much violated as by Pliny's five principal groups.

Let us make a detailed examination of these five groups.

I. *Vindili, quorum pars Burgundiones, Varini, Carini, Guttones.**

Thus we have three tribes, Vandals, Burgundians and Goths, of whom we know firstly, that they spoke Gothic dialects, and secondly that they lived in Eastern Germania at that time, the Goths near, and beyond the estuary of the Vistula, the Burgundians according to Ptolemy in the Warta region up to the Vistula, and the Vandals, according to Dio Cassius (who calls the Riesengebirge after them) in Silesia. All the tribes whose dialects are traced by

* The Vindili to whom the Burgundians, Varini, Carini and Guttons belong.—*Ed.*

Grimm back to the Gothic can be definitely ascribed to this group, which we shall call *Gothic* after their language, this applies first of all to the areas—and also the Vandals—that are directly associated by Procopius with the Gothic language. We know nothing of their previous homeland, nor of that of the Heruli, who together with the Skiri and Rugii are also regarded by Grimm as Goths. The Skiri are placed by Pliny on the Vistula, the Rugii by Tacitus on the coast close to the Goths. The Gothic-speaking people accordingly occupied a fairly compact territory between the Vandal mountains (Riesengebirge), the Oder and the Baltic Sea up to the Vistula and beyond.

We do not know who the Carini were. Some difficulty is caused by the Varini. Tacitus mentions them together with the Angles among the seven tribes who offered sacrifices to Nerthus, already Zeuss mentions quite correctly that their appearance was peculiarly Ingaevonian. The Angles, however, were regarded by Ptolemy as Suevi, which is obviously wrong. Zeuss thinks that one or two distorted names used by the same geographer denote the Varini and accordingly he places them in Havelland and together with the Suevi. The heading of an old tribal code of laws simply identifies the Varini with the Thuringians, but the law itself is common to the Varini and the Angles. For all these reasons it remains doubtful whether the Varini have to be regarded as Goths or as Ingaevones, and since they have completely vanished, the question is of little importance.

II. *Altera pars Ingaevones, quorum pars Cimbri, Teutoni ac Chaucorum gentes.**

Pliny thus assigns in the first place the Cimbric Peninsula and the coastal land between the Elbe and the Ems to the Ingaevones. Of the three tribes named the Chauci were undoubtedly closely related to the Frisians.

* The Ingaevones form the second group, which includes the Cimbri, Teutons and Chauci.—*Ed.*

Even today Frisian is the prevalent language on the North Sea, in Dutch West-Friesland, in Saterland (in Oldenburg), and in North Friesland (in Schleswig). At the time of the Carolingians, Frisian was spoken almost exclusively in the whole coastal region from Sinkfal (the bay which even today marks the border between Belgian Flanders and Dutch Zeeland) to Sylt and Widau in Schleswig and probably considerably further north; the Saxon tongue reached the sea only on both sides of the estuary of the Elbe.

Cimbri and Teutons are for Pliny evidently the people who lived in the Cimbric Peninsula at that time, and who therefore belonged to the Chaucian-Frisian language group. Accordingly we can agree with the view of Zeuss and Grimm that the North Frisians are direct descendants of the oldest German inhabitants of the peninsula.

It is true that Dahlmann (*Geschichte von Dänemark*) asserts that the North Frisians migrated from the southwest to the peninsula only in the fifth century. But he produces no evidence whatever, and his statement was with good reason entirely disregarded in all later investigations.

According to this, Ingaevonic is identical with Frisian, in the sense that we call the entire group after the language of which alone we have old relics and dialects which continue to be used. But does this demarcate the full extent of the Ingaevonian group? Or is Grimm justified when he includes in it the whole of what he, not quite accurately, describes as Low German, that is in addition to the Frisians also the Saxons?

Let us admit from the beginning that Pliny has given the Saxons an entirely wrong position by regarding the Cherusci as belonging to the Herminones. We shall see later that the only thing to do is in fact to class the Saxons too with the Ingaevones, and therefore to define this principal ethnic group as the Frisian-Saxon group.

This is the right place to speak of the Angles, who are

regarded perhaps by Tacitus and certainly by Ptolemy as Suevi. The latter places them on the right bank of the Elbe, opposite the Langobardi; if the statement is to be correct at all, it can only refer to the *real* Langobardi on the lower reaches of the Elbe. Accordingly the territory of the Angles stretched from Lauenburg to approximately the Prignitz. We find them later in the peninsula itself, where their name is still preserved and from where they together with the Saxons migrated to Britain. Their language became then an element of Anglo-Saxon and in fact the distinctly *Frisian* element of this newly arisen language. This fact alone—whatever may have happened to the Angles who remained in, or moved to, the interior of Germany—forces us to rank the Angles with the Ingaevones, and indeed with their Frisian branch. The entire vocalism of Anglo-Saxon—a vocalism which is far more Frisian than Saxon—is due to the Angles, and also the fact that the further development of this language is in many cases strikingly similar to that of the Frisian dialects. Of all continental dialects the Frisian ones are today closest to the English language. Thus the transformation of guttural sounds into sibilants in English is caused not by French but by Frisian influence. The English *ch-ċ* instead of *k*, and the English *dž* for *g* before soft vowels can very well have developed from Frisian *tz*, *tj* for *k*, and *dz* for *g*, but not from the French *ch* and *g*.

We must also include the Jutes together with the Angles in the Frisian-Ingaevonian group, irrespective of whether they already lived in the peninsula at the time of Pliny or Tacitus, or migrated there later. Grimm thinks that their name is identical with that of the Eudoses, one of the tribes worshipping Nerthus who are mentioned by Tacitus. If the Angles are Ingaevones, it is difficult to assign the other tribes of this group to a different branch. In that case the territory of the Ingaevones extended as far as the Oder estuary, and the gap between them and the Gothic tribes has been closed.

III. *Proximi autem Rheno Iscaevones (alias Istaevones), quorum pars Sicambri*.*

Already Grimm and others following him, e.g. Waitz, more or less identify Istaevones with Franks. But what disconcerted Grimm was their language. All German documents of the Frankish empire since the middle of the ninth century are written in a dialect which cannot be distinguished from Old High German. Grimm therefore assumes that Old Frankish disappeared abroad and was replaced by High German at home, and thus in the end he classes the Franks with the High Germans.

Grimm himself states that his analysis of the linguistic remnants still existing has shown that Old Frankish was an independent dialect lying halfway between Saxon and High German. This is sufficient for the time being, a closer investigation of the Frankish language, regarding which there is still a great deal of uncertainty, must be reserved for a separate note.

It is true that the territory allotted to the Istaevones is relatively small for one of the principal German groups, and especially for one that played such an important role in history. It follows the Rhine from the Rheingau, extending into the interior of the country up to the sources of the Dill, Sieg, Ruhr, Lippe and Ems, in the north it is cut off from the sea by Frisians and Chauci, and in addition the area near the estuary of the Rhine is interspersed with remnants of other tribes, belonging mostly to the Chatti: Batavi, Chattuari, etc. The Germans dwelling on the left of the lower Rhine belong also to the Franks; whether Tribocci, Vangiones and Nemetes as well is questionable. The small size of this territory was due to the fact that the expansion of the Istaevones was resisted on the Rhine by the Celts and since Caesar by the Romans, while the Cherusci had already settled in their rear, and

* The Iscaevones (or Istaevones) including the Sugambri live close to the Rhine.—Ed.

their flank was to an increasing extent hemmed in by Suevi and in particular Chatti, as Caesar attests. The constant penetration across the Rhine, first by conquering bands and later by groups settling voluntarily in Roman territory, e.g. the Ubii, proves that for the conditions prevailing in Germany, a relatively large population was crowded together in a small space. For the same reason it was here, and only here, that at an early stage the Romans could without difficulty transfer substantial sections of Istaevonic tribes to Roman territory.

The note on the Frankish dialect will demonstrate that the Franks constitute a separate German group, which is subdivided into several tribes, and speak a distinct dialect, which consists of various idioms, in short that they have all the characteristics of a principal Germanic group, and can accordingly be said to be identical with the Istaevones. Everything that needs to be said about the individual tribes belonging to this principal group has already been said by Jacob Grimm. In addition to the Sugambri, he includes in this group the Ubii, Chamavi, Bructeri, Tencteri, and Usipetes, that is the tribes living in the territory on the right bank of the Rhine which we have earlier called Istaevonic.

IV. *Mediterranei Hermiones, quorum Suevi, Hermunduri, Chatti, Cherusci.**

Jacob Grimm already identifies the Herminones, to use Tacitus' more accurate spelling, with the High Germans. The term Suevi, which according to Caesar comprised all High Germans as far as he knew them, begins to acquire a distinct content. Thuringians (Hermunduri) and Hessians (Chatti) appear as separate tribes. The other Suevi remain still undivided. If for the time being we leave aside the numerous mysterious names which vanished already during the following centuries and cannot be explored, the Suevi

* The Hermiones comprising the Suevi, Hermunduri, Chatti and Cherusci, live in the centre of the country.—*Ed.*

must still have comprised three big High German groups which later played a role in history: the Alamanni-Swabians, the Bavarians and the Langobardi. The Langobardi, we know this well, lived on the left bank of the lower Elbe, in the region of the Bardengau, separate from the rest of their tribesmen, in an advanced position surrounded by Ingaevonic peoples. Their isolated position, which they had to maintain in protracted fights, is admirably described by Tacitus without however understanding its cause. The Bavarians, as we also know since Zeuss and Grimm, lived under the name of Marcomanni in Bohemia. The Hessians and Thuringians lived in their present territories and the neighbouring southern areas. Since Roman territory began to the south of the Franks, Hessians and Thuringians, the only place left for the Swabians-Alamanni is that between the Elbe and Oder, in the present Mark Brandenburg and the kingdom of Saxony, and we find a Suevian people there, the Semnones. The Swabians-Alamanni were presumably identical with them and adjoined the Ingaevones in the north-west and Gothic tribes in the northeast and east.

So far everything has been going fairly smoothly. But Pliny regards the Cherusci too as Herminones, and this is definitely a mistake. Even Caesar clearly separated them from the Suevi, among whom he also places the Chatti. In Tacitus too there is nothing about the Cherusci belonging to any High German tribe. Nor in Ptolemy, who even includes the Angles among the Suevi. The mere fact that the Cherusci occupied the land between the Chatti and Hermunduri in the south and the Langobardi in the north-east is certainly not a sufficient reason for concluding that there was close tribal kinship, although it may have been precisely this which misled Pliny.

So far as I know, no scholar whose opinion is of any importance has regarded the Cherusci as High Germans. Thus there remains only the question whether they are Ingaevones or Istaevones. The few names which have

come down to us have Frankish characteristics, *ch* instead of the *h* used later in Cherusci, Chariomerus and *e* instead of *i* in Segestes, Segimerus, Segimundus. But almost all German names which reached the Romans from the Rhine area seem to have been transmitted to them by the Franks in a Frankish form. Moreover, we do not know whether the guttural aspirate of the first consonant shift, which the Franks pronounced *ch* as late as the seventh century, was in the first century perhaps pronounced *ch* by all west Germans and only later weakened to *h* which is now common to all of them. In other ways too we cannot find any tribal affinity between the Cherusci and Istaevones, such as for instance the fact that the remnants of the Usipetes and Tencteri who escaped from Caesar were taken in by the Sugambri. The territory on the right bank of the Rhine which was garrisoned by the Romans in Varus' time and treated as a province likewise coincides with that inhabited by the Istaevones-Franks. Aliso and the other Roman strongholds were situated there, whereas of the Cheruscan country only the strip between Osning and Weser seems to have been actually garrisoned; beyond that lived the Chatti, Cherusci, Chauci, and Frisians, more or less unreliable allies, kept in check by fear, but who were autonomous in the management of their internal affairs and exempt from permanent Roman garrisons. When the Romans encountered fairly strong resistance in this area, they always temporarily halted their advance at the tribal boundary. Caesar had done likewise in Gaul. He stopped on the Belgian border and crossed it only when he thought that he could be sure of what is known as the truly Celtic part of Gaul.

Hence there is nothing for it but, in agreement with Jacob Grimm and the commonly held view, to regard the Cherusci and the smaller neighbouring tribes closely related to them as belonging to the Saxon group and therefore to the Ingaevones. This is also supported by the fact that it is precisely the old Cheruscan territory where the

old Saxon *a* has been best preserved as against the Westphalian *o* of the plural genitive and the weak masculine declension. All difficulties are thereby removed. The Ingaevones, like all other groups, receive a fairly self-contained territory, into which only the Herminonic Langobardi protrude a little. Of the two large sections of this group, the Frisian-Anglian-Jutish one occupied the coast and at least the northern and western part of the peninsula, the Saxon one lived in the interior of the country and perhaps even then in a part of Nordalbingien, where Ptolemy soon afterwards mentions the Saxons for the first time.

V. *Quinta pars Peucini, Basternae contermini Dacis.**

The little we know of these two tribes and also their name Basternae mark them as kinsmen of the Goths. That Pliny lists them as a separate group is probably due to the fact that he received his information about them through Greeks from the Lower Danube, whereas his knowledge of the Gothic tribes on the Oder and Vistula was gained on the Rhine and the North Sea, and the connection between Goths and Basternae therefore eluded him. Both the Basternae and Peucini were German tribes who stayed behind near the Carpathians and the estuary of the Danube; they continued to wander around for a considerable time and helped to prepare the ground for the great empire of the Goths, which later arose and in which they disappeared.

VI. The Hilleviones, a collective name under which Pliny lists the Germanic Scandinavians, are mentioned by me merely for form's sake and in order to state once more that all ancient writers only allotted the islands (among which they counted Sweden and Norway as well) to this principal group, and that they excluded it from the Cimbric Peninsula.

* The fifth group consists of the Peucini and Basternae, whose neighbours are the Dacians.—*Ed.*

Thus we have five principal Germanic groups and five principal dialects.

Gothic, in the East and North-east, has *ê* in the plural genitive of the masculine and neuter declension and *ô* and *ê* in the feminine; the weak masculine has *a*. Taking into account the sound shift, the inflected verb forms of the present (indicative) are still very close to those of the cognate languages, especially Greek and Latin.

The Ingaevonic in the north-west has *a* in the plural genitive and also *a* in the weak masculine; all three persons in the plural of the present indicative have *d* or *dh* and have shed all nasal sounds. The group is divided into two main branches, the Saxon and the Frisian, which merge again in the Anglo-Saxon.

The Scandinavian group, which adjoins the Frisian branch, has *a* in the plural genitive and *i*—which is a modification of *a* as the whole declension shows—in the weak masculine. The original *s* of the second person singular has been changed to *r* in the present indicative, the first person plural retains *m*, the second person *dh*, the other persons are more or less deformed.

In contrast to these three groups we have two southern ones: the Istaevonic and the Herminonic, or as they were later called the Frankish and High German groups. Both have *o* in the weak masculine, and very likely also *ô* in the plural genitive, although this has not been proved in the Frankish dialect, and the plural accusative ends in *as* in the oldest western (Salic) documents. The present conjugations of the two dialects, in so far as we can verify this for the Frankish, are very similar and, like the Gothic, close to the cognate languages. But their entire linguistic development, beginning with the very substantial and archaic peculiarities of the oldest Frankish and ending with the great differences which exist between the two dialects today, prevents us from lumping the two dialects together; just as the entire historical development of the two peo-

ples themselves precludes us from placing them into the same principal group.

The reason for considering only inflected forms and not the interrelation of sounds in this investigation is that substantial changes occurred in the latter—at any rate in many dialects—between the first century and the time our oldest linguistic records were drawn up. I need only point to the second sound shift in Germany; the alliteration in the oldest songs of Scandinavia shows how greatly the language changed in the interval that elapsed between their composition and their recording. The work that has still to be done in this respect will no doubt be done by professional German philologists, here it would merely have unnecessarily complicated this essay.

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FREDERICK ENGELS

From THE FRANKISH PERIOD

THE RADICAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE RELATIONS OF LANDOWNERSHIP UNDER THE MEROVINGIANS AND CAROLINGIANS

The mark system remained the basis of nearly the entire life of the German nation till the end of the Middle Ages. Eventually, after an existence of one and a half millennia, it gradually disintegrated for purely economic reasons. It became the victim of economic advances for which it was no longer an adequate form. We shall later examine its decline and ultimate destruction and we shall see that remnants of the mark system continue to exist even today.

But it was only at the cost of its political importance that it could survive for so long. For centuries it was the embodiment of the freedom of the Germanic tribes, then it became the basis of the people's bondage for a thousand years. How was this possible?

The oldest community, as we have seen, comprised the whole people. Originally the people owned all the appropriated land. Later the whole body of inhabitants of a district, who were closely interrelated, became the owners of the territory in which they had settled, and the people as such retained only the right to dispose of the tracts which had not yet been claimed. The inhabitants of the district in their turn handed over their fields and forests to individual village communities, which likewise consisted of closely kindred people, and in this case too the land that was left over was retained by the district. The same procedure was followed when the original villages set up new

village colonies—they were provided with land from the old mark by the parent village.

As a result of the increasing population and the further development of the people the ties of consanguinity, on which here as everywhere the entire national structure was based, were more and more forgotten.

This happened first of all with regard to the people as a whole. The common descent was less and less regarded as real kinship; the memory of it became weaker and weaker and what remained was merely the common history and the dialect. On the other hand, the inhabitants of a district naturally retained an awareness of their consanguinity for a longer time. The people thus consisted of a stronger or weaker confederation of districts. This seems to have been the state of affairs reached by the Germans at the time of the *Völkerwanderung*. Ammianus Marcellinus reports this definitely about the Alamanni and in the tribal laws it is still everywhere apparent. The Saxons were still at this stage of development during Charlemagne's time and the Frisians until they lost their independence.

But the migrations on Roman soil destroyed the consanguinity of the district and were bound to destroy it. Although the intention was to settle according to tribes and kindreds, it was impossible to carry this through. The long marches had thrown into disarray not only tribes and kindreds but also entire peoples. It was only with difficulty that the consanguinity of individual village communities could be maintained, and these became thus the real political units of which the people consisted. The new districts on Roman territory were from the start, or soon became, judicial divisions set up more or less arbitrarily—or occasioned by conditions found already in existence.

The people thus disintegrated into an association of small village communities, between which there was either no economic connection, or hardly any, for every mark was self-sufficient, it produced enough to satisfy its own needs and the goods moreover which the various marks

in the neighbourhood produced were almost invariably the same. Hardly any exchange could therefore take place between them. And since the people consisted entirely of small communities, which, although they had the same economic interests, had for that very reason no common economic interests, the continued existence of the nation depended on a political authority which was not based on these communities but confronted them as something alien and exploited them to an ever increasing extent.

The form of this political authority depends in its turn on the form of the communities at the time in question. Where, as among the Aryan peoples of Asia and the Russians, it develops at a time when the fields are still cultivated by the community on behalf of the whole collective, or when at any rate the fields are only temporarily allocated to individual families, i.e. when there is as yet no private property in land, the political authority appears as despotism. On the other hand, in the Roman countries which were conquered by the Germans, the individual shares in arable land and meadows had, as we have seen, already been converted into allodial holdings, the owners' free property subject only to the ordinary mark obligations. We must now examine how on the basis of this allodium a social and political structure arose, which—with the usual irony of history—in the end caused the disintegration of the state and completely abolished allodium in its classical form.

Allodium made the transformation of the original equality of landed property into its opposite not only possible but inevitable. From the moment it was established in the previously Roman territory, the German allodium became a commodity, which Roman landed property, which existed side by side with the German, had been for a long time. It is an inexorable law of all societies based on commodity production and commodity exchange that the distribution of property within them becomes increasingly unequal, the opposition of wealth and poverty constantly

grows and property is more and more concentrated in a few hands. It is true that this law reaches its highest stage of development in modern capitalist production, but it is by no means only in it that this law begins to operate. From the moment therefore that allodium, landed property which can be freely sold, landed property as commodity, developed, from that moment the development of large-scale landed property was merely a matter of time.

But in the period we are concerned with, the principal branches of production were farming and stock-breeding. Landed property and its products constituted the by far largest part of wealth at that time. Other types of movable wealth that existed then followed landed property as a matter of course, and gradually accumulated in the same hands as landed property. Industry and commerce, which had already deteriorated during the decline of the Roman empire, were almost completely ruined by the German invasion. The little that was left was for the most part carried on by serfs and aliens and remained a despised occupation. The ruling class which, with the growing inequality in wealth, gradually arose could only be a class of big landowners and rule politically as an aristocracy. Though, as we shall see, political factors, violence and deceit contributed frequently, and as it seems even predominantly, to the formation and development of this class, one should nevertheless not forget that these political factors only advanced and accelerated an inevitable economic process. We shall indeed see just as often that these political factors impeded economic development; this happened quite frequently and invariably when the different parties concerned used them for opposite ends or ends that ran counter to each other.

How did this class of big landowners come into being?

First of all we know that even after the Frankish conquest a large number of big Roman landowners remained in Gaul, whose estates were for the most part cultivated

by free or enthralled copyholders against payment of rent (canon).

Furthermore we have seen that as a result of the wars of conquest the monarchy had become a permanent institution and a real power among all emigrant Germans, and that the land which had formerly belonged to the people had been turned into a royal domain and that the lands belonging to the Roman state had likewise been appropriated by it. These crown lands were constantly augmented by the wholesale seizure of the estates of so-called rebels during the many civil wars resulting from the division of the empire. But however rapidly these lands increased, they were just as rapidly squandered in donations to the church and to private individuals, Franks and Romans, retainers (antrustions) and other favourites of the king. Once the rudiments of a ruling class comprising the big and the powerful, landlords, officials and army leaders had formed during and because of the civil wars, local rulers tried to purchase their support by grants of land. Roth has conclusively proved that in most cases these were real grants, transfer of land which became free, inheritable and alienable property, until this was changed by Charles Martel.*

When Charles seized the reins of government, the power of the kings was completely broken, but the power of the major-domos, the mayors of the palace, had by no means replaced it. The class of grandees, created under the Merovingians at the expense of the crown, furthered the ruin of monarchical power in every way, but certainly not in order to submit to the rule of the major-domos, their compeers. On the contrary the whole of Gaul was, as Einhard says, in the hands of these

* P. Roth, *Geschichte des Beneficialwesens*, Erlangen, 1850. One of the best books written in the period before Maurer, from which I have borrowed a certain amount in this chapter. [Note by Engels.]

"tyrants, who wanted to arrogate to themselves power everywhere" (*tyrannos per totam Galliam dominatum sibi vindicantes*).¹¹³

This was done not only by secular grandees but also by bishops, who appropriated adjacent earldoms and duchies in many areas, and were protected by their immunity and the strong organisation of the Church. The internal disintegration of the empire was followed by incursion of enemies from abroad. The Saxons invaded Rhenish Franconia, the Avars Bavaria, and the Arabs moved across the Pyrenees into Aquitania. Merely to quell the internal enemies and expel the external enemies could not solve this situation in the long run. A method had to be found of binding the humbled grandees, or their successors who had been appointed by Charles to take their place, more firmly to the crown. And in order to bring this about, a complete transformation of property relations was primarily required, for their power was up to then based on large-scale landed property. This transformation was the principal achievement of the Carolingian dynasty. The distinctive feature of this transformation is that the method chosen to unite the empire, to tie the grandees permanently to the crown and thus to make the latter more powerful, in the end led to the complete impotence of the crown, the independence of the grandees and the dissolution of the empire.

To understand why Charles chose this method, we must to start with examine the property relations of the church at that time. They can in any case not be passed over in silence here since they were an essential element of the contemporary agrarian conditions.

The church owned considerable landed property in Gaul even during the Roman era, and the revenue from this was further increased by its substantial privileges with regard to taxes and other obligations. But it was only after the conversion of the Franks to Christianity that the golden age began for the church in Gaul. The kings vied with one

another in making donations of land, money, jewels, church utensils, etc., to the Church. Already Chilpéric used to say (according to Gregory of Tours):

"See how poor our treasury has become, all our wealth has been transferred to the Church."¹¹⁴

The donations exceeded all bounds under Gunthram, the darling and servant of the priests. Thus the confiscated lands of free Franks who were accused of rebellion became largely the property of the church.

Like master like man, like king like people. The small man and the big one went out of their way to give presents to the church.

"A miraculous cure of a real or imagined ailment, the fulfilment of an ardent wish, e.g. the birth of a son, or deliverance from danger, brought the church, whose saint had proved to be helpful, a gift. It was deemed the more necessary to be always open-handed as both among high and low the view was widespread that gifts to the church led to the remission of sins." (Roth, p. 250.)

To this has to be added the immunity which protected the property of the church at a time of constant civil wars, looting and confiscation. Many a small man thought it advisable to cede his property to the church provided he retained its usufruct against payment of a moderate rent.

But even all this was not sufficient for the pious priests. They used threats of the eternal torments of hell virtually to extort more and more donations, so that as late as 811 Charlemagne reproaches them with this in the Aachen Capitulary¹¹⁵ adding that they induce people

"to commit perjury and to bear false witness, so as to increase your (the bishops' and abbots') wealth".

Unlawful donations were obtained by hook or by crook in the hope that quite apart from its legal privileges, the church had sufficient means to cock a snook at the judiciary. There was hardly any Galic church council in the sixth and seventh centuries that did not threaten to ex-

communicate anybody trying to contest donations to the church. In this way they hoped to make formally invalid donations valid, and to safeguard the private debts of individual clerics against recovery.

"One can see how truly contemptible were the means constantly employed to arouse the desire for making donations. When descriptions of celestial bliss and infernal torment were no longer effective, relics were brought from distant parts, translations were arranged and new churches built; this was literally a business branch in the ninth century." (Roth, p. 254.) "When the emissaries of the St. Medard monastery in Soissons, who had by much assiduous begging in Rome obtained the body of Saint Sebastian and had in addition stolen that of Gregory, had deposited both of them in the monastery, so many people flocked to see the new saints that the whole area seemed to be covered as though with grasshoppers, and those seeking relief were not cured individually but in whole swarms. The result was that the monks measured the money by the bushel of which they had 85, and their stock of gold amounted to 900 pounds." (p. 255.)

Deceit, legerdemain, manifestations of dead people, especially saints, and finally also and even predominantly the forging of documents were used to obtain riches for the church. The forging of documents—to let Roth speak again—

"was practised by many clerics on a grandiose scale ... this business began very early. ... The extent to which this trade was carried on can be seen from the large number of forged documents contained in our collections. Of Bréquigny's 360 Merovingian certificates nearly 130 are definitely forgeries. ... The forged testament of Remigius was used by Hincmar of Reims to procure his church a number of properties, which were not mentioned in the genuine testament, although the latter had never been lost and Hincmar knew very well that the former was spurious." Even Pope John VIII tried "to gain possession of the St. Denis monastery near Paris by means of a document which he knew to be a forgery." (Roth, p. 256 ff.)

It can therefore not be surprising that the land the church amassed through donations, extortion, false pretences, fraud, forgery and other criminal activities as-

sumed enormous proportions within a few centuries. The monastery of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, now within the perimeter of Paris, owned landed property amounting to 8,000 mansi or hides at the beginning of the ninth century. Guérard calculated that this was an area of 429,987 hectares with an annual yield of one million francs = 800,000 marks. If we use the same average, i.e. an area of 54 hectares with a yield of 125 francs = 100 marks per hide of land, then the monasteries St. Denis, Luxeuil, St. Martin de Tours, each owning 15,000 mansi at that time, held landed property of 810,000 hectares with an income of 1½ million marks. And this was the position *after* the confiscation of church property by Pepin the Short. Roth estimates (p. 249) that the entire property of the church in Gaul at the end of the seventh century was probably above, rather than below one third of the total area.

These enormous estates were cultivated partly by unfree and in part also by free tenants of the church. Among the unfree were the slaves (*servi*), the services these had to perform for their masters were originally not limited since they were not persons in law. But it seems that for the indigenous slaves too a customary amount of duties and services was soon established. On the other hand, the services of the other two servile classes, the colons and bondsmen (we have no information about the difference in their legal position at that time) were fixed and consisted in certain personal services and *corvée* as well as a definite part of the produce of their plot. These were long established customary conditions of dependence. But for the Germans it was something quite new that free men were cultivating not their own or common land. It is true that the Germans met quite frequently free Roman tenants in Gaul and in general in territories where Roman law prevailed, however during the settlement of the country care was taken to ensure that they themselves did not have to become tenants but could settle on their own land. Hence before free Franks could become somebody's copyholders

they must have in some way or other lost the allodium they received when the country was conquered, a distinct class of free Franks without land must have come into existence.

This class developed as a result of the beginning concentration of landed property, as a result of the same causes that led to this concentration, i.e., on the one hand civil wars and confiscations and on the other the transfer of land to the church mainly due to the pressure of circumstances and the desire for security. The church soon discovered a specific means to encourage such transfers, it allowed the donor not only to enjoy the usufruct of his land for a rent, but also to rent a piece of church land as well. For such donations were made in two forms. Either the donor retained the usufruct of his farm during his lifetime, so that it became the property of the church only after his death (*donatio post obitum*). In this case it was usual, and was later expressly laid down in the kings' Capitularies,¹¹⁶ that the donor should be able to rent twice as much land from the church as he had donated. Or the donation took effect immediately (*cessio a die praesente*) and in this case the donor could rent three times as much church land as well as his own farm, by means of a document known as *precaria*,¹¹⁷ issued by the church—which transferred the land to him, usually for the duration of his life, but sometimes for a longer or shorter period. Once a class of free men without land had come into being, some of them were likely to enter into such a relationship. The *precaria* they were granted seem at first to have been mostly issued for five years, but in their case too they were soon made out for life.

It is fairly certain that even under the Merovingians relations very similar to those obtaining on church estates developed also on the estates of the secular magnates, and that here too free and unfree rent-paying tenants were living side by side. They must have been very numerous as early as Charles Martel's rule for otherwise at least *one*

aspect of the transformation of property relations which he initiated and which his son and grandson completed would be inexplicable.

This transformation depended basically on two new institutions. First, in order to keep the barons of the empire tied to the crown, the crown lands they received were henceforth as a rule no longer a gift, but only a benefice¹¹⁸ granted for life, and moreover under certain conditions nonfulfilment of which entailed the forfeiture of the land. Thus they became themselves tenants of the crown. And secondly, in order to ensure that the free tenants of the barons turned up for military service, some of the district count's judicial powers over the free men living on the barons' estates were transferred to the latter, who were thus made their superiors. For the present we need only consider the first of these two changes.

When subduing the rebellious small "tyrants" Charles probably—we have no information regarding this—confiscated their land according to old custom, but in so far as he reinstated them later in their old position he will have invested them again with part or the whole of their land as a benefice. He did not yet dare to treat the church land of recalcitrant bishops in the same way. He deposed them and gave their positions to people devoted to him, though the only clerical trait of many of them was their tonsure (*sola tonsura clericus*). These new bishops and abbots then began at his bidding to transfer large tracts of church land to laymen as *precaria*. Such instances had occurred earlier too, but it was now done on a mass scale. His son Pepin went considerably further. The church was decaying, the clergy despised, the Pope, who was threatened by the Langobardi, depended exclusively on Pepin's support. He helped the Pope, favoured the extension of his ecclesiastical rule and held the Pope's stirrup. But as a remuneration he incorporated the by far largest part of the church land into the crown estates and left the bishops and monasteries an amount just sufficient for their mainte-

nance. The church submitted passively to this first large-scale secularisation, the synod of Lestines confirmed it, although with a restrictive clause but this was never observed. This huge mass of land placed the exhausted crown estate once more on a secure footing and was to a large extent used for further investments, which in fact soon assumed the form of ordinary benefices.

Let us add here that the church managed to recover from this blow very quickly. Directly after the conflict with Pepin the worthy men of God resumed their machinations. Donations came once more thick and fast from all directions, the small free peasants were still in the same dreadful position of being pounded by both sides, as they had been for the past 200 years. Under Charlemagne and his successors they fared even worse and many of them entrusted themselves and all their possessions to the protection of the crosier. The kings returned some of their loot to their favourite monasteries, and donated huge stretches of crown land to other monasteries, especially in Germany. The blessed times of Gunthram seemed to have returned for the church during the reign of Louis the Pious. The monastery archives contain especially numerous records of donations made in the ninth century.

The benefice, this new institution, which we must now examine closer, was not yet the feudal tenure which was to evolve later, but its embryo. It was from the outset granted for the common span of life of both the conferrer and the recipient. If one or the other died, it reverted to the owner or his heirs. To renew the former relationship, the benefice had to be transferred once again to the recipient or his heirs. Hence it was subject to escheat and reversion, to use a later terminology. Escheat soon ceased to be applied, for the great beneficiaries were more powerful than the king. Even at an early stage reversion often entailed the re-transfer of the estate to the heir of the former beneficiary. *Patriciacum* (Percy), an estate near Autun, which Charles Martel granted as a benefice to Hildebrannus, re-

mained in the family passing from father to son for four generations, until in 839 the king presented it to the brother of the fourth beneficiary as absolute property. Similar cases occur quite frequently since the middle of the eighth century.

The benefice could be withdrawn by the conferrer in all cases involving confiscation of property. And there was no shortage of such cases under the Carolingians. The risings in Alamannia under Pepin the Short, the conspiracy of the Thuringians and the repeated risings of the Saxons invariably led to new confiscations either of free peasant land or of magnates' estates and benefices. This occurred also, despite all stipulations to the contrary, during the internal wars under Louis the Pious and his sons. Certain non-political crimes were also punished by confiscation.

The crown could moreover withdraw benefices if the beneficiary neglected his allegiance to the sovereign in general, e.g., failed to hand over a robber who had sought asylum, did not turn up armed for a campaign, did not pay heed to royal letters, etc.

Furthermore benefices were conferred on certain terms, the infringement of which entailed their confiscation, which of course did not extend to the rest of the property of the beneficiary. This was the case, for example, when the benefice consisted of former church estates and the beneficiary failed to pay the church the duties (*nonae et decimae*) with which the estate was encumbered. Or if he neglected the estate, in which case usually a cautionary period of one year was established so that the beneficiary could improve matters to avert confiscation which would otherwise follow, etc. The transfer of an estate could also be tied to definite services and this was indeed done more and more frequently as the benefice gradually developed into a proper feudal tenure. But initially this was by no means necessary, especially with regard to military service, for many benefices were conferred on the lower clergy, monks, and women both spiritual and lay.

Finally it is quite possible that in the beginning the crown also conferred land until recalled or for a definite period, i.e. as *precaria*. Some of the information we have and the precedence of the church make this probable. But the practice must at any rate have ceased soon for the transfer of land as a benefice became prevalent in the ninth century.

For the church—and we must assume that this applied to the big landowners and beneficiaries as well—the church, which previously granted land to its free tenants usually only as *precaria* for a definite period of time, had to follow the stimulus given by the crown. The church not only began to grant benefices as well, but this kind of grant became so predominant that already existing *precaria* were turned into tenures for life and imperceptibly became benefices, until the former merged almost completely into the latter in the ninth century. Beneficiaries of the church and also of secular magnates must have played an important part in the state as early as the second half of the ninth century, some of them must have been men of substantial property, the ancestors of the future lower nobility. Otherwise Charles the Bald would not have so vigorously assisted those who had been without reason deprived of their benefices by Hincmar of Laon.

The benefice, as we see, has many aspects which reappear in the developed feudal tenure. Escheat and reversion are common to both. The benefice, like the feudal tenure, can only be revoked under certain conditions. The social hierarchy created by means of the benefices, which extended from the crown through the big beneficiaries—the predecessors of the imperial princes—to the medium beneficiaries—the future nobility—and from them to the free and enthralled peasants the bulk of whom lived in mark communities, formed the foundation for the future compact feudal hierarchy. Whereas the feudal tenure which developed later was always held in return for services and entailed military service for the feudal lord, the benefice

did not yet require military service and other services were by no means inevitable. But the tendency of the benefice to become an estate held in return for services is already obvious, and this tendency becomes stronger and stronger during the ninth century, and in the same measure as it develops, the benefice is transformed into a feudal tenure.

Another factor contributed to this development, i.e., the changes which took place in the district and military structure first under the influence of big landed property and later under that of the big benefices, into which big landed property was gradually transformed as a result of the incessant internal wars and the confiscations and re-transferals associated with them.

It is evident that only the pure, classical form of the benefice has been examined in this chapter, although it was a transitory form, which did not even appear everywhere simultaneously. But such historical manifestations of economic relations can only be understood if they are considered in their pure state, and it is one of the chief merits of Roth that he has laid bare this classical form of the benefice detached from all its confusing appendages.

THE DISTRICT AND ARMY STRUCTURE

The transformation in the position of landed property which we have just described was bound to influence the old structure. It caused just as significant changes in the latter, and these in their turn had repercussions on the position of landed property. For the present we shall leave aside the transformation of the political structure as a whole and confine ourselves to an examination of the influence the new economic position exerted on the still existing remnants of the old democratic structure in the districts and the army.

As early as the Merovingian period we frequently encounter counts and dukes as administrators of crown lands. But it was not until the ninth century that certain

crown estates were definitely linked to the countship in such a way that the count currently holding the office received their revenue. What had previously been an honorary office was transformed into a paid one. Side by side with this we also find counts holding royal benefices which had been granted to them personally, a fact which is self-evident under the conditions of that time. The count thus became a powerful landowner within his county.

First of all it is obvious that the authority of the count was bound to suffer when big landed proprietors arose under him and side by side with him. These people, who had often enough flouted the commands of the kings under the Merovingians and early Carolingians, could be expected to show even less respect for the orders of a count. Their free tenants, relying on the protection of their powerful landlords, just as frequently disregarded the count's summons to appear in court or to join the army. This was one of the reasons that led to grants being made in the form of benefices instead of allodial grants and later to the gradual transformation of most of the formerly free big estates into benefices.

But this alone did not yet ensure that all free men living on the estates of the magnates did in fact carry out their public duties. A further change had to be introduced. The king felt obliged to make the big landlords responsible for the appearance of their free tenants at court and for their performance of military and other traditional public services, in the same way as hitherto the count was held accountable for all free inhabitants of his county. And this could only be accomplished if the king gave the magnates some of the count's official powers over their tenants. It was the landlord or beneficiary who had to make sure that his people appeared before the court, they therefore had to be summoned through him. He had to bring them to the army, they had therefore to be summoned through him, and so that he could always be held accountable for them he had to lead them and have the right to

impose military discipline on them. But it was the king's service that the tenants performed and continued to perform, and the recalcitrant was punished not by the landlord but by the royal count, and the fine went to the royal fisc.

This innovation too can be traced back to Charles Martel. At any rate only since his time do we find the custom of high ecclesiastical dignitaries taking the field themselves, a custom which, according to Roth, was due to the fact that Charles made his bishops join the army at the head of their tenants in order to ensure that the latter turned up. The secular magnates and their tenants were undoubtedly treated in the same way. This new practice seems to have been firmly established and generally followed as early as Charlemagne's rule.

But this caused a substantial change in the political position of the free tenants. They who had formerly been on an equal footing with their landlord before the law, however much they depended on him economically, now became his inferiors also in the legal sphere. Their economic subordination was politically sanctioned. The landlord becomes Senior, Seigneur, the tenants become his *homines*, the "lord" becomes the master of his "man". The legal equality of the free men has disappeared; the man on the lowest rung of the ladder, whose full freedom was already greatly impaired by the loss of his ancestral land, has again moved one step closer to the unfree. The new "lord" has risen by the same amount above the level of the old communal freedom. The basis of the new aristocracy, which was already established economically, has now been recognised by the state and becomes one of the pinions permanently involved in the mechanism of the state.

But in addition to these *homines* who were made up of free tenants there existed also another kind. These were impoverished free men who had voluntarily entered into the service or joined the retinue of a magnate. The retinue

of the Merovingians were the antrustions,¹¹⁹ the magnates of that time will likewise have had their retainers. The retainers of the king were, under the Carolingians, called *vassi*, *vasalli* or *gasindi*, terms which still denoted a bondsman in the oldest tribal laws, but had now already acquired the meaning of a usually free retainer. The same expressions were applied to the magnates' retainers, who were now encountered everywhere and constituted a social and political element whose numbers and importance were constantly increasing.

Old formulas used in agreements show how the magnates acquired such retainers. One of them (Formulae Sirmundicae 44) for instance says:

"Since it is generally known that I have no means to provide food and clothing for myself, I request your piety to allow me to place myself under your" (the master's) "protection" (*mundeburdum*-guardianship as it were) "and commend myself of you in such a way . . . that you will be obliged to assist me with food and clothing according to my services to you and my deserts; I however shall be as a free man (*ingenuili ordine*) obliged to serve and obey you as long as I live, and during my lifetime I shall have no right to remove myself from your authority and patronage but shall remain all my life under your authority and protection."¹²⁰

This formula clearly reveals the origin and nature of the ordinary relations of allegiance stripped of all external admixtures, and it is especially revealing because it describes an extreme case, a completely destitute poor devil. The entry into the seignior's retinue was effected by both parties freely reaching an agreement—free according to Roman and modern law—often rather similar to the entry of a present-day worker into the service of a manufacturer. The "man" commended himself to the master, and the latter accepted his commendation.¹²¹ It was confirmed by a handshake and an oath of allegiance. The agreement was for life and was only dissolved by the death of one of the two partners. The liege man had to carry out all services consistent with the position of a free man,

which might be required by his master. In return the master provided for his keep and rewarded him as he thought fit. A transfer of land was by no means inevitably involved and in fact it certainly did not take place in all cases.

Under the Carolingians, especially since Charlemagne, this relationship was not only tolerated but definitely encouraged and eventually, it seems, made compulsory for all ordinary free men—by a Capitulary of 847—and regulated by the state. For example, the liege man could unilaterally repudiate the agreement with his master only if the latter tried to kill him, hit him with a stick, dishonour his wife or daughter or deprive him of his ancestral land (Capitulary of 813). The liege man moreover was pledged to his master as soon as he had received a value equivalent to one solidus from him. Hence it again follows clearly that at that time vassalage was by no means inevitably associated with the granting of land. The same stipulations are repeated in a Capitulary of 816 with the addition that the liege man was released from his obligations if his master sought to enthrall him unlawfully or did not afford him the promised protection although he could have done so.

With regard to his retainers the liege lord now had the same rights and duties towards the state as the landlord or beneficiary had with regard to his tenants. As before they were liable to serve the king, but here too the liege lord was placed between the king and his counts. The liege lord brought his vassals to court, he called them up, led them during the war and maintained discipline among them, he was responsible for them and their regulation equipment. This gave him a certain degree of disciplinary authority over his subordinates, and was the starting point of the feudal lord's jurisdiction over his vassals, which developed later.

These two additional establishments, the formation of retinues and the transfer of the official power of the count, that is the state, to the landlord, the holder of crown land, the beneficiary and liege lord over his subordinates—both

tenants and retainers without land, who were soon all to be called *vassi*, *vasalli* or *homines*—this political confirmation and strengthening of the actual power of the lord over his vassals signifies an important further development of the seeds of the feudal system contained in the benefices. The hierarchy of social estates, from the king downwards through the big beneficiaries to their free tenants and finally to the serfs, has in its official capacity become a recognised constituent element of the political organisation. The state recognises that it cannot exist without its help. We shall see later how in actual fact this help was given.

The difference between retainers and tenants is only important in the beginning, in order to show that the dependence of free men came about in two ways. The two types of vassals very soon merged irrevocably, in name as well as in fact. It became more and more customary for the big beneficiaries to commend themselves to the king, so that they were not only his beneficiaries but also his vassals. It was in the interest of the king to make the magnates, bishops, abbots, counts and vassals swear the oath of allegiance to him personally (*Annales Bertiniani* 837¹²² and other documents of the ninth century); consequently the distinction between the general oath of loyalty and the specific oath of fealty was bound to disappear soon. Thus all magnates gradually became vassals of the king. The slow transformation of the big landowners into a separate estate, an aristocracy, was herewith recognised by the state, incorporated into the state structure and became one of its officially functioning factors.

In the same way the retainers of the various big landowners gradually became tenants. Apart from providing board at the manor-house, which after all could only be done for a small number of people, there was but one way of retaining one's followers, that is by inducing them to settle down, by granting them land as a benefice. A numerous militant retinue, one of the main prerequisites

for the survival of the magnates in those times of perpetual fighting, could therefore only be obtained by granting land to the vassals. Consequently landless retainers gradually disappear from the manor as against the mass of those who had settled on the lord's land.

But the more this new element penetrated the old structure, the more it was bound to weaken the latter. The old direct exercise of political power by the king and the counts was more and more replaced by an indirect method; the seignior, to whom the ordinary free men had to an increasing extent pledged personal allegiance, now stood between them and the state. The count, the most effective mainspring of the mechanism of state, was bound to be, and actually was pushed more and more into the background. On this occasion Charlemagne acted as he generally used to do. First he encouraged the spread of vassalage, as we have seen, until the independent small free men had almost disappeared, and when the weakening of his power to which this led became obvious, he tried to improve the position by state intervention. Under such an energetic and formidable ruler this could be successful in some cases, but the force of circumstances created with his help asserted itself inexorably under his weak successors.

Charlemagne's favourite measure was to send royal emissaries (*missi dominici*) with special plenipotentiary powers. Where the ordinary royal official, the count, was unable to stem the spread of disorder, a special envoy was expected to do so. (This has to be historically substantiated and amplified.)

But another measure was also employed, it consisted in placing the count in such a position that he had at his disposal material means to enforce his authority which were at least equal to those of the magnates in his county. This was only possible if the count too became a big landowner, which again could be brought about in two ways. Certain estates could be attached as a sort of endowment

to the office of the count in the various districts, so that whoever was count administered them *ex officio* and received the revenue they yielded. Many examples of this kind can be found, especially in old records, and moreover as far back as the end of the eighth century, and this type of arrangement is quite usual from the ninth century onwards. It is self-evident that such endowments come for the most part from the king's fiscal estates, and as early as the time of the Merovingians we often find counts and dukes administering the fiscal estates of the king situated in their territory.

Strangely enough there are also several examples (and even a blank form for this purpose) of bishops using church land to endow the office of the count, of course in the shape of some sort of benefice since church land was inalienable. The munificence of the church is too well known, to accept any other explanation for this but bitter necessity. Because of the increasing pressure exerted by neighbouring secular magnates no other resort was left to the church but entering into an alliance with the remnants of the state authority.

These appurtenances (*res comitatus*, *pertinentiae comitatus*) associated with the count's post were originally clearly distinguished from the benefices which were granted personally to the count holding the position at a given time. Benefices too were as a rule liberally conferred, so that taking into account both endowment and benefices, countships, originally honorary positions, had by then become very lucrative posts, and since Louis the Pious they were, like all royal favours, bestowed on people whom the king wanted to win over to his side or of whom he wanted to be sure. Thus it is said of Louis II that he "*quos potuit conciliavit [sibi], dans eis abbatias et comitatus ac villas*"* (*Annales Bertiniani* 877). The term honor, which was

* Tried to win the support of as many people as possible by presenting abbaties and estates to anyone desiring them.—Ed.

formely applied to an office because of the honorary rights connected with it, acquired the same meaning as benefice in the course of the ninth century. And at the same time a substantial change in the functions of the count's office was bound to take place, as Roth rightly emphasises (p. 408). Originally the seignior, in so far as it had public functions, was modelled upon the office of the count and equipped with some of the count's rights. Then, in the second half of the ninth century, the seignior had become so widespread that it threatened to surpass the power of the counts and the latter could only maintain their authority by more and more assuming the characteristics of seigniors. The counts tried, fairly successfully, gradually to usurp the position of a seignior towards the inhabitants of their districts (*pagenses*) with regard to both their private and public concerns. Just as the other "lords" sought to subordinate the small people in their neighbourhood, so the counts tried, in an amicable way or by force, to induce the not so well-off free inhabitants of their district to become their vassals. They succeeded in this the more easily, as the mere fact that the counts could thus misuse their official power was the best proof that the surviving ordinary free men could hardly expect any protection from the royal authority and its organs. Exposed to oppression from all quarters, the small free men had to be glad to find a patron, even at the cost of relinquishing their allodium and receiving it back as a mere benefice. Already in the Capitulary of 811 Charlemagne complained that bishops, abbots, counts, judges and hundreders by continuous legal chicanery and repeated summonses to the army reduced the small people to such a state that the latter were willing to transfer or sell their allodium to them, and that the poor bitterly lamented that they were being robbed of their property, etc. The greater part of the free property in Gaul had in this way come into the hands of the church, the counts and other magnates as early as the close of the ninth century (Hincmar Remensis

869). And a little later no free landed property belonging to small free men existed any longer in some provinces (Maurer, *Einleitung*, p. 212). When the increasing power of the beneficiaries and the declining power of the crown had gradually caused benefices to become hereditary, the count's office as a rule became likewise hereditary. We regarded the numerous royal beneficiaries as the rudiments of the nobility that arose later, now we see the germ of the territorial sovereignty of the future princes, who were descendants of the district counts.

While thus the social and political system changed completely, the old structure of the army, based on the military service of all free men—a service which was both their right and their duty—remained outwardly unchanged, except that where the new conditions of dependence existed, the seignior interposed himself between his vassals and the count. However, year by year the common free men were less able to carry the burden of military service, which consisted not only of personal service, but the man called up had also to equip himself and to live at his own expense during the first six months. This continued until finally Charlemagne's perpetual wars went beyond all bounds. The burden became so unendurable that in order to rid themselves of it masses of small free men preferred to entrust not only their remaining property but also their own person and their descendants to the magnates, and especially to the church. Charlemagne had reduced the free bellicose Franks to such a state that they chose to become bondsmen or serfs simply to avoid going to war. That was the consequence of Charlemagne's insistence on maintaining, and even carrying to its extreme limit, a military structure based on equal landed property which as a rule was held by all free men, at a time when the bulk of the free men had lost their landed property either entirely or for the most part.

Facts, however, were stronger than Charlemagne's stubbornness and ambition. The old army structure could no longer be preserved. To equip and provision the army at the expense of the state was even less feasible, at a time when there was a natural economy run practically without money or commerce. Charlemagne was therefore obliged to restrict compulsory military service in such a way that equipment and food could still remain the responsibility of the men themselves. This was done in the Aachen Capitulary of 807, at a time when the wars were reduced to mere border fights, and the continued existence of the empire as a whole was ensured. Firstly all the king's beneficiaries without exception had to turn up, then those owning twelve hides (*mansi*) of land were to appear clad in armour, and therefore presumably also on horseback (the word *caballarius*-knight is used in the same Capitulary). Owners of three to five hides of land were also obliged to serve. Every group of two owners having two hides of land each, three owners having one hide of land each, or six owners each possessing half a hide of land, had to send one man equipped by the rest of the group. As to free men who had no land at all but personal property worth five solidi, every sixth of them was to take the field and receive one solidus as pecuniary aid from each of the other five men. Moreover the obligation of the various parts of the country to take part in the fighting, an obligation which applied fully when the war was waged in the neighbourhood, was in the case of more distant wars reduced to between one-half and one-sixth of the total manpower according to the distance from the theatre of war.

Charlemagne evidently attempted to adapt the old structure to the changed economic position of the men liable to military service, to rescue what he could still rescue. But even these concessions were of no avail, and he was soon compelled to grant further exemptions in the *Capitulare de exercitu promovendo*. The whole contents of this Capitulary, which is usually regarded as antecedent to that

of Aachen, shows that it was undoubtedly composed several years later. According to it, one man has to do military service from every four hides of land, instead of three as previously. The owners of half a hide of land and those without land are freed from military service, and as regards beneficiaries their obligation is also restricted to the provision of one man for every four hides of land. Under Charlemagne's successors the minimum number of hides of land obliged to provide one man seems even to have been raised to five.

It is strange that the mobilisation of the armoured owners of twelve hides of land seems to have encountered the greatest difficulties. At any rate, the order that they must turn up clad in armour is repeated innumerable times in the Capitularies.

Thus the common free men disappeared to an increasing extent. Just as the gradual separation from their land had forced some of them to become vassals of the new big landlords, so the fear of being completely ruined by military service actually drove the others into serfdom. How rapidly this subjection to servitude proceeded can be seen from the polyptichon (land register) of the Saint-Germain-des-Prés monastery, which was then still situated outside Paris. It was compiled by abbot Irminon early in the ninth century, and among the tenants of the monastery it lists 2,080 families of coloni, 35 of bondsmen, 220 of slaves (servi), but only *eight* free families. At that time however the word colonus definitely denoted a serf in Gaul. If a free woman married a colonus or slave she was regarded as defiled (*deturpatam*) and became subordinate to the lord (Capitulary of 817). Louis the Pious commanded that "*colonus vel servus*" (of a monastery at Poitier) "*ad naturale servitium velit nolit redeat*".* They were thrashed (Capitularies of 853, 861, 864 and 873) and sometimes set

* "A colon or slave has to return to his natural position whether he is willing or not."—*Ed.*

free (Guérard, *Polyptyque de l'abbé Irminon*). And these enthralled peasants were by no means of Romance stock, but according to the testimony of Jacob Grimm (*Geschichte der deutschen Sprache*, I), who examined their names, they had "almost exclusively Frankish names, which far exceeded the small number of Romance names."

This huge rise in the unfree population in its turn changed the class relations of the Frankish society. Alongside the big landlords, who at that time rapidly emerged as a separate social estate, and alongside their free vassals there appeared now a class of serfs which gradually absorbed the remnants of the common free men. But some of these serfs had themselves been free, and some were children of free men; those who had lived for three or more generations in hereditary bondage formed a small minority. These serfs moreover were not Saxon, Wendish, or other prisoners of war brought in from outside, on the contrary most of them were of Frankish or Romance origin. Such people, especially when they began to constitute the bulk of the population, could not be so easily dealt with as inherited or foreign serfs. They were not yet used to servitude, the thrashings which even the colonus got (Capitularies of 853, 861, 873) were still considered a humiliation and not regarded as a matter of course. Hence the many plots and risings of serfs and even peasant vassals. Charlemagne himself brutally crushed an uprising of the tenants of the bishopric of Reims. In a Capitulary of 821 Louis the Pious mentions slaves (*servorum*) plotting in Flanders and Menapiscus (on the upper Lys). Risings of the liege men (*homines*) of the Mainz bishopric had to be put down in 848 and 866. Orders to stamp out such plots are repeatedly given in capitularies since 779. The rising of the Stellinga in Saxony¹²³ must likewise be included here. The fact that since the close of the eighth century and the beginning of the ninth gradually a definite limit was fixed for the obligations of the serfs, and even of the indigenous slaves, and that this limit, which was not

to be exceeded, was laid down by Charlemagne in his Capitularies, was obviously a consequence of the threatening attitude of the enthralled masses.

The price therefore which Charlemagne had to pay for his new Roman Empire was the annihilation of the class of common free men, who had constituted the entire Frankish people at the time of the conquest of Gaul, and the division of the people into big landlords, vassals and serfs. But with the common free men the old military structure collapsed, and with these two the monarchy went down. Charlemagne had destroyed the foundation of his own rule. It could still sustain him, but under his successors the real results of his handiwork became manifest.

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FREDERICK ENGELS

From THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY,
PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The following chapters constitute, in a sense, the fulfilment of a bequest. It was no less a person than Karl Marx who had planned to present the results of Morgan's researches in connection with the conclusions arrived at by his own—within certain limits I might say our own-materialist investigation of history and thus to make clear their whole significance. For Morgan rediscovered in America, in his own way, the materialist conception of history that had been discovered by Marx forty years ago, and in his comparison of barbarism and civilisation was led by this conception to the same conclusions, in the main points, as Marx had arrived at. And just as *Capital* was for years both zealously plagiarised and persistently hushed up on the part of the official economists in Germany, so was Morgan's *Ancient Society** treated by the spokesmen of "prehistoric" science in England. My work can offer but a meagre substitute for that which my departed friend was not destined to accomplish. However, I have before me, in his extensive extracts from Morgan,** critical notes

* *Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery. Through Barbarism to Civilisation.* By Lewis H. Morgan, London, MacMillan & Co., 1877. This book was printed in America, and is remarkably difficult to obtain in London. The author died a few years ago. [Note by Engels.]

** The reference is to Karl Marx's "Abstract of Morgan's *Ancient Society*".—Ed.

which I reproduce here wherever this is at all possible.

According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is, in the last resort, the production and reproduction of immediate life. But this itself is of a twofold character. On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools requisite therefore; on the other, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species. The social institutions under which men of a definite historical epoch and of a definite country live are conditioned by both kinds of production: by the stage of development of labour, on the one hand, and of the family, on the other. The less the development of labour, and the more limited its volume of production and, therefore, the wealth of society, the more preponderatingly does the social order appear to be dominated by ties of sex. However, within this structure of society based on ties of sex, the productivity of labour develops more and more; with it, private property and exchange, differences in wealth, the possibility of utilising the labour power of others, and thereby the basis of class antagonisms: new social elements, which strive in the course of generations to adapt the old structure of society to the new conditions, until, finally, the incompatibility of the two leads to a complete revolution. The old society, built on groups based on ties of sex, bursts asunder in the collision of the newly-developed social classes; in its place a new society appears, constituted in a state, the lower units of which are no longer groups based on ties of sex but territorial groups, a society in which the family system is entirely dominated by the property system, and in which the class antagonisms and class struggles, which make up the content of all hitherto *written* history, now freely develop.

Morgan's great merit lies in having discovered and reconstructed this prehistoric foundation of our written history in its main features, and in having found in the groups based on ties of sex of the North American Indians the

key to the most important, hitherto insoluble, riddles of the earliest Greek, Roman and German history. His book, however, was not the work of one day. He grappled with his material for nearly forty years until he completely mastered it. That is why his book is one of the few epoch-making works of our time.

In the following exposition the reader will, on the whole, easily be able to distinguish between what has been taken from Morgan and what I have added myself. In the historical sections dealing with Greece and Rome I have not limited myself to Morgan's data, but have added what I had at my disposal. The sections dealing with the Celts and the Germans are substantially my own; here Morgan had at his disposal almost exclusively second-hand sources, and, as far as German conditions were concerned—with the exception of Tacitus—only the wretched liberal falsifications of Mr. Freeman. The economic arguments, sufficient for Morgan's purpose but wholly inadequate for my own, have all been elaborated afresh by myself. And, finally, I of course am responsible for all conclusions wherever Morgan is not expressly quoted.

I

PREHISTORIC STAGES OF CULTURE

Morgan was the first person with expert knowledge to attempt to introduce a definite order into the prehistory of man; unless important additional material necessitates alterations, his classification may be expected to remain in force.

Of the three main epochs, savagery, barbarism and civilisation, he is naturally concerned only with the first two, and with the transition to the third. He subdivides each of these two epochs into a lower, middle and upper stage, according to the progress made in the production of the means of subsistence; for, as he says:

"Upon their skill in this direction, the whole question of human supremacy on the earth depended. Mankind are the only beings who may be said to have gained an absolute control over the production of food. The great epochs of human progress have been identified, more or less directly, with the enlargement of the sources of subsistence."¹²⁴

The evolution of the family proceeds concurrently, but does not offer such conclusive criteria for the delimitation of the periods.

1. SAVAGERY

1. *Lower Stage.* Infancy of the human race. Man still lived in his original habitat, tropical or subtropical forests, dwelling, at least partially, in trees; this alone explains his continued survival in face of the large beasts of prey. Fruits, nuts and roots served him as food; the formation of articulate speech was the main achievement of this period. None of the peoples that became known during the historical period were any longer in this primeval state. Although this period may have lasted for many thousands of years, we have no direct evidence of its existence; but once we admit the descent of man from the animal kingdom, the acceptance of this transitional stage is inevitable.

2. *Middle Stage.* Begins with the utilisation of fish (under which head we also include crabs, shellfish and other aquatic animals) for food and with the employment of fire. These two are complementary, since fish food becomes fully available only by the use of fire. This new food, however, made man independent of climate and locality. By following the rivers and coasts man was able, even in his savage state, to spread over the greater part of the earth's surface. The crude, unpolished stone implements of the earlier Stone Age—the so-called palaeolithic—which belong wholly, or predominantly, to this period, and are scattered over all the continents, are evidence of these migrations. The newly-occupied territories as well as the unceasingly active urge for discovery, linked with their com-

mand of the art of producing fire by friction, made available new foodstuffs, such as farinaceous roots and tubers, baked in hot ashes or in baking pits (ground ovens), and game, which was occasionally added to the diet after the invention of the first weapons—the club and the spear. Exclusively hunting peoples, such as figure in books, that is, peoples subsisting *solely* by hunting, have never existed, for the fruits of the chase are much too precarious to make that possible. As a consequence of the continued uncertainty with regard to sources of foodstuffs cannibalism appears to have arisen at this stage, and continued for a long time. The Australians and many Polynesians are to this day in this middle stage of savagery.

3. *Upper Stage.* Begins with the invention of the bow and arrow, whereby wild game became a regular item of food, and hunting one of the normal occupations. Bow, string and arrow constitute a very composite instrument, the invention of which presupposes long accumulated experience and sharpened mental powers, and, consequently, a simultaneous acquaintance with a host of other inventions. If we compare the peoples which, although familiar with the bow and arrow, are not yet acquainted with the art of pottery (from which point Morgan dates the transition to barbarism), we find, even at this early stage, beginnings of settlement in villages, a certain mastery of the production of means of subsistence: wooden vessels and utensils, finger weaving (without looms) with filaments of bast, baskets woven from bast or rushes, and polished (neolithic) stone implements. For the most part, also, fire and the stone axe have already provided the dug-out canoe and, in places, timber and planks for house-building. All these advances are to be found, for example, among the Indians of North-Western America, who, although familiar with the bow and arrow, know nothing of pottery. The bow and arrow was for savagery what the iron sword was for barbarism and firearms for civilisation, namely, the decisive weapon,

2. BARBARISM

1. *Lower Stage.* Dates from the introduction of pottery. This latter had its origin, demonstrably in many cases and probably everywhere, in the coating of baskets or wooden vessels with clay in order to render them fire-proof; whereby it was soon discovered that moulded clay also served the purpose without the inner vessel.

Up to this point we could regard the course of evolution as being generally valid for a definite period among all peoples, irrespective of locality. With the advent of barbarism, however, we reach a stage where the difference in natural endowment of the two great continents begins to assert itself. The characteristic feature of the period of barbarism is the domestication and breeding of animals and the cultivation of plants. Now the Eastern Continent, the so-called Old World, contained almost all the animals suitable for domestication and all the cultivable cereals with one exception; while the Western, America, contained only one domesticable mammal, the llama, and this only in a part of the South; and only one cereal fit for cultivation, but that the best, maize. The effect of these different natural conditions was that from now on the population of each hemisphere went its own special way, and the landmarks on the border lines between the various stages are different in each of the two cases.

2. *Middle Stage.* Begins, in the East, with the domestication of animals; in the West, with the cultivation of edible plants by means of irrigation, and with the use of adobes (bricks dried in the sun) and stone for buildings.

We shall commence with the West, because there this stage was nowhere outgrown until the European Conquest.

At the time of their discovery the Indians in the lower stage of barbarism (to which all those found east of the Mississippi belonged) already engaged to a certain extent in the garden cultivation of maize and perhaps also of

pumpkins, melons and other garden produce, which supplied a very substantial part of their food. They lived in wooden houses, in villages surrounded by stockades. The tribes of the North-West, particularly those living in the region of the Columbia River, still remained in the upper stage of savagery and were familiar neither with pottery nor with any kind of plant cultivation. On the other hand, the so-called Pueblo Indians of New Mexico,¹²⁵ the Mexicans, Central Americans and Peruvians were in the middle stage of barbarism at the time of the Conquest. They lived in fort-like houses built of adobe or stone; they cultivated, in artificially irrigated gardens, maize and other edible plants, varying according to location and climate, which constituted their chief source of food, and they had even domesticated a few animals—the Mexicans the turkey and other birds, and the Peruvians the llama. They were furthermore acquainted with the working up of metals—except iron, which was the reason why they could not yet dispense with the use of stone weapons and stone implements. The Spanish Conquest cut short all further independent development.

In the East, the middle stage of barbarism commenced with the domestication of milk and meat-yielding animals, while plant cultivation appears to have remained unknown until very late in this period. The domestication and breeding of cattle and the formation of large herds seem to have been the cause of the differentiation of the Aryans and the Semites from the remaining mass of barbarians. Names of cattle are still common to the European and the Asiatic Aryans, the names of cultivable plants hardly at all.

In suitable places the formation of herds led to pastoral life; among the Semites, on the grassy plains of the Euphrates and the Tigris; among the Aryans, on those of India, of the Oxus and the Jaxartes, of the Don and the Dnieper. The domestication of animals must have been first accomplished on the borders of such pasture lands.

It thus appears to later generations that the pastoral peoples originated in areas which, far from being the cradle of mankind, were, on the contrary, almost uninhabitable for their savage forebears and even for people in the lower stage of barbarism. Conversely, once these barbarians of the middle stage had taken to pastoral life, it would never have occurred to them to leave the grassy watered plains of their own accord and return to the forest regions which had been the home of their ancestors. Even when the Aryans and Semites were driven farther north and west, they found it impossible to settle in the forest regions of Western Asia and Europe until they had been enabled, by the cultivation of cereals, to feed their cattle on this less favourable soil, and particularly to pass the winter there. It is more than probable that the cultivation of cereals was introduced here primarily because of the necessity of providing fodder for cattle and only later became important for human nourishment.

The plentiful meat and milk diet among the Aryans and the Semites, and particularly the beneficial effects of these foods on the development of children, may, perhaps, explain the superior development of these two races. In fact, the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, who are reduced to an almost exclusively vegetarian diet, have a smaller brain than the more meat- and fish-eating Indians in the lower stage of barbarism. At any rate, cannibalism gradually disappears at this stage, and survives only as a religious rite or, what is almost identical in this instance, sorcery.

3. *Upper Stage.* Begins with the smelting of iron ore and passes into civilisation through the invention of alphabetic writing and its utilisation for literary records. At this stage, which, as we have already noted, was traversed independently only in the eastern hemisphere, more progress was made in production than in all the previous stages put together. To it belong the Greeks of the Heroic Age, the Italian tribes shortly before the foundation of Rome,

the Germans of Tacitus and the Normans of the days of the Vikings.

Above all, we here encounter for the first time the iron ploughshare drawn by cattle, making possible land cultivation on a wide scale—tillage—and, in the conditions then prevailing, a practically unlimited increase in the means of subsistence; in connection with this we find also the clearing of forests and their transformation into arable and pasture land—which, again, would have been impossible on a wide scale without the iron axe and spade. But with this there also came a rapid increase of the population and dense populations in small areas. Prior to tillage only very exceptional circumstances could have brought together half a million people under one central leadership; in all probability this never happened.

In the poems of Homer, particularly the *Iliad*, we find the upper stage of barbarism at its zenith. Improved iron tools, the bellows, the handmill, the potter's wheel, the making of oil and wine, the working up of metals developing into an art, waggons and war chariots, shipbuilding with planks and beams, the beginnings of architecture as an art, walled towns with towers and battlements, the Homeric epic and the entire mythology—these are the chief heritages carried over by the Greeks in their transition from barbarism to civilisation. If we compare with this Caesar's and even Tacitus' descriptions of the Germans, who were on the threshold of that stage of culture from which the Homeric Greeks were preparing to advance to a higher one, we will see how rich was the development of production in the upper stage of barbarism.

The picture of the evolution of mankind through savagery and barbarism to the beginning of civilisation that I have here sketched after Morgan is already rich enough in new and, what is more, incontestable features, incontestable because they are taken straight from production; nevertheless it will appear faint and meagre compared with the picture which will unfold itself at the end of our

journey. Only then will it be possible to give a full view of the transition from barbarism to civilisation and the striking contrast between the two. For the time being we can generalise Morgan's periodisation as follows: Savage-ry—the period in which the appropriation of natural products, ready for use, predominated; the things produced by man were, in the main, instruments that facilitated this appropriation. Barbarism—the period in which knowledge of cattle breeding and land cultivation was acquired, in which methods of increasing the productivity of nature through human activity were learnt. Civilisation—the period in which knowledge of the further working up of natural products, of industry proper, and of art was acquired.

V

THE RISE OF THE ATHENIAN STATE

How the state developed, some of the organs of the gentile constitution being transformed, some displaced, by the intrusion of new organs, and, finally, all superseded by real governmental authorities—while the place of the actual "people in arms" defending itself through its gentes, phratries and tribes was taken by an armed "public power" at the service of these authorities and, therefore, also available against the people—all this can nowhere be traced better, at least in its initial stage, than in ancient Athens. The forms of the changes are, in the main, described by Morgan; the economic content which gave rise to them I had largely to add myself.

In the Heroic Age, the four tribes of the Athenians were still installed in separate parts of Attica. Even the twelve phratries comprising them seem still to have had separate seats in the twelve towns of Cecrops. The constitution was that of the Heroic Age: a popular assembly, a popular council, a *basileus*. As far back as written history goes we find the land already divided up and transformed into private property, which corresponds with the relatively

developed state of commodity production and a commensurate commodity trade towards the end of the higher stage of barbarism. In addition to cereals, wine and oil were cultivated. Commerce on the Aegean Sea passed more and more from Phoenician into Attic hands. As a result of the purchase and sale of land and the continued division of labour between agriculture and handicrafts, trade and navigation, the members of gentes, phratries and tribes very soon intermingled. The districts of the phratry and the tribe received inhabitants who, although they were fellow countrymen, did not belong to these bodies and, therefore, were strangers in their own places of residence. For in time of peace, every phratry and every tribe administered its own affairs without consulting the popular council or the *basileus* in Athens. But inhabitants of the area of the phratry or tribe not belonging to either naturally could not take part in the administration.

This so disturbed the regulated functioning of the organs of the gentile constitution that a remedy was already needed in the Heroic Age. A constitution, attributed to Theseus, was introduced. The main feature of this change was the institution of a central administration in Athens, that is to say, some of the affairs that hitherto had been conducted independently by the tribes were declared to be common affairs and transferred to a general council sitting in Athens. Thereby, the Athenians went a step further than any ever taken by any indigenous people in America: the simple federation of neighbouring tribes was now supplanted by the coalescence of all the tribes into one single people. This gave rise to a system of general Athenian popular law, which stood above the legal usages of the tribes and gentes. It bestowed on the citizens of Athens, as such, certain rights and additional legal protection even in territory that was not their own tribe's. This, however, was the first step towards undermining the gentile constitution; for it was the first step towards the subsequent admission of citizens who were alien to all the At-

tic tribes and were and remained entirely outside the pale of the Athenian gentile constitution. A second institution attributed to Theseus was the division of the entire people, irrespective of gentes, phratries and tribes, into three classes: *eupatrides*, or nobles; *geomoroi*, or tillers of the land; and *demiurgi*, or artisans, and the granting to the nobles of the exclusive right to public office. True, apart from reserving to the nobles the right to hold public office, this division remained inoperative, as it created no other legal distinctions between the classes. It is important, however, because it reveals to us the new social elements that had quietly developed. It shows that the customary holding of office in the gens by certain families had already developed into a privilege of these families that was little contested; that these families, already powerful owing to their wealth, began to unite outside of their gentes into a privileged class; and that the nascent state sanctioned this usurpation. It shows, furthermore, that the division of labour between husbandmen and artisans had become strong enough to contest the superiority, socially, of the old division into gentes and tribes. And finally, it proclaimed the irreconcilable antagonism between gentile society and the state. The first attempt to form a state consisted in breaking up the gentes by dividing the members of each into a privileged and an inferior class, and the latter again into two vocational classes, thus setting one against the other.

The ensuing political history of Athens up to the time of Solon is only incompletely known. The office of *basileus* fell into disuse; *archons*, elected from among the nobility, became the heads of the state. The rule of the nobility steadily increased until, round about 600 B.C., it became unbearable. The principal means for stifling the liberty of the commonalty were—money and usury. The nobility lived mainly in and around Athens, where maritime commerce, with occasional piracy still as a sideline, enriched it and concentrated monetary wealth in its hands.

From this point the developing money system penetrated like a corroding acid into the traditional life of the rural communities founded on natural economy. The gentile constitution is absolutely incompatible with the money system. The ruin of the Attic small-holding peasants coincided with the loosening of the old gentile bonds that protected them. Creditor's bills and mortgage bonds—for by then the Athenians had also invented the mortgage—respected neither the gens nor the phratry. But the old gentile constitution knew nothing of money, credit and monetary debt. Hence the constantly expanding money rule of the nobility gave rise to a new law, that of custom, to protect the creditor against the debtor and sanction the exploitation of the small peasant by the money owner. All the rural districts of Attica bristled with mortgage posts bearing the legend that the lot on which they stood was mortgaged to so and so for so and so much. The fields that were not so designated had for the most part been sold on account of overdue mortgages or non-payment of interest and had become the property of the noble-born usurers; the peasant was glad if he was permitted to remain as a tenant and live on *one-sixth* of the product of his labour while paying *five-sixths* to his new master as rent. More than that: if the sum obtained from the sale of the lot did not cover the debt, or if such a debt was not secured by a pledge, the debtor had to sell his children into slavery abroad in order to satisfy the creditor's claim. The sale of his children by the father—such was the first fruit of father right and monogamy! And if the blood-sucker was still unsatisfied, he could sell the debtor himself into slavery. Such was the pleasant dawn of civilisation among the Athenian people.

Formerly, when the conditions of life of the people were still in keeping with the gentile constitution, such a revolution would have been impossible; but here it had come about nobody knew how. Let us return for a moment to the Iroquois. Among them a state of things like that which

had now imposed itself on the Athenians without their own doing, so to say, and certainly against their will, was inconceivable. There the mode of production of the means of subsistence, which, year in and year out, remained unchanged, could never give rise to such conflicts, imposed from without, as it were; to antagonism between rich and poor, between exploiters and exploited. The Iroquois were still far from controlling the forces of nature; but within the limits set for them by nature they were masters of their production. Apart from bad harvests in their little gardens, the exhaustion of the fish supply in their lakes and rivers, or of game in their forests, they knew what the outcome would be of their mode of gaining a livelihood. The outcome would be: means of sustenance, meagre or abundant; but it could never be unpremeditated social upheavals, the severing of gentile bonds, or the splitting of the members of gentes and tribes into antagonistic classes fighting each other. Production was carried on within the most restricted limits, but—the producers exercised control over their own product. This was the immense advantage of barbarian production that was lost with the advent of civilisation; and to win it back on the basis of the enormous control man now exercises over the forces of nature, and of the free association that is now possible, will be the task of the next generations.

Not so among the Greeks. The appearance of private property in herds of cattle and articles of luxury led to exchange between individuals, to the transformation of products into *commodities*. Here lies the root of the entire revolution that followed. When the producers no longer directly consumed their product, but let it go out of their hands in the course of exchange, they lost control over it. They no longer knew what became of it, and the possibility arose that the product might some day be turned against the producers, used as a means of exploiting and oppressing them. Hence, no society can for any length of time remain master of its own production and continue to

control the social effects of its process of production, unless it abolishes exchange between individuals.

The Athenians were soon to learn, however, how quickly after individual exchange is established and products are converted into commodities, the product manifests its rule over the producer. With the production of commodities came the tilling of the soil by individual cultivators for their own account, soon followed by individual ownership of the land. Then came money, that universal commodity for which all others could be exchanged. But when men invented money they little suspected that they were creating a new social power, the one universal power to which the whole of society must bow. It was this new power, suddenly sprung into existence without the will or knowledge of its own creators, that the Athenians felt in all the brutality of its youth.

What was to be done? The old gentile organisation had not only proved impotent against the triumphant march of money; it was also absolutely incapable of providing a place within its framework for such things as money, creditors, debtors and the forcible collection of debts. But the new social power was there, and neither pious wishes nor a longing for the return of the good old times could drive money and usury out of existence. Moreover, a number of other, minor breaches had been made in the gentile constitution. The indiscriminate mingling of the gentiles and phrators throughout the whole of Attica, and especially in the city of Athens, increased from generation to generation, in spite of the fact that an Athenian, while allowed to sell plots of land out of his gens, was still prohibited from thus selling his dwelling house. The division of labour between the different branches of production—agriculture, handicraft, numerous skills within the various crafts, trade, navigation, etc.—had developed more fully with the progress of industry and commerce. The population was now divided according to occupation into rather well-defined groups, each of which had a number of new,

common interests that found no place in the gens or phratry and, therefore, necessitated the creation of new offices to attend to them. The number of slaves had increased considerably and must have far exceeded that of the free Athenians even at this early stage. The gentile constitution originally knew no slavery and was, therefore, ignorant of any means of holding this mass of bondsmen in check. And finally, commerce had attracted a great many strangers who settled in Athens because it was easier to make money there, and according to the old constitution these strangers enjoyed neither rights nor the protection of the law. In spite of traditional toleration, they remained a disturbing and foreign element among the people.

In short, the gentile constitution was coming to an end. Society was daily growing more and more out of it; it was powerless to check or allay even the most distressing evils that were arising under its very eyes. In the meantime, however, the state had quietly developed. The new groups formed by division of labour, first between town and country, then between the various branches of urban industry, had created new organs to protect their interests. Public offices of every description were instituted. And then the young state needed, above all, its own fighting forces, which among the seafaring Athenians could at first be only naval forces, to be used for occasional small wars and to protect merchant vessels. At some uncertain time before Solon, the *naucreries* were instituted, small territorial districts, twelve in each tribe. Every *naucrery* had to furnish, equip and man a war vessel and, in addition, detail two horsemen. This arrangement was a twofold attack on the gentile constitution. First, it created a public power which was no longer simply identical with the armed people in its totality; secondly, it for the first time divided the people for public purposes, not according to kinship groups, but territorially, according to *common domicile*. We shall see what this signified.

As the gentile constitution could not come to the assis-

tance of the exploited people, they could look only to the rising state. And the state brought help in the form of the constitution of Solon, while at the same time strengthening itself anew at the expense of the old constitution. Solon—the manner in which his reform of 594 B.C. was brought about does not concern us here—started the series of so-called political revolutions by an encroachment on property. All revolutions until now have been revolutions for the protection of one kind of property against another kind of property. They cannot protect one kind without violating another. In the Great French Revolution feudal property was sacrificed in order to save bourgeois property; in Solon's revolution, creditors' property had to suffer for the benefit of debtors' property. The debts were simply annulled. We are not acquainted with the exact details, but Solon boasts in his poems that he removed the mortgage posts from the encumbered lands and enabled all who had fled or had been sold abroad for debt to return home. This could have been done only by openly violating property rights. And indeed, the object of all so-called political revolutions, from first to last, was to protect *one* kind of property by confiscating—also called stealing—*another* kind of property. It is thus absolutely true that for 2,500 years private property could be protected only by violating property rights.

But now a way had to be found to prevent such re-enslavement of the free Athenians. This was first achieved by general measures; for example, the prohibition of contracts which involved the personal hypothecation of the debtor. Furthermore, a maximum was fixed for the amount of land any one individual could own, in order to put some curb, at least, on the craving of the nobility for the peasants' land. Then followed constitutional amendments, of which the most important for us are the following:

The council was increased to four hundred members, one hundred from each tribe. Here, then, the tribe still served as a basis. But this was the only side of the old

constitution that was incorporated in the new body politic. For the rest, Solon divided the citizens into four classes, according to the amount of land owned and its yield. Five hundred, three hundred and one hundred and fifty medimni of grain (1 medimnus equals appr. 41 litres) were the minimum yields for the first three classes; whoever had less land or none at all belonged to the fourth class. Only members of the first three classes could hold office; the highest offices were filled by the first class. The fourth class had only the right to speak and vote in the popular assembly. But here all officials were elected, here they had to give account of their actions, here all the laws were made, and here the fourth class was in the majority. The aristocratic privileges were partly renewed in the form of privileges of wealth, but the people retained the decisive power. The four classes also formed the basis for the reorganisation of the fighting forces. The first two classes furnished the cavalry; the third had to serve as heavy infantry; the fourth served as light infantry, without armour, or in the navy, and probably were paid.

Thus, an entirely new element was introduced into the constitution: private ownership. The rights and duties of the citizens were graduated according to the amount of land they owned; and as the propertied classes gained influence the old consanguine groups were driven into the background. The gentile constitution suffered another defeat.

The gradation of political rights according to property, however, was not an indispensable institution for the state. Important as it may have been in the constitutional history of states, nevertheless, a good many states, and the most completely developed at that, did without it. Even in Athens it played only a transient role. Since the time of Aristides, all offices were open to all the citizens.

During the next eighty years Athenian society gradually took the course along which it further developed in subsequent centuries. Usurious land operations, rampant in the

pre-Solon period, were checked, as was the unlimited concentration of landed property. Commerce and the handicrafts and useful arts conducted on an ever-increasing scale with slave labour became the predominating branches of occupation. Enlightenment made progress. Instead of exploiting their own fellow-citizens in the old brutal manner, the Athenians now exploited mainly the slaves and non-Athenian clients. Movable property, wealth in money, slaves and ships, increased more and more; but instead of being simply a means for purchasing land, as in the first period with its limitations, it became an end in itself. This, on the one hand, gave rise to the successful competition of the new, wealthy industrial and commercial class with the old power of the nobility, but, on the other hand, it deprived the old gentile constitution of its last foothold. The *gentes*, *phratries* and tribes, whose members were now scattered all over Attica and lived completely intermingled, thus became entirely useless as political bodies. A large number of Athenian citizens did not belong to any gens; they were immigrants who had been adopted into citizenship, but not into any of the old bodies of *consanguinei*. Besides, there was a steadily increasing number of foreign immigrants who only enjoyed protection.¹²⁶

Meanwhile, the struggles of the parties proceeded. The nobility tried to regain its former privileges and for a short time recovered its supremacy, until the revolution of Cleisthenes (509 B.C.) brought about its final downfall; and with them fell the last remnants of the gentile constitution.

In his new constitution, Cleisthenes ignored the four old tribes based on the *gentes* and *phratries*. Their place was taken by an entirely new organisation based exclusively on the division of the citizens according to place of domicile, already attempted in the *naucraries*. Not membership of a body of *consanguinei*, but place of domicile was now the deciding factor. Not people, but territory was now divided; politically, the inhabitants became mere attachments of the territory.

The whole of Attica was divided into one hundred self-governing townships, or demes. The citizens (demots) of a deme elected their official head (demarch), a treasurer and thirty judges with jurisdiction in minor cases. They also received their own temple and a tutelary deity, or *heros*, whose priests they elected. The supreme power in the deme was the assembly of the demots. This, as Morgan correctly remarks, is the prototype of the self-governing American municipality. The modern state in its highest development ends with the very unit with which the rising state in Athens began.

Ten of these units (demes) formed a tribe, which, however, as distinct from the old gentile tribe [*Geschlechtsstamm*], was now called a local tribe [*Ortsstamm*]. The local tribe was not only a self-governing political body, but also a military body. It elected a phylarch or tribal head, who commanded the cavalry, a taxiarch, who commanded the infantry, and a *strategos*, who was in command of the entire contingent raised in the tribal territory. Furthermore, it furnished five war vessels with crews and commander; and it received an Attic *heros*, by whose name it was known, as its guardian saint. Finally, it elected fifty councillors to the council of Athens.

The consummation was the Athenian state, governed by a council of five hundred—elected by the ten tribes—and, in the last instance, by the popular assembly, which every Athenian citizen could attend and vote in. Archons and other officials attended to the different departments of administration and the courts. In Athens there was no official possessing supreme executive authority.

By this new constitution and by the admission of a large number of dependents [*Schutzverwandter*], partly immigrants and partly freed slaves, the organs of the gentile constitution were eliminated from public affairs. They sank to the position of private associations and religious societies. But their moral influence, the traditional conceptions and views of the old gentile period, survived for a

long time and expired only gradually. This became evident in a subsequent state institution.

We have seen that an essential feature of the state is a public power distinct from the mass of the people. At that time Athens possessed only a militia and a navy equipped and manned directly by the people. These afforded protection against external enemies and held the slaves in check, who at that time already constituted the great majority of the population. For the citizens, this public power at first existed only in the shape of the police force, which is as old as the state, and that is why the naive Frenchmen of the eighteenth century spoke, not of civilised, but of policed nations (*nations policées*).* Thus, simultaneously with their state, the Athenians established a police force, a veritable gendarmerie of foot and mounted bowmen—*Landjäger*, as they say in South Germany and Switzerland. This gendarmerie consisted—of *slaves*. The free Athenian regarded this police duty as being so degrading that he preferred being arrested by an armed slave rather than perform such ignominious duties himself. This was still an expression of the old gentile mentality. The state could not exist without a police force, but it was still young and did not yet command sufficient moral respect to give prestige to an occupation that necessarily appeared infamous to the old gentiles.

How well this state, now completed in its main outlines, suited the new social condition of the Athenians was apparent from the rapid growth of wealth, commerce and industry. The class antagonism on which the social and political institutions rested was no longer that between the nobles and the common people, but that between slaves and freemen, dependents and citizens. When Athens was at the height of prosperity the total number of free Athenian citizens, women and children included, amounted to about 90,000; the slaves of both sexes numbered 365,000, and

* A play on words: *policé*—civilised, *police*—police.—*Ed.*

the dependents—immigrants and freed slaves—45,000. Thus, for every adult male citizen there were at least eighteen slaves and more than two dependents. The large number of slaves is explained by the fact that many of them worked together in manufactories with large rooms under overseers. With the development of commerce and industry came the accumulation and concentration of wealth in a few hands; the mass of the free citizens was impoverished and had to choose between going into handicrafts and competing with slave labour, which was considered ignoble and base and, moreover, promised little success—and complete pauperisation. Under the prevailing circumstances what happened was the latter, and being in the majority they dragged the whole Athenian state down with them. It was not democracy that caused the downfall of Athens, as the European schoolmasters who cringe before royalty would have us believe, but slavery, which brought the labour of the free citizen into contempt.

The rise of the state among the Athenians presents a very typical example of state building in general; because, on the one hand, it took place in a pure form, without the interference of violence, external or internal (the short period of usurpation by Pisistratus left no trace behind it); because, on the other hand, it represented the rise of a highly-developed form of state, the democratic republic, emerging directly out of gentile society; and lastly, because we are sufficiently acquainted with all the essential details.

VI

THE GENS AND THE STATE IN ROME

According to the legend about the foundation of Rome, the first settlement was undertaken by a number of Latin gentes (one hundred, the legend says) united into one tribe. A Sabellian tribe, also said to consist of one hundred

gentes, soon followed, and finally a third tribe of various elements, again numbering one hundred gentes, joined them. The whole story reveals at the very first glance that here hardly anything except the gens was a natural product, and that the gens itself, in many cases, was only an offshoot of a mother gens still existing in the old habitat. The tribes bear the mark of having been artificially constituted; nevertheless, they consisted mostly of kindred elements and were formed on the model of the old, naturally grown, not artificially constituted, tribe; and it is not improbable that a genuine old tribe formed the nucleus of each of these three tribes. The connecting link, the phratry, contained ten gentes and was called the *curia*. Hence, there were thirty of them.

That the Roman gens was an institution identical with the Grecian gens is a recognised fact; if the Grecian gens was a continuation of the social unit the primitive form of which is presented by the American Redskins, then the same, naturally, holds good for the Roman gens. Hence, we can be more brief in its treatment.

At least during the earliest times of the city, the Roman gens had the following constitution:

1. Mutual right of inheritance of the property of deceased gentiles; the property remained in the gens. Since father right was already in force in the Roman gens, as it was in the Grecian gens, the offspring of female lineage were excluded. According to the law of the Twelve Tables, the oldest written law of Rome known to us,¹²⁷ the natural children had the first title to the estate; in case no natural children existed, the *agnates* (kin of *male* lineage) took their place; and in their absence came the gentiles. In all cases the property remained in the gens. Here we observe the gradual infiltration into gentile practice of new legal provisions, caused by increased wealth and monogamy: the originally equal right of inheritance of the gentiles was first limited in practice to the *agnates*, probably at a very remote date as mentioned above, and afterwards to the children

and their offspring in the male line. Of course, in the Twelve Tables this appears in reverse order.

2. Possession of a common burial place. The patrician gens Claudia, on immigrating into Rome from Regilli, received a plot and also a common burial place in the city. Even under Augustus, the head of Varus, who had fallen in the Teutoburg Forest, was brought to Rome and interred in the *gentilitius tumulus**; hence, his gens (Quinctilia) still had its own tomb.

3. Common religious celebrations. These, the *sacra gentilitia*** are well known.

4. Obligation not to marry within the gens. In Rome this does not appear to have ever become a written law, but the custom remained. Of the innumerable names of Roman married couples that have come down to our day there is not a single case where husband and wife have the same gentile name. The law of inheritance also proves this rule. A woman by her marriage forfeited her agnatic rights, left her gens, and neither she nor her children could inherit her father's property, or that of his brothers, for otherwise the father's gens would lose the property. This rule has a meaning only on the assumption that the woman was not permitted to marry a member of her own gens.

5. Possession of land in common. In primeval times this always obtained when the tribal territory was first divided. Among the Latin tribes we find the land partly in the possession of the tribe, partly of the gens, and partly of households that could hardly have represented single families at that time. Romulus is credited with having been the first to assign land to single individuals, about a hectare (two *jugera*) to each. Nevertheless, even later we still find land in the hands of the gentes, not to mention state lands, around which the whole internal history of the republic turned.

* Mound of the gens.—*Ed.*

** Sacred celebrations of the gens.—*Ed.*

6. Reciprocal obligation of members of the gens to assist and help redress injuries. Written history records only paltry remnants of this; from the outset the Roman state manifested such superior power that the duty of redress of injury devolved upon it. When Appius Claudius was arrested, his whole gens, including his personal enemies, put on mourning. At the time of the second Punic War¹²⁸ the gentes united to ransom their fellow gentiles who were in captivity; they were *forbidden* to do this by the senate.

7. Right to bear the gentile name. This was in force until the time of the emperors. Freed slaves were permitted to assume the gentile names of their former masters, although without gentile rights.

8. Right of adopting strangers into the gens. This was done by adoption into a family (as among the Red Indians), which brought with it adoption into the gens.

9. The right to elect and depose chiefs is nowhere mentioned. Inasmuch, however, as during the first period of Rome's existence all offices, from the elective king downward, were filled by election or appointment, and as the *curiae* elected also their own priests, we are justified in assuming that the same existed in regard to the gentile chiefs (*principes*)—no matter how well-established the rule of choosing the candidates from the same family may have been already.

Such were the powers of a Roman gens. With the exception of the complete transition to father right, they are the true image of the rights and duties of an Iroquois gens. Here, too, "the Iroquois is plainly discerned."

The confusion that still reigns even among our most authoritative historians on the question of the Roman gentile order is shown by the following example: In his treatise on Roman proper names of the Republican and Augustinian era (*Roman Researches*, Berlin 1864, Vol. I), Mommsen writes:

"The gentile name is not only borne by all male gentiles, including adopted persons and wards, except, of course, the slaves, but also by the women. . . . The tribe [*Stamm*] (as Mommsen here translates *gens*) is . . . a community derived from a common-actual, assumed or even invented-ancestor and united by common rites, burial places and inheritance. All personally free individuals, hence women also, may and must be registered in them. But determining the gentile name of a married woman offers some difficulty. This indeed did not exist as long as women were prohibited from marrying anyone but members of their own gens; and evidently for a long time the women found it much more difficult to marry outside the gens than in it. This right, the *gentis enuptio*,* was still bestowed as a personal privilege and reward during the sixth century. . . . But wherever such outside marriages occurred the woman in primeval times must have been transferred to the tribe of her husband. Nothing is more certain than that by the old religious marriage the woman fully joined the legal and sacramental community of her husband and left her own. Who does not know that the married woman forfeits her active and passive right of inheritance in respect to her gentiles, but enters the inheritance group of her husband, her children and his gentiles? And if her husband adopts her as his child and brings her into his family, how can she remain separated from his gens?" (Pp. 8-11.)

Thus, Mommsen asserts that Roman women belonging to a certain gens were originally free to marry only *within* their gens; according to him, the Roman gens, therefore, was endogamous, not exogamous. This opinion, which contradicts the experience of all other peoples, is principally, if not exclusively, based on a single, disputed passage in Livy (Book xxxix, ch. 19)¹²⁹ according to which the senate decreed in the year 568 of the City, that is, 186 B.C.,

uti Feceniae Hispalae datio, deminutio, gentis enuptio, tutoris optio item esset quasi ei vir testamento dedisset; utique ei ingenuo nubere liceret, neu quid ei qui eam duxisset, ob id fraudi ignominiaeve esset—that Fecenia Hispala shall have the right to dispose of her property, to diminish it, to marry outside of the gens, to choose a guardian, just as if her (deceased) husband had conferred this right on her by testament; that she shall be permitted to marry a freeman and that for the man who marries her this shall not constitute a misdemeanour or disgrace.

* Of marrying outside the gens.—Ed.

Undoubtedly, Fecenia, a freed slave, here obtained permission to marry outside of the gens. And it is equally doubtless, according to this, that the husband had the right to confer on his wife by testament the right to marry outside of the gens after his death. But outside of *which* gens?

If a woman had to marry in her gens, as Mommsen assumes, then she remained in this gens after her marriage. In the first place, however, this assertion that the gens was endogamous is the very thing to be proved. In the second place, if the woman had to marry in the gens, then naturally the man had to do the same, otherwise he could never get a wife. Then we arrive at a state where a man could by testament confer on his wife a right which he did not possess himself for his own enjoyment, which brings us to a legal absurdity. Mommsen realises this, and therefore conjectures:

"marriage outside of the gens most probably required in law not only the consent of the person authorised, but of all members of the gens." (P. 10, note.)

First, this is a very bold assumption; and secondly, it contradicts the clear wording of the passage. The senate gives her this right as her *husband's proxy*; it expressly gives her no more and no less than her husband could have given her; but what it does give is an *absolute* right, free from all restriction, so that, if she should make use of it, her new husband shall not suffer in consequence. The senate even instructs the present and future consuls and praetors to see that she suffers no inconvenience from the use of this right. Mommsen's supposition, therefore, appears to be absolutely inadmissible.

Then again: suppose a woman married a man from another gens, but remained in her own gens. According to the passage quoted above, her husband would then have the right to permit his wife to marry outside of her own gens. That is, he would have the right to make provisions

in regard to the affairs of a gens to which he did not belong at all. The thing is so utterly unreasonable that we need say no more about it.

Nothing remains but to assume that in her first marriage the woman wedded a man from another gens and thereby became without more ado a member of her husband's gens, which Mommsen himself admits for such cases. Then the whole matter at once explains itself. The woman, torn from her old gens by her marriage, and adopted into her husband's gentile group, occupies a special position in the new gens. She is now a gentile, but not a kin by blood; the manner in which she was adopted excludes from the outset all prohibition of marrying in the gens into which she has entered by marriage. She has, moreover, been adopted into the marriage group of the gens and on her husband's death inherits some of his property, that is to say, the property of a fellow member of the gens. What is more natural than that this property should remain in the gens and that she should be obliged to marry a member of her first husband's gens and no other? If, however, an exception is to be made, who is more competent to authorise this than the man who bequeathed this property to her, her first husband? At the time he bequeathed a part of his property to her and simultaneously gave her permission to transfer this property to another gens by marriage, or as a result of marriage, he was still the owner of this property; hence he was literally only disposing of his own property. As for the woman and her relation to her husband's gens, it was the husband who, by an act of his own free will—the marriage—introduced her into his gens. Thus, it appears quite natural, too, that he should be the proper person to authorise her to leave this gens by another marriage. In short, the matter appears simple and obvious as soon as we discard the strange conception of an endogamous Roman gens and, with Morgan, regard it as having originally been exogamous.

Finally, there is still another view, which has probably found the largest number of advocates, namely, that the passage in Livy only means

"that freed slave girls (*libertae*) cannot, without special permission, *e gente enubere* (marry outside of the gens) or take any step which, being connected with *capitis deminutio minima*,* would result in the *liberta* leaving the gentile group." (Lange, *Roman Antiquities*, Berlin 1856, Vol. I, p. 195, where the passage we have taken from Livy is commented on in a reference to Huschke.)

If this assumption is correct, the passage proves still less as regards the status of free Roman women, and there is so much less ground for speaking of their obligation to marry in the gens.

The expression *enuptio gentis* occurs only in this single passage and is not found anywhere else in the entire Roman literature. The word *enubere*, to marry outside, is found only three times, also in Livy, and not in reference to the gens. The fantastic idea that Roman women were permitted to marry only in their gens owes its existence solely to this single passage. But it cannot be sustained in the least; for either the passage refers to special restrictions for freed slave women, in which case it proves nothing for free-born women (*ingenuae*); or it applies also to free-born women, in which case it rather proves that the women as a rule married outside of the gens and were by their marriage transferred to their husbands' gens. Hence it speaks against Mommsen and for Morgan.

Almost three hundred years after the foundation of Rome the gentile bonds were still so strong that a patrician gens, the Fabians, with permission from the senate could undertake by itself an expedition against the neighbouring town of Veii. Three hundred and six Fabians are said to have marched out and to have been killed in an ambushade. A single boy, left behind, propagated the gens.

* Slightest loss of family rights.—*Ed.*

As we have said, ten *gentes* formed a phratry, which here was called a *curia*, and was endowed with more important functions than the Grecian phratry. Every *curia* had its own religious practices, sacred relics and priests. The latter in a body formed one of the Roman colleges of priests. Ten *curiae* formed a tribe, which probably had originally its own elected chief-leader in war and high priest-like the rest of the Latin tribes. The three tribes together formed the Roman people, the *populus Romanus*.

Thus, only those could belong to the Roman people who were members of a *gens*, and hence of a *curia* and tribe. The first constitution of this people was as follows. Public affairs were conducted by the senate composed, as Niebuhr was the first to state correctly, of the chiefs of the three hundred *gentes*; as the elders of the *gentes* they were called fathers, *patres*, and as a body senate (council of elders, from *senex*, old). Here too the customary choice of men from the same family in each *gens* brought into being the first hereditary nobility. These families called themselves patricians and claimed the exclusive right to the seats in the senate and to all other offices. The fact that in the course of time the people allowed this claim so that it became an actual right is expressed in the legend that Romulus bestowed the rank of patrician and its privileges on the first senators and their descendants. The senate, like the Athenian *boulè*, had power to decide in many affairs and to undertake the preliminary discussion of more important measures, especially of new laws. These were decided by the popular assembly, called *comitia curiata* (assembly of *curiae*). The assembled people are grouped by *curiae*, in each *curia* probably by *gentes*, and in deciding questions each of the thirty *curiae* had one vote. The assembly of *curiae* adopted or rejected laws, elected all higher officials including the *rex* (so-called king), declared war (but the senate concluded peace), and decided as a supreme court, on appeal of the parties, all cases involving capital punishment for Roman citizens.

Finally, by the side of the senate and the popular assembly stood the *rex*, corresponding exactly to the Grecian *basileus*, and by no means such an almost absolute monarch as Mommsen represents him to have been.* The *rex* also was military commander, high priest and presiding officer of certain courts. He had no civil functions, or any power over life, liberty and property of the citizens whatever, except such as resulted from his disciplinary power as military commander or from his power to execute sentence as presiding officer of the court. The office of *rex* was not hereditary; on the contrary, he was first elected, probably on the nomination of his predecessor, by the assembly of *curiae* and then solemnly invested by a second assembly. That he could also be deposed is proved by the fate of Tarquinius Superbus.

Like the Greeks in the Heroic Age, the Romans at the time of the so-called kings lived in a military democracy based on gentes, phratries and tribes, from which it developed. Even though the *curiae* and tribes may have been partly artificial formations, they were moulded after the genuine and natural models of the society in which they originated and which still surrounded them on all sides. And though the naturally developed patrician nobility had already gained ground, though the *reges* attempted gradually to enlarge the scope of their powers—this does not change the original and fundamental character of the constitution and this alone matters.

* The Latin *rex* is equivalent to the Celtic-Irish *righ* (tribal chief) and the Gothic *reiks*. That this, like our *Fürst* (English first and Danish *förste*), originally signified gentile or tribal chief is evident from the fact that the Goths in the fourth century already had a special term for the king of later times, the military chief of a whole people, namely, *thiudans*. In Ulfila's translation of the Bible Artaxerxes and Herod are never called *reiks* but *thiudans*, and the realm of the Emperor Tiberius not *reiki*, but *thiudinassus*. In the name of the Gothic *thiudans*, or king, as we inaccurately translate it, Thiudareiks, Theodorich, that is, Dietrich, both names flow together. [Note by Engels.]

Meanwhile, the population of the city of Rome and of the Roman territory, enlarged by conquest, increased, partly by immigration, partly through the inhabitants of the subjugated, mostly Latin, districts. All these new subjects (we leave out the question of the clients for the moment) were outside of the old gentes, *curiae* and tribes, and so were not part of the *populus Romanus*, the Roman people proper. They were personally free, could own land, had to pay taxes and were liable to military service. But they were not eligible for office and could neither participate in the assembly of *curiae* nor in the distribution of conquered state lands. They constituted the plebs, excluded from all public rights. Owing to their continually increasing numbers, their military training and armament, they became a menace to the old *populus* who had now closed their ranks hermetically against all increase. The land, moreover, seems to have been fairly evenly divided between *populus* and plebs, while the mercantile and industrial wealth, though as yet not very considerable, may have been mainly in the hands of the plebs.

In view of the utter darkness that enshrouds the whole legendary origin of Rome's historical beginning—a darkness intensified by the rationalistic-pragmatic attempts at interpretation and reports of later legally trained authors whose works serve us as source material—it is impossible to make any definite statements about the time, the course and the causes of the revolution that put an end to the old gentile constitution. The only thing we are certain of is that its causes lay in the conflicts between the plebs and the *populus*.

The new constitution, attributed to *rex* Servius Tullius and based on the Grecian model, more especially that of Solon, created a new popular assembly including or excluding all, *populus* and plebeians alike, according to whether they rendered military service or not. The whole male population liable to military service was divided into six classes, according to wealth. The minimum pro-

erty qualifications in the first five classes were respectively: I, 100,000 asses; II, 75,000 asses; III, 50,000 asses; IV, 25,000 asses; V, 11,000 asses; which, according to Dureau de la Malle, is equal to about 14,000, 10,500, 7,000 3,600 and 1,570 marks, respectively. The sixth class, the proletarians, consisted of those who possessed less and were exempt from military service and taxation. In the new assembly of *centuriae* (*comitia centuriata*) the citizens formed ranks after the manner of soldiers, in companies of one hundred (*centuria*), and each *centuria* had one vote. The first class placed 80 *centuriae* in the field; the second 22, the third 20, the fourth 22, the fifth 30 and the sixth, for propriety's sake, one. To these were added 18 *centuriae* of horsemen composed of the most wealthy; altogether 193. For a majority 97 votes were required. But the horsemen and the first class alone had together 98 votes, thus being in the majority; when they were united valid decisions were made without even asking the other classes.

Upon this new assembly of *centuriae* now devolved all the political rights of the former assembly of *curiae* (a few nominal ones excepted); the *curiae* and the *gentes* composing them were thereby, as was the case in Athens, degraded to the position of mere private and religious associations and as such they still vegetated for a long time, while the assembly of *curiae* soon fell into oblivion. In order to eliminate the three old gentile tribes, too, from the state, four territorial tribes were introduced, each tribe inhabiting one quarter of the city and receiving certain political rights.

Thus, in Rome also, the old social order based on personal ties of blood was destroyed even before the abolition of the so-called kingdom, and a new constitution, based on territorial division and distinction of wealth, a real state constitution, took its place. The public power here consisted of the citizenry liable to military service, and was directed not only against the slaves, but also

against the so-called proletarians, who were excluded from military service and the right to carry arms.

The new constitution was merely further developed upon the expulsion of the last *rex*, Tarquinius Superbus, who had usurped real royal power, and the institution, in place of the *rex*, of two military commanders (consuls) with equal powers (as among the Iroquois). Within this constitution moved the whole history of the Roman republic with all its struggles between patricians and plebeians for admission to office and a share in the state lands; and the final dissolution of the patrician nobility in the new class of big land and money owners, who gradually absorbed all the land of the peasants ruined by military service, cultivated with the aid of slaves the enormous new tracts thus created, depopulated Italy, and thus opened the gates not only to imperial rule, but also to its successors, the German barbarians.

VIII

THE FORMATION OF THE STATE AMONG THE GERMANS

According to Tacitus the Germans were a very numerous people. An approximate idea of the strength of the different German peoples is given by Caesar; he puts the number of Usipetans and Tencterans, who appeared on the left bank of the Rhine, at 180,000, including women and children. Thus, about 100,000 to a single people,* considerably more than, say, the Iroquois numbered in their most flourishing period, when not quite 20,000 be-

* The number taken here is confirmed by a passage in Diodorus on the Celts of Gaul: "In Gaul live numerous peoples of unequal strength. The biggest of them numbers about 200,000, the smallest 50,000." (Diodorus Siculus, V, 25.) That gives an average of 125,000. The individual Gallic peoples, being more highly developed, must certainly have been more numerous than the German. [*Note by Engels.*]

came the terror of the whole country, from the Great Lakes to the Ohio and Potomac. If we were to attempt to group on a map the individual peoples of the Rhine country, who are better known to us from reports, we would find that such a people would occupy on the average the area of a Prussian administrative district, about 10,000 square kilometres, or 182 geographical square miles. The *Germania Magna** of the Romans, reaching to the Vistula, comprised, however, roundly 500,000 square kilometres. Counting an average of 100,000 for any single people, the total population of *Germania Magna* would have amounted to five million—a rather high figure for a barbarian group of peoples, although 10 inhabitants to the square kilometre, or 550 to the geographical square mile, is very little when compared with present conditions. But this does not include all the Germans then living. We know that German peoples of Gothic origin, Bastarnians, Peukinians and others, lived along the Carpathian Mountains all the way down to the mouth of the Danube. They were so numerous that Pliny designated them as the fifth main tribe of the Germans; in 180 B.C. they were already serving as mercenaries of the Macedonian King Perseus, and in the first years of the reign of Augustus they were still pushing their way as far as the vicinity of Adrianople. If we assume that they numbered only one million, then, at the beginning of the Christian era, the Germans numbered probably not less than six million.

After settling in Germany [*Germanien*], the population must have grown with increasing rapidity. The industrial progress mentioned above is sufficient to prove it. The objects found in the bogs of Schleswig, to judge by the Roman coins found with them, date from the third century. Hence at that time the metal and textile industry was already well developed on the Baltic, a lively trade was carried on with the Roman Empire, and the wealthier class

* *Germania Magna*: Greater Germany.—Ed.

enjoyed a certain luxury—all evidences of a greater density of population. At this time, however, the Germans started their general assault along the whole line of the Rhine, the Roman frontier rampart and the Danube, a line stretching from the North Sea to the Black Sea—direct proof of the ever-growing population striving outwards. During the three centuries of struggle, the whole main body of the Gothic peoples (with the exception of the Scandinavian Goths and the Burgundians) moved towards the South-East and formed the left wing of the long line of attack; the High Germans (Herminonians) pushed forward in the centre of this line, on the Upper Danube, and the Istaevonians, now called Franks, on the right wing, along the Rhine. The conquest of Britain fell to the lot of the Ingaevonians. At the end of the fifth century the Roman Empire, exhausted, bloodless and helpless, lay open to the invading Germans.

In preceding chapters we stood at the cradle of ancient Greek and Roman civilisation. Now we are standing at its grave. The levelling plane of Roman world power had been passing for centuries over all the Mediterranean countries. Where the Greek language offered no resistance all national languages gave way to a corrupt Latin. There were no longer any distinctions of nationality, no more Gauls, Iberians, Ligurians, Noricans; all had become Romans. Roman administration and Roman law had everywhere dissolved the old bodies of *consanguinei* and thus crushed the last remnants of local and national self-expression. The new-fangled Romanism could not compensate for this loss; it did not express any nationality, but only lack of nationality. The elements for the formation of new nations existed everywhere. The Latin dialects of the different provinces diverged more and more; the natural boundaries that had once made Italy, Gaul, Spain, Africa independent territories, still existed and still made themselves felt. Yet nowhere was there a force capable of combining these elements into new nations; nowhere was

there the least trace of any capacity for development or any power of resistance, much less of creative power. The immense human mass of that enormous territory was held together by one bond alone—the Roman state; and this, in time, had become their worst enemy and oppressor. The provinces had ruined Rome; Rome itself had become a provincial town like all the others, privileged, but no longer ruling, no longer the centre of the world empire, no longer even the seat of the emperors and vice-emperors, who lived in Constantinople, Trèves and Milan. The Roman state had become an immense complicated machine, designed exclusively for the exploitation of its subjects. Taxes, services for the state and levies of all kinds drove the mass of the people deeper and deeper into poverty. The extortionate practices of the procurators, tax collectors and soldiers caused the pressure to become intolerable. This is what the Roman state with its world domination had brought things to: it had based its right to existence on the preservation of order in the interior and protection against the barbarians outside. But its order was worse than the worst disorder, and the barbarians, against whom the state pretended to protect its citizens, were hailed by them as saviours.

Social conditions were no less desperate. During the last years of the republic, Roman rule was already based on the ruthless exploitation of the conquered provinces. The emperors had not abolished this exploitation; on the contrary, they had regularised it. The more the empire fell into decay, the higher rose the taxes and compulsory services, and the more shamelessly the officials robbed and blackmailed the people. Commerce and industry were never the business of the Romans who lorded it over entire peoples. Only in usury did they excel all others, before and after them. The commerce that existed and managed to maintain itself for a time was reduced to ruin by official extortion; what survived was carried on in the eastern, Grecian, part of the empire, but this is beyond

the scope of our study. Universal impoverishment; decline of commerce, handicrafts, the arts, and of the population; decay of the towns; retrogression of agriculture to a lower stage—this was the final result of Roman world supremacy.

Agriculture, the decisive branch of production throughout antiquity, now became so more than ever. In Italy, the immense aggregations of estates (*latifundia*) which had covered nearly the whole territory since the end of the republic, had been utilised in two ways: either as pastures, on which the population had been replaced by sheep and oxen, the care of which required only a few slaves; or as country estates, on which large-scale horticulture had been carried on with masses of slaves, partly to serve the luxurious needs of the owners and partly for sale in the urban markets. The great pastures had been preserved and probably even enlarged. But the country estates and their horticulture fell into ruin owing to the impoverishment of their owners and the decay of the towns. Latifundian economy based on slave labour was no longer profitable; but at that time it was the only possible form of large-scale agriculture. Small-scale farming again became the only profitable form. Estate after estate was parcelled out and leased in small lots to hereditary tenants, who paid a fixed sum, or to *partiarii*,* farm managers rather than tenants, who received one-sixth or even only one-ninth of the year's product for their work. Mainly, however, these small plots were distributed to *coloni*, who paid a fixed amount annually, were attached to the land and could be sold together with the plots. These were not slaves, but neither were they free; they could not marry free citizens, and intermarriage among themselves was not regarded as valid marriage, but as mere concubinage (*contubernium*), as in the case of the slaves. They were the forerunners of the mediaeval serfs.

* Sharecroppers.—Ed.

The slavery of antiquity became obsolete. Neither in large-scale agriculture in the country, nor in the manufactories of the towns did it any longer bring in a return worth while—the market for its products had disappeared. Small-scale agriculture and small handicrafts, to which the gigantic production of the flourishing times of the empire was now reduced, had no room for numerous slaves. Society found room only for the domestic and luxury slaves of the rich. But moribund slavery was still sufficiently virile to make all productive work appear as slave labour, unworthy of the dignity of free Romans—and everybody was now a free Roman. On this account, on the one hand, there was an increase in the number of superfluous slaves who, having become a drag, were emancipated; on the other hand, there was an increase in the number of *coloni* and of beggared freemen (similar to the poor whites in the ex-slave states of America). Christianity is perfectly innocent of this gradual dying out of ancient slavery. It had partaken of the fruits of slavery in the Roman Empire for centuries, and later did nothing to prevent the slave trade of Christians, either of the Germans in the North, or of the Venetians on the Mediterranean, or the Negro slave trade of later years.* Slavery no longer paid, and so it died out; but dying slavery left behind its poisonous sting by branding as ignoble the productive work of the free. This was the blind alley in which the Roman world was caught: slavery was economically impossible, while the labour of the free was under a moral ban. The one could no longer, the other could not yet, be the basic form of social production. Only a complete revolution could be of help here.

Things were no better in the provinces. Most of the re-

* According to Bishop Liutprand of Cremona, the principal industry of Verdun in the tenth century, that is, in the Holy German Empire, was the manufacture of eunuchs, who were exported with great profit to Spain for the harems of the Moors. [Note by Engels.]

ports we have concern Gaul. By the side of the *coloni*, free small peasants still existed there. In order to protect themselves against the brutal extortions of the officials, judges and usurers, they frequently placed themselves under the protection, the patronage, of men possessed of power; and they did this not only singly, but in whole communities, so much so that the emperors of the fourth century often issued decrees prohibiting this practice. How did this help those who sought this protection? The patron imposed the condition that they transfer the title of their lands to him, and in return he ensured them the usufruct of their land for life—a trick which the Holy Church remembered and freely imitated during the ninth and tenth centuries, for the greater glory of God and the enlargement of its own landed possessions. At that time, however, about the year 475, Bishop Salvianus of Marseilles still vehemently denounced such robbery and related that the oppression of the Roman officials and great landlords became so intolerable that many "Romans" fled to the districts already occupied by the barbarians, and the Roman citizens who had settled there feared nothing so much as falling under Roman rule again. That poor parents frequently sold their children into slavery in those days is proved by a law forbidding this practice.

In return for liberating the Romans from their own state, the German barbarians appropriated two-thirds of the entire land and divided it among themselves. The division was made in accordance with the gentile system; as the conquerors were relatively small in number, large tracts remained, undivided, partly in the possession of the whole people and partly in that of the tribes or gentes. In each gens fields and pastures were distributed among the individual households in equal shares by lot. We do not know whether repeated redivisions took place at that time; at all events, this practice was soon discarded in the Roman provinces, and the individual allotment became alienable private property, allodium. Forests and pastures

remained undivided for common use; this use and the mode of cultivating the divided land were regulated by ancient custom and the will of the entire community. The longer the gens existed in its village, and the more Germans and Romans merged in the course of time, the more the consanguineous character of the ties retreated before territorial ties. The gens disappeared in the Mark community, in which, however, sufficient traces of the original kinship of the members were visible. Thus, the gentile constitution, at least in those countries where Mark communes were preserved—in the North of France, in England, Germany and Scandinavia—was imperceptibly transformed into a territorial constitution, and thus became capable of being fitted into the state. Nevertheless, it retained the natural democratic character which distinguishes the whole gentile order, and thus preserved a piece of the gentile constitution even in its degeneration, forced upon it in later times, thereby leaving a weapon in the hands of the oppressed, ready to be wielded even in modern times.

The rapid disappearance of the blood tie in the gens was due to the fact that its organs in the tribe and the whole people had also degenerated as a result of the conquest. We know that rule over subjugated people is incompatible with the gentile order. Here we see it on a large scale. The German peoples, masters of the Roman provinces, had to organise their conquest; but one could neither absorb the mass of the Romans into the gentile bodies nor rule them with the aid of the latter. A substitute for the Roman state had to be placed at the head of the Roman local administrative bodies, which at first largely continued to function, and this substitute could only be another state. Thus, the organs of the gentile constitution had to be transformed into organs of state, and owing to the pressure of circumstances, this had to be done very quickly. The first representative of the conquering people was, however, the military commander. The internal and external safety of the conquered ter-

ritory demanded that his power be increased. The moment had arrived for transforming military leadership into kingship. This was done.

Let us take the kingdom of the Franks. Here, not only the wide dominions of the Roman state, but also all the very large tracts of land that had not been assigned to the large and small *gau* and Mark communities, especially all the large forests, fell into the hands of the victorious Salian people as their unrestricted possession. The first thing the king of the Franks, transformed from an ordinary military commander into a real monarch, did was to convert this property of the people into a royal estate, to steal it from the people and to donate or grant it in fief to his retainers. This retinue, originally composed of his personal military retainers and the rest of the subcommanders of the army, was soon augmented not only by Romans, that is, Romanised Gauls, who quickly became almost indispensable to him owing to their knowledge of writing, their education and familiarity with the Romance vernacular and literary Latin as well as with the laws of the land, but also by slaves, serfs and freedmen, who constituted his Court and from among whom he chose his favourites. All these were granted tracts of public land, first mostly as gifts and later in the form of benefices—originally in most cases for the period of the life of the king—and so the basis was laid for a new nobility at the expense of the people.

But this was not all. The far-flung empire could not be governed by means of the old gentile constitution. The council of chiefs, even if it had not long become obsolete, could not have assembled and was soon replaced by the king's permanent retinue. The old popular assembly was still ostensibly preserved, but more and more as an assembly of the subcommanders of the army and the newly-rising notables. The free landowning peasants, the mass of the Frankish people, were exhausted and reduced to penury by continuous civil war and wars of conquest, the

latter particularly under Charlemagne, just as the Roman peasants had been during the last period of the republic. These peasants, who originally had formed the whole army, and after the conquest of the Frankish lands had been its core, were so impoverished at the beginning of the ninth century that scarcely one out of five could provide the accoutrements of war. The former army of free peasants, called up directly by the king, was replaced by an army composed of the servitors of the newly-arisen magnates. Among these servitors were also villeins, the descendants of the peasants who formerly had acknowledged no master but the king, and a little earlier had acknowledged no master at all, not even a king. Under Charlemagne's successors the ruin of the Frankish peasantry was completed by internal wars, the weakness of the royal power and corresponding usurpations of the magnates, whose ranks were augmented by the *gau* counts, established by Charlemagne and eager to make their office hereditary, and finally by the incursions of the Normans. Fifty years after the death of Charlemagne, the Frankish Empire lay as helpless at the feet of the Normans as four hundred years previously the Roman Empire had lain at the feet of the Franks.

Not only the external impotence, but the internal order, or rather disorder, of society, was almost the same. The free Frankish peasants found themselves in a position similar to that of their predecessors, the Roman *coloni*. Ruined by war and plunder, they had to seek the protection of the new magnates or the Church, for the royal power was too weak to protect them; they had to pay dear for this protection. Like the Gallic peasants before them, they had to transfer the property in their land to their patrons, and received it back from them as tenants in different and varying forms, but always on condition of performing services and paying dues. Once driven into this form of dependence, they gradually lost their personal freedom; after a few generations most of them be-

came serfs. How rapidly the free peasants were degraded is shown by Irminon's land records of the Abbey Saint-Germain-des-Prés, then near, now in, Paris. Even during the life of Charlemagne, on the vast estates of this abbey, stretching into the surrounding country, there were 2,788 households, nearly all Franks with German names; 2,080 of them were *coloni*, 35 *liti*, 220 slaves and only 8 freeholders! The custom by which the patron had the land of the peasants transferred to himself, giving to them only the usufruct of it for life, the custom denounced as ungodly by Salvianus, was now universally practised by the Church in its dealings with the peasants. Feudal servitude, now coming more and more into vogue, was modelled as much on the lines of the Roman *angariae*,¹³⁰ compulsory services for the state, as on the services rendered by the members of the German Mark in bridge and road building and other work for common purposes. Thus, it looked as if, after four hundred years, the mass of the population had come back to the point it had started from.

This proved only two things, however: First, that the social stratification and the distribution of property in the declining Roman Empire corresponded entirely to the then prevailing stage of production in agriculture and industry, and hence was unavoidable; secondly, that this stage of production had not sunk or risen to any material extent in the course of the following four hundred years, and, therefore, had necessarily produced the same distribution of property and the same class division of population. During the last centuries of the Roman Empire, the town lost its supremacy over the country, and did not regain it during the first centuries of German rule. This presupposes a low stage of agriculture, and of industry as well. Such a general condition necessarily gives rise to big ruling landowners and dependent small peasants. How almost impossible it was to graft either the Roman latifundian economy run with slave labour or the newer large-scale farming run with serf labour on to such a so-

ciety, is proved by Charlemagne's very extensive experiments with his famous imperial estates, which passed away leaving hardly a trace. These experiments were continued only by the monasteries and were fruitful only for them; but the monasteries were abnormal social bodies founded on celibacy. They could do the exceptional, and for that very reason had to remain exceptions.

Nevertheless, progress was made during these four hundred years. Even if in the end we find almost the same main classes as in the beginning, still, the people who constituted these classes had changed. The ancient slavery had disappeared; gone were also the beggared poor free-men, who had despised work as slavish. Between the Roman *colonus* and the new serf there had been the free Frankish peasant. The "useless reminiscences and vain strife" of doomed Romanism were dead and buried. The social classes of the ninth century had taken shape not in the bog of a declining civilisation, but in the travail of a new. The new race, masters as well as servants, was a race of men compared with its Roman predecessors. The relation of powerful landlords and serving peasants, which for the latter had been the hopeless form of the decline of the world of antiquity, was now for the former the starting-point of a new development. Moreover, unproductive as these four hundred years appear to have been, they, nevertheless, left *one* great product behind them: the modern nationalities, the refashioning and regrouping of West-European humanity for impending history. The Germans, in fact, had infused new life into Europe; and that is why the dissolution of the states in the German period ended, not in Norse-Saracen subjugation, but in the development from the royal benefices and patronage (commendation) to feudalism, and in such a tremendous increase in the population that the drain of blood caused by the Crusades barely two centuries later could be borne without injury.

What was the mysterious charm with which the Ger-

mans infused new vitality into dying Europe? Was it the innate magic power of the German race, as our jingo historians would have it? By no means. Of course, the Germans were a highly gifted Aryan tribe, especially at that time, in full process of vigorous development. It was not their specific national qualities that rejuvenated Europe, however, but simply—their barbarism, their gentile constitution.

Their personal efficiency and bravery, their love of liberty, and their democratic instinct, which regarded all public affairs as its own affairs, in short, all those qualities which the Romans had lost and which were alone capable of forming new states and of raising new nationalities out of the muck of the Roman world—what were they but the characteristic features of barbarians in the upper stage, fruits of their gentile constitution?

If they transformed the ancient form of monogamy, moderated male rule in the family and gave a higher status to women than the classic world had ever known, what enabled them to do so if not their barbarism, their gentile customs, their still living heritage of the time of mother right?

If they were able in at least three of the most important countries—Germany, Northern France and England—to preserve and carry over to the feudal state a piece of the genuine constitution in the form of the Mark communities, and thus give to the oppressed class, the peasants, even under the hardest conditions of mediaeval serfdom, local cohesion and the means of resistance which neither the slaves of antiquity nor the modern proletarians found ready at hand—to what did they owe this if not to their barbarism, their exclusively barbarian mode of settling in gentes?

And lastly, if they were able to develop and universally introduce the milder form of servitude which they had been practising at home, and which more and more displaced slavery also in the Roman Empire—a form which,

as Fourier first emphasised, gave to the oppressed the means of gradual emancipation *as a class* (*tournit aux cultivateurs des moyens d'affranchissement collectif et progressif**) and is therefore far superior to slavery, which permits only of the immediate manumission of the individual without any transitory stage (antiquity did not know any abolition of slavery by a victorious rebellion), whereas the serfs of the Middle Ages, step by step, achieved their emancipation as a class—to what was this due if not their barbarism, thanks to which they had not yet arrived at complete slavery, either in the form of the ancient labour slavery or in that of the Oriental domestic slavery?

All that was vital and life-bringing in what the Germans infused into the Roman world was barbarism. In fact, only barbarians are capable of rejuvenating a world labouring in the throes of a dying civilisation. And the highest stage of barbarism, to which and in which the Germans worked their way up previous to the migration of peoples, was precisely the most favourable one for this process. This explains everything.

IX

BARBARISM AND CIVILISATION

We have traced the dissolution of the gentile order in the three great separate examples: Greek, Roman, and German. We shall investigate, in conclusion, the general economic conditions that had already undermined the gentile organisation of society in the upper stage of barbarism and completely abolished it with the advent of civilisation. For this, Marx's *Capital* will be as necessary as Morgan's book.

Growing out of the middle stage and developing further in the upper stage of savagery, the gens reached its prime, as far as our sources enable us to judge, in the

* Furnishes for the cultivators means of collective and gradual emancipation.—*Ed.*

lower stage of barbarism. With this stage, then, we shall begin our investigation.

At this stage, for which the American Indians must serve as our example, we find the gentile system fully developed. A tribe was divided up into several, in most cases two, gentes; with the increase of the population, these original gentes again divided into several daughter gentes, in relation to which the mother gens appeared as the phratry; the tribe itself split up into several tribes, in each of which, in most cases, we again find the old gentes. In some cases, at least, a confederacy united the kindred tribes. This simple organisation was fully adequate for the social conditions from which it sprang. It was nothing more than a peculiar natural grouping, capable of smoothing out all internal conflicts likely to arise in a society organised on these lines. In the realm of the external, conflicts were settled by war, which could end in the annihilation of a tribe, but never in its subjugation. The grandeur and at the same time the limitation of the gentile order was that it found no place for rulers and ruled. In the realm of the internal, there was as yet no distinction between rights and duties; the question of whether participation in public affairs, blood revenge or atonement for injuries was a right or a duty never confronted the Indian; it would have appeared as absurd to him as the question of whether eating, sleeping or hunting was a right or a duty. Nor could any tribe or gens split up into different classes. This leads us to the investigation of the economic basis of those conditions.

The population was very sparse. It was dense only in the habitat of the tribe, surrounded by its wide hunting grounds and beyond these the neutral protective forest which separated it from other tribes. Division of labour was a pure and simple outgrowth of nature; it existed only between the two sexes. The men went to war, hunted, fished, provided the raw material for food and the tools necessary for these pursuits. The women cared for

the house, and prepared food and clothing; they cooked, weaved and sewed. Each was master in his or her own field of activity: the men in the forest, the women in the house. Each owned the tools he or she made and used: the men, the weapons and the hunting and fishing tackle, the women, the household goods and utensils. The household was communistic, comprising several, and often many, families.* Whatever was produced and used in common was common property: the house, the garden, the long boat. Here, and only here, then, do we find the "earned property" which jurists and economists have falsely attributed to civilised society—the last mendacious legal pretext on which modern capitalist property rests.

But man did not everywhere remain in this stage. In Asia he found animals that could be domesticated and propagated in captivity. The wild buffalo cow had to be hunted down; the domestic cow gave birth to a calf once a year, and also provided milk. A number of the most advanced tribes—Aryans, Semites, perhaps also the Turanians—made the domestication, and later the raising and tending of cattle, their principal occupation. Pastoral tribes separated themselves from the general mass of the barbarians: *the first great social division of labour*. These pastoral tribes not only produced more articles of food, but also a greater variety than the rest of the barbarians. They not only had milk, milk products and meat in greater abundance than the others, but also skins, wool, goat's hair, and the spun and woven fabrics which the increasing quantities of the raw material brought into common use. This, for the first time, made regular exchange possible. At the preceding stages, exchange could only take place occasionally; exceptional ability in the making of

* Especially on the North-West coast of America; see Bancroft. Among the Haidas of the Queen Charlotte Islands some households gather as many as seven hundred members under one roof. Among the Nootkas, whole tribes lived under one roof. [Note by Engels.]

weapons and tools may have led to a transient division of labour. Thus, unquestionable remains of workshops for stone implements of the neolithic period have been found in many places. The artificers who developed their ability in those workshops most probably worked for the community, as the permanent handicraftsmen of the Indian gentile communities still do. At any rate, no other exchange than that within the tribe could arise in that stage, and even that was an exception. After the crystallisation of the pastoral tribes, however, we find here all the conditions favourable for exchange between members of different tribes, and for its further development and consolidation as a regular institution. Originally, tribe exchange with tribe through their respective gentile chiefs. When, however, the herds began to be converted into separate property, exchange between individuals predominated more and more, until eventually it became the sole form. The principal article which the pastoral tribes offered their neighbours for exchange was cattle; cattle became the commodity by which all other commodities were appraised, and was everywhere readily taken in exchange for other commodities—in short, cattle assumed the function of money and served as money already at this stage. Such was the necessity and rapidity with which the demand for a money commodity developed at the very beginning of commodity exchange.

Horticulture, probably unknown to the Asiatic barbarians of the lower stage, arose, among them, at the latest, at the middle stage, as the forerunner of field agriculture. The climate of the Turanian Highlands does not admit of a pastoral life without a supply of fodder for the long and severe winter. Hence, the cultivation of meadows and grain was here indispensable. The same is true of the steppes north of the Black Sea. Once grain was grown for cattle, it soon became human food. The cultivated land still remained tribal property and was assigned first to the gens, which, later, in its turn distributed it to the

household communities for their use, and finally to individuals; these may have had certain rights of possession, but no more.

Of the industrial achievements of this stage two are particularly important. The first is the weaving loom, the second, the smelting of metal ore and the working up of metals. Copper, tin, and their alloy, bronze, were by far the most important; bronze furnished useful tools and weapons, but could not displace stone implements. Only iron could do that, but its production was as yet unknown. Gold and silver began to be used for ornament and decoration, and must already have been of far higher value than copper and bronze.

The increase of production in all branches—cattle breeding, agriculture, domestic handicrafts—enabled human labour power to produce more than was necessary for its maintenance. At the same time, it increased the amount of work that daily fell to the lot of every member of the gens or household community or single family. The addition of more labour power became desirable. This was furnished by war; captives were made slaves. Under the given general historical conditions, the first great social division of labour, by increasing the productivity of labour, that is, wealth, and enlarging the field of production, necessarily carried slavery in its wake. Out of the first great social division of labour arose the first great division of society, into two classes: masters and slaves, exploiters and exploited.

How and when the herds and flocks were converted from the common property of the tribe or gens into the property of the individual heads of families we do not know to this day; but it must have occurred, in the main, at this stage. The herds and the other new objects of wealth brought about a revolution in the family. Gaining a livelihood had always been the business of the man; he produced and owned the means therefore. The herds were the new means of gaining a livelihood, and their original

domestication and subsequent tending was his work. Hence, he owned the cattle, and the commodities and slaves obtained in exchange for them. All the surplus now resulting from production fell to the man; the woman shared in consuming it, but she had no share in owning it. The "savage" warrior and hunter had been content to occupy second place in the house and give precedence to the woman. The "gentler" shepherd, presuming upon his wealth, pushed forward to first place and forced the woman into second place. And she could not complain. Division of labour in the family had regulated the distribution of property between man and wife. This division of labour remained unchanged, and yet it now put the former domestic relationship topsy-turvy simply because the division of labour outside the family had changed. The very cause that had formerly made the woman supreme in the house, namely, her being confined to domestic work, now assured supremacy in the house for the man: the woman's housework lost its significance compared with the man's work in obtaining a livelihood; the latter was everything, the former an insignificant contribution. Here we see already that the emancipation of women and their equality with men are impossible and must remain so as long as women are excluded from socially productive work and restricted to housework, which is private. The emancipation of women becomes possible only when women are enabled to take part in production on a large, social scale, and when domestic duties require their attention only to a minor degree. And this has become possible only as a result of modern large-scale industry, which not only permits of the participation of women in production in large numbers, but actually calls for it and, moreover, strives to convert private domestic work also into a public industry.

His achievement of actual supremacy in the house threw down the last barrier to the man's autocracy. This autocracy was confirmed and perpetuated by the overthrow of mother right, the introduction of father right and the

gradual transition from the pairing family to monogamy. This made a breach in the old gentile order: the monogamian family became a power and rose threateningly against the gens.

The next step brings us to the upper stage of barbarism, the period in which all civilised peoples passed through their Heroic Age: it is the period of the iron sword, but also of the iron ploughshare and axe. Iron became the servant of man, the last and most important of all raw materials that played a revolutionary role in history, the last—if we except the potato. Iron made possible field agriculture on a larger scale and the clearing of extensive forest tracts for cultivation; it gave the craftsman a tool of such hardness and sharpness that no stone, no other known metal, could withstand it. All this came about gradually; the first iron produced was often softer than bronze. Thus, stone weapons disappeared but slowly; stone axes were still used in battle not only in the Hildebrand Song, but also at the battle of Hastings, in 1066.¹³¹ But progress was now irresistible, less interrupted and more rapid. The town, inclosing houses of stone or brick within its turreted and crenellated stone walls, became the central seat of the tribe or confederacy of tribes. It marked rapid progress in the art of buildings; but it was also a symptom of increased danger and need for protection. Wealth increased rapidly, but it was the wealth of single individuals. Weaving, metalworking and the other crafts that were becoming more and more specialised displayed increasing variety and artistic finish in their products; agriculture now provided not only cereals, leguminous plants and fruit, but also oil and wine, the preparation of which had now been learned. Such diverse activities could no longer be conducted by any single individual; *the second great division of labour* took place; handicrafts separated from agriculture. The continued increase of production and with it the increased productivity of labour enhanced the value of human labour power.

Slavery, which had been a nascent and sporadic factor in the preceding stage, now became an essential part of the social system. The slaves ceased to be simply assistants, but they were now driven in scores to work in the fields and workshops. The division of production into two great branches, agriculture and handicrafts, gave rise to production for exchange, the production of commodities; and with it came trade, not only in the interior and on the tribal boundaries, but also overseas. All this was still very undeveloped; the precious metals gained preference as the universal money commodity, but it was not yet minted and was exchanged merely by bare weight.

The distinction between rich and poor was added to that between freemen and slaves—with the new division of labour came a new division of society into classes. The differences in the wealth of the various heads of families caused the old communistic household communities to break up wherever they had still been preserved; and this put an end to the common cultivation of the soil for the account of the community. The cultivated land was assigned for use to the several families, first for a limited time and later in perpetuity; the transition to complete private ownership was accomplished gradually and simultaneously with the transition from the pairing family to monogamy. The individual family began to be the economic unit of society.

The increased density of the population necessitated closer union internally and externally. Everywhere the federation of kindred tribes became a necessity, and soon after, their amalgamation; and thence the amalgamation of the separate tribal territories into a single territory of the people. The military commander of the people—*rex*, *basileus*, *thiudans*—became an indispensable and permanent official. The popular assembly was instituted wherever it did not yet exist. The military commander, the council and the popular assembly formed the organs of the military democracy into which gentile society had developed. A military democracy—because war and organi-

sation for war were now regular functions of the life of the people. The wealth of their neighbours excited the greed of the peoples who began to regard the acquisition of wealth as one of the main purposes in life. They were barbarians: plunder appeared to them easier and even more honourable than productive work. War, once waged simply to avenge aggression or as a means of enlarging territory that had become inadequate, was now waged for the sake of plunder alone, and became a regular profession. It was not for nothing that formidable walls were reared around the new fortified towns: their yawning moats were the graves of the gentile constitution, and their turrets already reached up into civilisation. Internal affairs underwent a similar change. The robber wars increased the power of the supreme military commander as well as of the subcommanders. The customary election of successors from one family, especially after the introduction of father right, was gradually transformed into hereditary succession, first tolerated, then claimed and finally usurped; the foundation of hereditary royalty and hereditary nobility was laid. In this manner the organs of the gentile constitution were gradually torn from their roots in the people, in gens, phratry and tribe, and the whole gentile order was transformed into its opposite: from an organisation of tribes for the free administration of their own affairs it became an organisation for plundering and oppressing their neighbours; and correspondingly its organs were transformed from instruments of the will of the people into independent organs for ruling and oppressing their own people. This could not have happened had not the greed for wealth divided the members of the gentes into rich and poor; had not "property differences in a gens changed the community of interest into antagonism between members of a gens" (Marx)¹³²; and had not the growth of slavery already begun to brand working for a living as slavish and more ignominious than engaging in plunder.

* * *

This brings us to the threshold of civilisation. This stage is inaugurated by further progress in division of labour. In the lowest stage men produced only for their own direct needs; exchange was confined to sporadic cases when a surplus was accidentally obtained. In the middle stage of barbarism we find that the pastoral peoples had in their cattle a form of property which, with sufficiently large herds and flocks, regularly provided a surplus over and above their needs; and we also find a division of labour between the pastoral peoples and backward tribes without herds, so that there were two different stages of production side by side, which created the conditions for regular exchange. The upper stage of barbarism introduced a further division of labour, between agriculture and handicrafts, resulting in the production of a continually increasing portion of commodities especially for exchange, so that exchange between individual producers reached the point where it became a vital necessity for society. Civilisation strengthened and increased all the established divisions of labour, particularly by intensifying the contrast between town and country (either the town exercising economic supremacy over the country, as in antiquity, or the country over the town, as in the Middle Ages) and added a third division of labour, peculiar to itself and of decisive importance: it created a class that took no part in production, but engaged exclusively in exchanging products—the *merchants*. All previous inchoative formations of classes were exclusively connected with production; they divided those engaged in production into managers and performers, or into producers on a large scale and producers on a small scale. Here a class appears for the first time which, without taking any part in production, captures the management of production as a whole and economically subjugates the producers to its rule; a class that makes itself the indispensable intermediary between any two producers and exploits them both. On the pretext of saving the producers the trouble and risk of ex-

change, of finding distant markets for their products, and of thus becoming the most useful class in society, a class of parasites arises, genuine social sycophants, who, as a reward for very insignificant real services, skim the cream off production at home and abroad, rapidly amass enormous wealth and corresponding social influence, and for this very reason are destined to reap ever new honours and gain increasing control over production during the period of civilisation, until they at last create a product of their own—periodic commercial crises.

At the stage of development we are discussing, the young merchant class had no inkling as yet of the big things that were in store for it. But it took shape and made itself indispensable, and that was sufficient. With it, however, *metal money*, minted coins, came into use, and with this a new means by which the non-producer could rule the producer and his products. The commodity of commodities, which conceals within itself of all other commodities, was discovered; the charm that can transform itself at will into anything desirable and desired. Whoever possessed it ruled the world of production; and who had it above all others? The merchant. In his hands the cult of money was safe. He took care to make it plain that all commodities, and hence all commodity producers, must grovel in the dust before money. He proved in practice that all other forms of wealth were mere semblances compared with this incarnation of wealth as such. Never again has the power of money revealed itself with such primitive crudity and violence as it did in this period of its youth. After the sale of commodities for money came the lending of money, entailing interest and usury. And no legislation of any later period throws the debtor so pitilessly and helplessly at the feet of the usurious creditor as that of ancient Athens and Rome—both sets of law arose spontaneously, as common law, without other than economic compulsion.

Besides wealth in commodities and slaves, besides mon-

ey wealth, wealth in the form of land came into being. The titles of individuals to parcels of land originally assigned to them by the gens or tribe were now so well established that these parcels became their hereditary property. The thing they had been striving for most just before that time was liberation from the claim of the gentile community to their parcels of land, a claim which had become a fetter for them. They were freed from this fetter—but soon after also from their new landed property. The full, free ownership of land implied not only possibility of unrestricted and uncurtailed possession, but also possibility of alienating it. As long as the land belonged to the gens there was no such possibility. But when the new landowner shook off the chains of the paramount title of the gens and tribe, he also tore the bond that had so long tied him inseparably to the soil. What that meant was made plain to him by the money invented simultaneously with the advent of private property in land. Land could now become a commodity which could be sold and pledged. Hardly had the private ownership of land been introduced when mortgage was discovered (see Athens). Just as hetaerism and prostitution clung to the heels of monogamy, so from now on mortgage clung to the ownership of land. You clamoured for free, full, alienable ownership of land. Well, here you have it—*tu l'as voulu*,* Georges Dandin!

Commercial expansion, money, usury, landed property and mortgage were thus accompanied by the rapid concentration and centralisation of wealth in the hands of a small class, on the one hand, and by the increasing impoverishment of the masses and a growing mass of paupers, on the other. The new aristocracy of wealth, in so far as it did not from the outset coincide with the old tribal nobility, forced the latter permanently into the back-

* You wanted it. This expression is taken from Molière's comedy *Georges Dandin*.—Ed.

ground (in Athens, in Rome, among the Germans). And this division of freemen into classes according to their wealth was accompanied, especially in Greece, by an enormous increase in the number of slaves,* whose forced labour formed the basis on which the superstructure of all society was reared.

Let us now see what became of the gentile constitution as a result of this social revolution. It stood powerless in face of the new elements that had grown up without its aid. It was dependent on the condition that the members of a gens, or, say, of a tribe, should live together in the same territory, be its sole inhabitants. This had long ceased to be the case. Gentes and tribes were everywhere commingled; everywhere slaves, dependents and foreigners lived among the citizens. The sedentary state, which had been acquired only towards the end of the middle stage of barbarism, was time and again interrupted by the mobility and changes of abode upon which commerce, changes of occupation and the transfer of land were conditioned. The members of the gentile organisation could no longer meet for the purpose of attending to their common affairs; only matters of minor importance, such as religious ceremonies, were still observed, indifferently. Beside the wants and interests which the gentile organs were appointed and fitted to take care of, new wants and interests had arisen from the revolution in the conditions of earning one's living and the resulting change in social structure. These new wants and interests were not only alien to the old gentile order, but thwarted it in every way. The interests of the groups of craftsmen created by division of labour, and the special needs of the town as opposed to the country, required new organs; but each

* For the number of slaves in Athens, see above, p. 126. In Corinth, at the city's zenith, it was 460,000, and in Aegina 470,000; in both, ten times the number of free burghers. [Note by Engels.]

Engels gives the page of the fourth German edition. See pp. 409-10 of this book.—Ed.

of these groups was composed of people from different gentes, phratries and tribes; they even included aliens. Hence, the new organs necessarily had to take form outside the gentile constitution, parallel with it, and that meant against it. And again, in every gentile organisation the conflict of interests made itself felt and reached its apex by combining rich and poor, usurers and debtors, in the same gens and tribe. Then there was the mass of new inhabitants, strangers to the gentile associations, which, as in Rome, could become a power in the land, and was too numerous to be gradually absorbed by the consanguine gentes and tribes. The gentile associations confronted these masses as exclusive, privileged bodies; what had originally been a naturally-grown democracy was transformed into a hateful aristocracy. Lastly, the gentile constitution had grown out of a society that knew no internal antagonisms, and was adapted only for such a society. It had no coercive power except public opinion. But now a society had come into being that by the force of all its economic conditions of existence had to split up into freemen and slaves, into exploiting rich and exploited poor; a society that was not only incapable of reconciling these antagonisms, but had to drive them more and more to a head. Such a society could only exist either in a state of continuous, open struggle of these classes against one another or under the rule of a third power which, while ostensibly standing above the classes struggling with each other, suppressed their open conflict and permitted a class struggle at most in the economic field, in a so-called legal form. The gentile constitution had outlived its usefulness. It was burst asunder by the division of labour and by its result, the division of society into classes. Its place was taken by the *state*.

* * *

Above we discussed separately each of the three main forms in which the state was built up on the ruins of the

gentile constitution. Athens represented the purest, most classical form. Here the state sprang directly and mainly out of the class antagonisms that developed within gentile society. In Rome gentile society became an exclusive aristocracy amidst a numerous plebs, standing outside of it, having no rights but only duties. The victory of the plebs burst the old gentile constitution asunder and erected on its ruins the state, in which both the gentile aristocracy and the plebs were soon wholly absorbed. Finally, among the German vanquishers of the Roman Empire, the state sprang up as a direct result of the conquest of large foreign territories, which the gentile constitution had no means of ruling. As this conquest did not necessitate either a serious struggle with the old population or a more advanced division of labour, and as conquered and conquerors were almost at the same stage of economic development and thus the economic basis of society remained the same as before, therefore, the gentile constitution could continue for many centuries in a changed, territorial form, in the shape of a Mark constitution, and even rejuvenate itself for a time in enfeebled form in the noble and patrician families of later years, and even in peasant families, as in Dithmarschen.*

The state is, therefore, by no means a power forced on society from without; just as little is it "the reality of the ethical idea," "the image and reality of reason," as Hegel maintains.¹³⁴ Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic in-

* The first historian who had at least an approximate idea of the nature of the gens was Niebuhr, thanks to his knowledge of the Dithmarschen¹³³ families—to which, however, he also owes the errors he mechanically copied from there. [Note by Engels.]

terests, might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it became necessary to have a power seemingly standing above society that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of "order"; and this power, arisen out of society but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state.

As distinct from the old gentile order, the state, first, divides its subjects *according to territory*. As we have seen, the old gentile associations, built upon and held together by ties of blood, became inadequate, largely because they presupposed that the members were bound to a given territory, a bond which had long ceased to exist. The territory remained, but the people had become mobile. Hence, division according to territory was taken as the point of departure, and citizens were allowed to exercise their public rights and duties wherever they settled, irrespective of gens and tribe. This organisation of citizens according to locality is a feature common to all states. That is why it seems natural to us; but we have seen what long and arduous struggles were needed before it could replace, in Athens and Rome, the old organisation according to gentes.

The second distinguishing feature is the establishment of a *public power* which no longer directly coincides with the population organising itself as an armed force. This special public power is necessary because a self-acting armed organisation of the population has become impossible since the split into classes. The slaves also belonged to the population; the 90,000 citizens of Athens formed only a privileged class as against the 365,000 slaves. The people's army of the Athenian democracy was an aristocratic public power against the slaves, whom it kept in check; however, a gendarmerie also became necessary to keep the citizens in check, as we related above. This public power exists in every state; it consists not merely of armed men but also of material adjuncts, prisons and institutions of coercion of all kinds, of which gentile [clan] society knew nothing. It may be very insignificant, al-

most infinitesimal, in societies where class antagonisms are still undeveloped and in out-of-the-way places as was the case at certain times and in certain regions in the United States of America. It [the public power] grows stronger, however, in proportion as class antagonisms within the state become more acute, and as adjacent states become larger and more populous. We have only to look at our present-day Europe, where class struggle and rivalry in conquest have tuned up the public power to such a pitch that it threatens to swallow the whole of society and even the state.

In order to maintain this public power, contributions from the citizens become necessary—*taxes*. These were absolutely unknown in gentile society; but we know enough about them today. As civilisation advances, these taxes become inadequate; the state makes drafts on the future, contracts loans, *public debts*. Old Europe can tell a tale about these, too.

Having public power and the right to levy taxes, the officials now stand, as organs of society, *above* society. The free, voluntary respect that was accorded to the organs of the gentile [clan] constitution does not satisfy them, even if they could gain it; being the vehicles of a power that is becoming alien to society, respect for them must be enforced by means of exceptional laws by virtue of which they enjoy special sanctity and inviolability. The shabbiest police servant in the civilised state has more "authority" than all the organs of gentile society put together; but the most powerful prince and the greatest statesman, or general, of civilisation may well envy the humblest gentile chief for the unstrained and undisputed respect that is paid to him. The one stands in the midst of society, the other is forced to attempt to represent something outside and above it.

Because the state arose from the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but because it arose, at the same time, in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule,

the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which, through the medium of the state, becomes also the politically dominant class, and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. Thus, the state of antiquity was above all the state of the slave owners for the purpose of holding down the slaves, as the feudal state was the organ of the nobility for holding down the peasant serfs and bondsmen, and the modern representative state is an instrument of exploitation of wage labour by capital. By way of exception, however, periods occur in which the warring classes balance each other so nearly that the state power, as ostensible mediator, acquires, for the moment, a certain degree of independence of both. Such was the absolute monarchy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which held the balance between the nobility and the class of burghers; such was the Bonapartism of the First, and still more of the Second French Empire,¹³⁵ which played off the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. The latest performance of this kind, in which ruler and ruled appear equally ridiculous, is the new German Empire of the Bismarck nation: here capitalists and workers are balanced against each other and equally cheated for the benefit of the impoverished Prussian cabbage junkers.

In most of the historical states, the rights of citizens are, besides, apportioned according to their wealth, thus directly expressing the fact that the state is an organisation of the possessing class for its protection against the non-possessing class. It was so already in the Athenian and Roman classification according to property. It was so in the mediaeval feudal state, in which the alignment of political power was in conformity with the amount of land owned. It is seen in the electoral qualifications of the modern representative states. Yet this political recognition of property distinctions is by no means essential. On the contrary, it marks a low stage of state development.

The highest form of the state, the democratic republic, which under our modern conditions of society is more and more becoming an inevitable necessity, and is the form of state in which alone the last decisive struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie can be fought out—the democratic republic officially knows nothing any more of property distinctions. In it wealth exercises its power indirectly, but all the more surely. On the one hand, in the form of the direct corruption of officials, of which America provides the classical example; on the other hand, in the form of an alliance between government and Stock Exchange, which becomes the easier to achieve the more the public debt increases and the more joint-stock companies concentrate in their hands not only transport but also production itself, using the Stock Exchange as their centre. The latest French republic as well as the United States is a striking example of this; and good old Switzerland has contributed its share in this field. But that a democratic republic is not essential for this fraternal alliance between government and Stock Exchange is proved by England and also by the new German Empire, where one cannot tell who was elevated more by universal suffrage, Bismarck or Bleichröder. And lastly, the possessing class rules directly through the medium of universal suffrage. As long as the oppressed class, in our case, therefore, the proletariat, is not yet ripe to emancipate itself, it will in its majority regard the existing order of society as the only one possible and, politically, will form the tail of the capitalist class, its extreme Left wing. To the extent, however, that this class matures for its self-emancipation, it constitutes itself as its own party and elects its own representatives, and not those of the capitalists. Thus, universal suffrage is the gauge of the maturity of the working class. It cannot and never will be anything more in the present-day state; but that is sufficient. On the day the thermometer of universal suffrage registers boiling point among the workers, both they and the capitalists will know what to do.

The state, then, has not existed from all eternity. There have been societies that did without it, that had no idea of the state and state power. At a certain stage of economic development, which was necessarily bound up with the split of society into classes, the state became a necessity owing to this split. We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes not only will have ceased to be a necessity, but will become a positive hindrance to production. They will fall as inevitably as they arose at an earlier stage. Along with them the state will inevitably fall. Society, which will reorganise production on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers, will put the whole machinery of state where it will then belong: into the museum of antiquities, by the side of the spinning-wheel and the bronze axe.

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Thus, from the foregoing, civilisation is that stage of development of society at which division of labour, the resulting exchange between individuals, and commodity production, which combines the two, reach their complete unfoldment and revolutionise the whole hitherto existing society.

Production at all former stages of society was essentially collective and, likewise, consumption took place by the direct distribution of the products within larger or smaller communistic communities. This production in common was carried on within the narrowest limits, but concomitantly the producers were masters of their process of production and of their product. They knew what became of the product: they consumed it, it did not leave their hands; and as long as production was carried on on this basis, it could not grow beyond the control of the producers, and it could not raise any strange, phantom powers against them, as is the case regularly and inevitably under civilisation.

But, slowly, division of labour crept into this process of production. It undermined the collective nature of production and appropriation, it made appropriation by individuals the largely prevailing rule, and thus gave rise to exchange between individuals—how, we examined above. Gradually, the production of commodities became the dominant form.

With the production of commodities, production no longer for one's own consumption but for exchange, the products necessarily pass from hand to hand. The producer parts with his product in the course of exchange; he no longer knows what becomes of it. As soon as money, and with it the merchant, steps in as a middleman between the producers, the process of exchange becomes still more complicated, the ultimate fate of the product still more uncertain. The merchants are numerous and none of them knows what the other is doing. Commodities now pass not only from hand to hand, but also from market to market. The producers have lost control of the aggregate production of the conditions of their own life, and the merchants have not acquired it. Products and production become the playthings of chance.

But chance is only one pole of an interrelation, the other pole of which is called necessity. In nature, where chance also seems to reign, we have long ago demonstrated in each particular field the inherent necessity and regularity that asserts itself in this chance. What is true of nature holds good also for society. The more a social activity, a series of social processes, becomes too powerful for conscious human control, grows beyond human reach, the more it seems to have been left to pure chance, the more do its peculiar and innate laws assert themselves in this chance, as if by natural necessity. Such laws also control the fortuities of the production and exchange of commodities; these laws confront the individual producer and exchanger as strange and, in the beginning, even as unknown powers, the nature of which must first be labo-

riously investigated and ascertained. These economic laws of commodity production are modified at the different stages of development of this form of production; on the whole, however, the entire period of civilisation has been dominated by these laws. To this day, the product is master of the producer; to this day, the total production of society is regulated, not by a collectively thought-out plan, but by blind laws, which operate with elemental force, in the last resort in the storms of periodic commercial crises.

We saw above how human labour power became able, at a rather early stage of development of production, to produce considerably more than was needed for the producer's maintenance, and how this stage, in the main, coincided with that of the first appearance of the division of labour and of exchange between individuals. Now, it was not long before the great "truth" was discovered that man, too, may be a commodity; that human power may be exchanged and utilised by converting man into a slave. Men had barely started to engage in exchange when they themselves were exchanged. The active became a passive, whether man wanted it or not.

With slavery, which reached its fullest development in civilisation, came the first great cleavage of society into an exploiting and an exploited class. This cleavage has continued during the whole period of civilisation. Slavery was the first form of exploitation, peculiar to the world of antiquity; it was followed by serfdom in the Middle Ages, and by wage labour in modern times. These are the three great forms of servitude, characteristic of the three great epochs of civilisation; open, and, latterly, disguised slavery, are its steady companions.

The stage of commodity production, with which civilisation began, is marked economically by the introduction of 1) metal money and, thus, of money capital, interest and usury; 2) the merchants acting as middlemen between producers; 3) private ownership of land and mortgage; 4) slave labour as the prevailing form of production. The

form of the family corresponding to civilisation and under it becoming the definitely prevailing form is monogamy, the supremacy of the man over the woman, and the individual family as the economic unit of society. The cohesive force of civilised society is the state, which in all typical periods is exclusively the state of the ruling class, and in all cases remains essentially a machine for keeping down the oppressed, exploited class. Other marks of civilisation are: on the one hand, fixation of the contrast between town and country as the basis of the entire division of social labour; on the other hand, the introduction of wills, by which the property holder is able to dispose of his property even after his death. This institution, which was a direct blow at the old gentile constitution, was unknown in Athens until the time of Solon; in Rome it was introduced very early, but we do not know when.* Among the Germans it was introduced by the priests in order that the good honest German might without hindrance bequeath his property to the Church.

With this constitution as its foundation civilisation has accomplished things with which the old gentile society was totally unable to cope. But it accomplished them by playing on the most sordid instincts and passions of man,

* Lassalle's *Das System der erworbenen Rechte* (*System of Acquired Rights*) turns, in its second part, mainly on the proposition that the Roman testament is as old as Rome itself, that in Roman history there was never "a time when testaments did not exist"; that the testament arose rather in pre-Roman times out of the cult of the dead. As a confirmed Hegelian of the old school, Lassalle derived the provisions of the Roman law not from the social conditions of the Romans, but from the "speculative conception" of the will, and thus arrived at this totally unhistoric assertion. This is not to be wondered at in a book that from the same speculative conception draws the conclusion that the transfer of property was purely a secondary matter in Roman inheritance. Lassalle not only believes in the illusions of Roman jurists, especially of the earlier period, but he even excels them. [*Note by Engels.*]

and by developing them at the expense of all his other faculties. Naked greed has been the moving spirit of civilisation from the first day of its existence to the present time; wealth, more wealth and wealth again; wealth, not of society, but of this shabby individual was its sole and determining aim. If, in the pursuit of this aim, the increasing development of science and repeated periods of the fullest blooming of art fell into its lap, it was only because without them the ample present-day achievements in the accumulation of wealth would have been impossible.

Since the exploitation of one class by another is the basis of civilisation, its whole development moves in a continuous contradiction. Every advance in production is at the same time a retrogression in the condition of the oppressed class, that is, of the great majority. What is a boon for the one is necessarily a bane for the other; each new emancipation of one class always means a new oppression of another class. The most striking proof of this is furnished by the introduction of machinery, the effects of which are well known today. And while among barbarians, as we have seen, hardly any distinction could be made between rights and duties, civilisation makes the difference and antithesis between these two plain even to the dullest mind by assigning to one class pretty nearly all the rights, and to the other class pretty nearly all the duties.

But this is not as it ought to be. What is good for the ruling class should be good for the whole of the society with which the ruling class identifies itself. Therefore, the more civilisation advances, the more it is compelled to cover the ills it necessarily creates with the cloak of love, to embellish them, or to deny their existence; in short, to introduce conventional hypocrisy—unknown both in previous forms of society and even in the earliest stages of civilisation—that culminates in the declaration: The exploiting class exploits the oppressed class solely and exclusively in the interest of the exploited class itself; and if the latter fails to appreciate this, and even becomes rebellious,

it thereby shows the basest ingratitude to its benefactors, the exploiters.*

And now, in conclusion, Morgan's verdict on civilisation:

"Since the advent of civilisation, the outgrowth of property has been so immense, its forms so diversified, its uses so expanding and its management so intelligent in the interests of its owners that it *has become*, on the part of the people, *an unmanageable power. The human mind stands bewildered in the presence of its own creation.* The time will come, nevertheless, when human intelligence will rise to the mastery over property, and define the relations of the state to the property it protects, as well as the obligations and the limits of the rights of its owners. The interests of society are paramount to individual interests, and the two must be brought into just and harmonious relation. A mere property career is not the final destiny of mankind, if progress is to be the law of the future as it has been of the past. The time which has passed away since civilisation began is but a fragment of the past duration of man's existence; and but a fragment of the ages yet to come. The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim, because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction. Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending. *It will be a revival, in a higher form of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes.*" (Morgan, *Ancient Society*, p. 552.)

Written at the end of
March-May 26, 1884

Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, pp. 191-92, 204-09, 275-84, 285-93, 306-34

* I had intended at the outset to place the brilliant critique of civilisation, scattered through the works of Fourier, by the side of Morgan's and my own. Unfortunately, I cannot spare the time. I only wish to remark that Fourier already considered monogamy and property in land as the main characteristics of civilisation, and that he described it as a war of the rich against the poor. We also find already in his works the deep appreciation of the fact that in all imperfect societies, those torn by conflicting interests, the individual families (*les familles incohérentes*) are the economic units. [Note by Engels.]

FREDERICK ENGELS

[THE DECLINE OF FEUDALISM AND THE RISE
OF THE BOURGEOISIE]

While the noise of the devastating wars waged by the ruling feudal nobility filled the Middle Ages, the labour of the oppressed classes had quietly undermined the feudal system throughout Western Europe creating conditions in which less and less room remained for the feudal lord. It is true that the noble lords still carried on as before in the countryside, tormented their serfs, led a life of luxury based on their toil, rode down their crops and raped their wives and daughters. But all around them cities came into being, ancient Roman municipia rose from their ashes in Italy, the south of France and on the Rhine; elsewhere, especially in the interior of Germany they were newly created. These cities, which were always encircled with a protective wall and moat, were fortresses far stronger than the castles of the nobility, for they could only be conquered by a large army. Behind these walls and moats the medieval handicrafts developed—along guild lines and on a rather petty scale—the first capitals were accumulated, the need for commerce between the cities and with the rest of the world arose, and with this need the means to protect this commerce were gradually acquired.

In the fifteenth century, the urban citizens were already a more essential element of society than the feudal nobility. Although the bulk of the population was still engaged in agriculture, which thus remained the principal branch of production, but the very few free peasants, who had

survived in some places despite the usurpations of the nobility, demonstrated sufficiently clearly that not the idleness and the extortions of the nobleman were of vital importance in agriculture but the work of the peasant. Moreover, the requirements of the nobleman had also increased and changed to such an extent that even for him the cities had become indispensable, for he obtained the only means of production he used, his armour and weapons, from the towns. He bought everything—locally-made cloth, furniture and jewellery, Italian silks, Mechlin lace, furs from the North, perfumes from Arabia, fruit from the Levant, spices from India—everything, except soap, from the townspeople. A certain amount of international trade had developed. The Italians sailed across the Mediterranean and beyond it along the Atlantic coast up to Flanders, and the Hanseatic League¹³⁶ still dominated the North Sea and the Baltic, though it encountered growing Dutch and English competition. Overland routes were used to link the northern and southern centres of maritime commerce, and these routes went through Germany. Whereas the nobility became more and more superfluous and hampered development to an increasing extent, the townspeople became the class that represented the further development of production and commerce, of culture and of social and political institutions.

All these advances in production and exchange were actually very limited, according to modern concepts. Production remained entirely within the confines of the craft guilds and therefore retained its feudal character. Commerce remained within the European waters and did not go beyond the coastal towns of the Levant, where it obtained the products of the Far East. But although the trades remained petty and restricted and with them also the citizens who carried on these trades, they were nevertheless able to overturn feudal society, and at any rate they continued to develop whereas the nobility stagnated.

The townspeople moreover had a powerful weapon

which they could use against feudalism—*money*. There was hardly any room for money in the feudal economic model of the early Middle Ages. The feudal lord got everything he needed from his serfs, either in the form of labour or as finished products. The women spun and wove flax and wool and made clothes, the men tilled the land, the children tended the cattle of the lord and gathered the products of the forest, birds' nests and litter, and in addition the family as a whole had to provide corn, fruit, eggs, butter, cheese, poultry, young cattle and many other things. Every feudal domain was self-sufficient, even war contributions were collected in kind, commerce and exchange did not exist, money was therefore superfluous. Europe had been reduced to such a low level and had to start again from the beginning, so that the function money fulfilled at that time was simply political and to a much smaller extent social—it was used to *pay taxes* and was mainly acquired through *robbery*.

All that changed now. Money was again the universal means of exchange and accordingly its amount increased significantly. The noblemen too could no longer manage without it, and since they had little or nothing to sell and robbery too was not such a simple business any longer, the noblemen were obliged to borrow money from the plebeian usurer. Money undermined the castles of the knights long before the new cannon breached their walls, in fact gunpowder was as it were merely a bailiff in the service of money. Money was used by the townspeople as the great political leveller. Wherever money relations displaced personal relations and payment in money displaced payment in kind, bourgeois relations took the place of feudal relations. Although the old crude natural economy survived to a large extent in the countryside, there were however already entire districts, e.g., in Holland, Belgium and on the lower Rhine, where instead of *corvée* and dues in kind, the peasants paid money to the lords, where the lords and their subjects had already taken the first decisive

step towards the transition to landlords and tenants, and where therefore the political institutions of feudalism were deprived of their social basis even in the countryside.

The thirst for gold, which gripped Western Europe at the close of the fifteenth century, demonstrates vividly the extent to which feudal society was already undermined and eroded at that time. The Portuguese tried to find *gold* on the coast of Africa, in India and throughout the Far East, *gold* was the magic word which drove the Spaniards across the Atlantic to America, and *gold* was the first thing the white man inquired about as soon as he set foot on a newly-discovered shore. But this urge to set out on adventurous journeys in search of gold, although it was initially realised in feudal or semi-feudal forms, was nevertheless fundamentally incompatible with feudalism, whose basis was agriculture and whose military campaigns were essentially designed for the *conquest of land*. Navigation moreover was definitely a *middle-class* occupation, and its anti-feudal nature has left its mark on all modern navies.

Feudal society in Western Europe was therefore rapidly declining in the fifteenth century. Towns with their anti-feudal interests, their own law, and their body of armed citizens had penetrated into the feudal territories everywhere, and by means of their money had already made the feudal lords partly dependent on them socially, and in some places politically as well. Even in the country where agriculture had improved owing to specially favourable conditions the old feudal ties began to be loosened under the influence of money. Only in newly-conquered territories, such as the German conquests east of the Elbe, or in other backward regions situated far from the trade routes, did the traditional rule of the aristocracy continue to flourish. But everywhere—in town and country—there was an increase in those sections of the population whose principal demand was the cessation of the interminable senseless wars, the feuds waged by the feudal lords, which led to

permanent internal warfare even when enemies from abroad stood in the country, that state of incessant and quite pointless devastation which continued throughout the Middle Ages. These sections, which were still too weak to enforce their demands, received strong support from the monarchy, the apex of the entire feudal system. And this is the point where the examination of social conditions leads us to the examination of political conditions, and where we have to proceed from economics to politics.

Gradually new nationalities arose from the welter of ethnic groups which we see in the early Middle Ages, and it is well known that this process led in most of the former Roman provinces to the assimilation of the conquerors by the vanquished, the Germanic lord by the peasant and the townsman. Hence the modern nationalities are likewise the product of the oppressed classes. A graphic picture of how amalgamation proceeded here and lines of demarcation were established there, is provided by Menke's district map of central Lorraine.* One need only trace a line dividing Romance and German geographical names on this map to realise that as far as Belgium and Lower Lorraine are concerned, this line coincides in the main with the linguistic boundary between French and German which still existed a century ago. In some places one can still find a narrow disputed strip where the two languages are striving for priority, but it is on the whole certain which part will remain German and which Romance. The Old Lower Frankish or the Old High German form of most geographical names on the map proves that they arose in the ninth century, or at the latest in the tenth, and that therefore the boundary had for the most part been already established at the close of the Carolingian period. On the Romance side, especially near the linguistic boun-

* Spruner-Menke, *Hand-Atlas zur Geschichte des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit*, 3. Aufl., Gotha 1874, Karte Nr. 32. [Note by Engels.]

dary, we find composite names consisting of a German personal name and a Romance geographical name, e.g., west of the Meuse near Verdun—Eppone curtis, Rotfridi curtis, Ingolini curtis and Teudegisilo-villa, now Ippécourt, Récourt la Creux, Amblaincourt sur Aire and Thierville. These were estates of Frankish lords, small German colonies on Romance soil, bound to become Romance sooner or later. Larger German colonies, which existed in the towns and some rural areas, preserved their language for a considerable time, for example as late as the close of the ninth century the *Ludwigslied*¹³⁷ arose in one of these colonies. But the formal oaths sworn by the kings and their magnates in 842, in which Romance is already used as the official language of France,¹³⁸ show that a large number of Frankish lords were Romanised even earlier.

Once the areas of the language groups were delimited (apart from subsequent wars of conquest or extermination, like those waged against the Slavs on the Elbe¹³⁹) it was natural that they served as a convenient basis for the formation of states, and that nationalities began to develop into nations. How strong this factor was even in the ninth century is demonstrated by the rapid disintegration of Lotharingia,¹⁴⁰ which was a composite state. Although throughout the Middle Ages linguistic boundaries and state boundaries were by no means identical, nevertheless each nationality, perhaps with the exception of Italy, was represented in Europe by one particular big state, and the tendency to set up national states—a tendency which became increasingly conspicuous and purposeful—is one of the principal progressive factors of the Middle Ages.

The apex of the entire feudal hierarchy in each of these medieval states was the king, and the vassals, who could not possibly manage without him, were at the same time in a state of perpetual rebellion against him. The foundation of the whole feudal economy, the granting of land in return for certain personal services and dues, even in its initial and most simple form provided sufficient opportu-

nity for conflicts, especially when so many were interested in picking a quarrel. How much worse was the position in the late Middle Ages, when feudal relations in all countries formed an inextricable tangle of granted, withdrawn, renewed, forfeited, changed or somehow modified rights and duties. For example Charles the Bold held some of his land from the Emperor, and other territories from the King of France; on the other hand the King of France, his liege lord, held certain territories from Charles the Bold, his own vassal. How was it possible to avoid conflicts under these circumstances?

Hence we see for centuries an alternation of the vassals being attracted by the monarchical centre, which alone could protect them against attacks from without and against one another, and the constant and inevitable transformation of this attraction into repulsion. Hence the incessant struggle between monarchy and vassals, whose monotonous din drowned everything else during the long period when robbery was considered the only source of income worthy of a free man. Hence that endless and constantly repeated series of treachery, assassination, poisoning, foul play and any other villainy imaginable, which masqueraded under the poetic name of chivalry and talked ceaselessly of honour and loyalty.

It is self-evident that the monarchy was the progressive element in this universal confusion. It stood for order in this disorder, for the emerging nation as against fragmentation into rebellious vassal states. All revolutionary elements which arose under the feudal surface depended just as much on the monarchy as the monarchy depended on them. The alliance between monarchy and townspeople dates from the tenth century. It was often suspended by conflicts, for nothing followed a consistent course throughout the Middle Ages, but was renewed and became firmer and firmer and more powerful, until it enabled the monarchy finally to triumph and as a reward the monarchy subjugated and plundered its allies.

Kings and citizens were strongly supported by the emerging profession of *jurists*. The rediscovery of Roman law led to a division of labour between clerics, the legal advisers of the feudal period, and non-ecclesiastic lawyers. This new type of lawyer belonged from the outset intrinsically to the middle class, moreover the law which these lawyers studied, expounded and applied was by its very nature anti-feudal and in a way middle-class. Roman law is to such an extent the classical legal expression of the living conditions and conflicts of a society dominated by unadulterated private property that none of the codes of law adopted later was able to improve it substantially. But middle-class property in the Middle Ages was still strongly affected by feudal restrictions, e.g., it consisted largely of privileges, in this respect therefore Roman law was far in advance of the civic relations obtaining at that time. The further historical development of middle-class property was bound to, and actually did, lead to pure private property. But this development must have received a strong impetus from Roman law, which already contained everything towards which the townspeople of the late Middle Ages were heading though as yet unwittingly.

Even though in many individual cases Roman law served as a pretext for the increased oppression of the peasants by the nobility, e.g., when peasants were unable to supply written proof that they were freed from customary obligations, this does not affect the substance of the matter. Without Roman law the nobility would also have found such pretexts, and did find them every day. It was at any rate a tremendous advance when a code of law was recognised to which feudal relations were something quite unknown and which completely anticipated modern private property.

We have seen that the feudal nobility were becoming economically superfluous, and indeed an impediment, in the society of the late Middle Ages, and that politically too they even obstructed the development of the towns and of the national state, which at that time could only arise

in a monarchical form. In spite of all that they had been sustained by the fact that up to then they had the monopoly of using arms, and that without them no wars could be waged and no battles fought. This was to be changed as well, a decisive development was to occur making it evident to the feudal lords that the period socially and politically dominated by them was at an end, and that as knights they were no longer of any use even on the battlefield.

To fight the feudal system with a feudal army, whose soldiers were bound by closer ties to their immediate liege lords than to the monarch's army headquarters, obviously meant moving in a vicious circle and making no headway. From the beginning of the fourteenth century, the kings tried to become independent of this feudal army and to create their own army. From that time onwards we see that the armies of the kings comprised a constantly growing section of hired or mercenary troops. Initially they were mainly foot-soldiers, consisting of the scum of the urban population and fugitive serfs, Lombards, Genoese, Germans, Belgians and so on. They were used to garrison towns and for siege operations, and in the beginning they could hardly be used in open battle. But towards the end of the Middle Ages we see that knights with their retinue which they had scraped together somehow or other, went as mercenaries into the service of foreign princes, thus demonstrating the irredeemable collapse of the feudal military system.

It was at the same time that the towns and free peasants, where they had survived or had again come into being, provided the chief prerequisite for the creation of an effective body of foot-soldiers. The knights and their retainers, likewise on horseback, had up to then constituted not merely the nucleus of the army, but rather the army itself, for the crowd of serfs who accompanied them did not count, and in the open field they seemed to exist merely in order to run away or to plunder. All battles were fought and decided by the cavalry in the heyday of feudalism, up

to the close of the thirteenth century. But from then on matters changed and moreover at several points simultaneously. The gradual disappearance of serfdom in England created a large class of free peasants, yeomen* or tenants, and thus the raw material for a new kind of foot-soldier practised in the use of the longbow, then the English national weapon. The introduction of the longbowmen, who always fought on foot whether they were mounted during the march or not, brought about a substantial change in the tactics of the English armies. Since the fourteenth century, the English knights liked to fight on foot where the terrain or other circumstances made this appropriate. Behind the longbowmen, who started the fight and wore the enemy down, the compact phalanx of dismounted knights awaited an enemy attack or an opportune moment for charging, while only some of them remained on horseback to help decide the outcome by flank attacks. The victories then constantly gained by the English in France¹⁴¹ are largely due to this reintroduction of a defensive element in the army and are for the most part defensive battles with an offensive counter-thrust, just as those fought by Wellington in Spain and Belgium. After the adoption of these new tactics by the French—perhaps after they began to use hired Italian crossbowmen whose role was similar to that of the English longbowmen—the victorious advance of the English came to an end. It was likewise at the beginning of the fourteenth century that the foot-soldiers of the Flemish cities dared to confront—and often successfully—the French chivalry in open battle,¹⁴² and that a stimulus for the establishment of the first modern infantry of European fame was given by Emperor Albrecht's attempt to betray the free Swiss peasants to the Archduke of Austria, i.e., to himself. The triumphs of the Swiss over the Austrians, and especially over the Burgundians, signify the irrevocable defeat of the armoured cavalry—mounted

* Engels uses the English word.—Ed.

or dismounted—by the infantry, of the feudal army by the incipient modern army, and of the knights by the townsmen and free peasants. So as to establish at once the middle-class nature of their republic, the first independent republic in Europe, the Swiss immediately began to turn their military glory *into cash*. Disregarding all political considerations, the Cantons were turned into recruiting offices for the supply of mercenaries to the highest bidder. Elsewhere too, especially in Germany, recruiting was in full swing, but the cynicism of a government whose only purpose seemed to be the sale of its own subjects remained unequalled, until it was surpassed by German princes in the period of extreme national degradation.

Moreover also in the fourteenth century the Arabs brought gunpowder and artillery via Spain to Europe. But hand-guns were of no importance up to the close of the Middle Ages, this is understandable because the longbow of the English archer at Crécy could hit a target at the same distance as, and perhaps even more reliably than, the smooth-bored musket used by the infantryman at Waterloo, although not with the same effect.¹⁴³ The field-gun was likewise still in its infancy, but heavy cannon had already frequently breached exposed castle walls, thus announcing to the feudal nobility that gunpowder confirmed the end of their rule.

The spread of printing, the renewed study of classical literature, and the whole cultural movement which grew constantly stronger and more general since 1450—all this helped the townspeople and the monarchy in their struggle against feudalism.

The combination of all these causes, which became stronger with every year as a result of their growing interaction, which increasingly moved in the same direction, brought about the victory of the monarchy, though not yet of the middle class, over feudalism in the second half of the fifteenth century. Royal power suddenly gained the upper hand everywhere in Europe, even in distant minor states

which had not experienced feudalism. On the Iberian Peninsula the kingdom of Spain was formed by the union of two Romance speaking peoples, and the state of Aragon, whose population spoke a Provençal tongue, adopted the Castilian written language¹⁴⁴; the third group combined their linguistic area (except Galicia) to form the kingdom of Portugal, the Iberian Netherlands, which, turning its back on the interior, proved by its seafaring activity that it had a right to an independent existence.

After the destruction of the buffer state of Burgundy,¹⁴⁵ Louis XI of France finally managed to establish national unity, represented by the monarchy, on French territory, which at that time was still considerably smaller; he succeeded to such an extent that his successor* was already able to interfere in Italian affairs¹⁴⁶ and national unity was only once imperilled, for a short time, by the reformation.¹⁴⁷ England had at last abandoned her quixotic wars of conquest in France, which in the long run would have bled her white. The feudal nobility tried to find a substitute in the Wars of the Roses¹⁴⁸ and got more than they bargained for; they destroyed one another and placed the Tudors on the throne, whose regal power surpassed that of all their predecessors and successors. The Scandinavian countries were long since united. Poland, after her union with Lithuania, was advancing towards her golden age with an as yet unimpaired monarchy. And even in Russia the subjugation of the local princes went hand in hand with the liberation from the Tartar yoke and was finally brought about by Ivan III.¹⁴⁹ Italy and Germany were the only countries in the whole of Europe in which monarchy and national unity, which at that time could not be achieved without monarchy, did not exist at all, or existed only on paper.

Written at the end of 1884

Translated from the German
Published in English
for the first time

* Charles VIII.—*Ed.*

FREDERICK ENGELS
CONCERNING *THE PEASANT WAR*

The Reformation, both Lutheran and Calvinist, was the first bourgeois revolution, in which the peasant war formed the crucial episode. The disintegration of feudalism and the development of towns, both of which had a decentralising effect, made the absolute monarchy quite indispensable to the integration of the nationalities. It *had* to be absolute, precisely because of the centrifugal nature of all [other] factors. But "absolute" must not be understood in the vulgar sense; the monarchy was constantly fighting, sometimes with the social estates and sometimes with insurgent feudal lords or towns. The estates were nowhere abolished, hence it could rather be called a monarchy based on the *social estates*, a monarchy which was still feudalistic, though decreasingly feudalistic and incipient bourgeois.

The first revolution, which was much more European than the English revolution and became much more rapidly European than the French one, was victorious in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Scotland, England and in a way also in Sweden as early as the reign of Gustavus Vasa, and in Denmark, but only in 1660 in the orthodox absolutist form.

I.* Causes in Germany. History from the beginning.

* In the manuscript this section, which was marked I by Engels, follows section II.—Ed.

After the heroic period of the *Völkerwanderung* Germany disintegrated. The impulse to Germany's re-establishment by Charlemagne came from France. And thus also the idea of a Roman Empire. It was revived by Otto. It comprised more non-Germans than Germans. This policy—of plundering Italian cities—led to Germany's ruin under the Hohenstaufen. This increases fragmentation—*excepto casu revolutionis*.^{*} The development from the interregnum¹⁵⁰ up to the fifteenth century. The rise of towns. Decline of feudalism, which was never fully developed in Germany, due to the pressure exerted by the princes (the emperor as territorial prince *opposed* the knights of the empire, as emperor he *supported* them). Gradual liberation of the peasants, until the setback in the fifteenth century. Germany was then materially abreast of the other countries.

It was crucial that because of its territorial fragmentation *and the long freedom from invasion*, the need for national unity was not as strong in Germany as it was in France (the Hundred Years War), Spain, which had only recently been reconquered from the Moors, Russia, which had only recently ejected the Tartars, and England (the Wars of the Roses), and that precisely at that time its emperors were so contemptible.

II. Including the Renaissance in its European form, based on the general decline of feudalism and the rise of towns. Then absolutist national monarchies—everywhere except in Germany and Italy.

III. The Reformation as the only feasible, *popular* expression of generally existing tendencies, etc.

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for the first time

* Except in the case of revolution.—Ed.

FREDERICK ENGELS

From "THE LABOUR MOVEMENT IN AMERICA"

Preface to the American edition
of *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*

In Asiatic and classical antiquity, the predominant form of class oppression was slavery, that is to say, not so much the expropriation of the masses from the land as the appropriation of their persons. When, in the decline of the Roman Republic, the free Italian peasants were expropriated from their farms, they formed a class of "poor whites" similar to that of the Southern Slave States before 1861; and between slaves and poor whites, two classes equally unfit for self-emancipation, the old world went to pieces. In the Middle Ages, it was not the expropriation of the people *from*, but on the contrary, their appropriation *to* the land which became the source of feudal oppression. The peasant retained his land, but was attached to it as a serf or villein, and made liable to tribute to the lord in labor and in produce.

Written in January
1887

Frederick Engels, *The
Condition of the Working-
Class in England*, Moscow,
1973, p. 19

FREDERICK ENGELS

From THE AFTERWORD TO "SOZIALES AUS
RUSSLAND"

But the Russian [peasant] community has gained the attention and approval of men who stand infinitely higher than a Herzen or Tkachov. Among them is Nikolai Chernyshevsky, the outstanding thinker to whom Russia is so greatly indebted and whose slow murder caused by many years of exile among Siberian Yakuts will for ever remain a stigma on the reputation of Alexander II, the "Liberator".¹⁵¹

Because Russia closed its intellectual borders, Chernyshevsky never saw the works of Marx and when *Capital* was published he was already living among the Yakuts in Middle Vilyuisk. His entire mental development had to take place within the climate created by this intellectual embargo. Whatever was banned by the Russian censor, scarcely existed or did not exist at all as far as Russia was concerned. If under these circumstances one finds a few weak spots and some limitations in his views, one can only be surprised that there are not more of them.

Chernyshevsky too regards the Russian peasant community as a means of advancing from the existing social system to a new stage of development which will be higher than the Russian community on the one hand, and West-European capitalist society with its class contradictions on the other. And the fact that Russia possesses this means, whereas the West lacks it, is according to him an advantage.

"The unlimited extension of the rights of the individual makes it extremely difficult to introduce a better social structure in Western Europe ... people do not easily relinquish even a small part of what they are used to enjoy. The individual in Western Europe is already accustomed to unlimited personal rights. The advantages and the inevitability of mutual concessions can only be taught by bitter experience and lengthy deliberation. It is difficult to establish a better economic system in the West because it involves sacrifice and runs counter to the habits of the English and French peasants." But: "Something that seems utopian there exists as an actual fact here ... habits whose inculcation in the life of the people seems to the English and French immensely difficult, actually exist in the life of the Russian people ... the state of affairs towards which the West is moving by a long and difficult route, already exists here in the strong national customs of our rural life... We see the sad consequences produced in the West by the abolition of communal property in land, and how difficult it is for the Western nations to make good their loss. We must not ignore the object lesson given us by the West." (Chernyshevsky, *Works*, Geneva edition, Vol. V, pp. 16-19, quoted by Plekhanov in *Nashy raznoglasiya*, Geneva, 1885.)

He says about the Ural Cossacks,¹⁵² among whom the communal cultivation of the land and subsequent division of the product was still prevalent,

"Should these inhabitants of the Urals and their present institutions still exist when machines for the cultivation of grain are introduced, they will be very glad to have retained a property system allowing them to employ machines which presuppose huge farms covering hundreds of dessiatines." (*Ibid.*, p. 131.)

In this context however one should not forget that these Ural people with their communal cultivation—which has been preserved for military reasons (we have barracks communism too)—are a completely isolated case in Russia, somewhat similar to the agricultural communities on the Moselle with their periodic reallocations. And if they should retain their present system until they are able to introduce machinery, then it is not they who will benefit by it, but the Russian military revenue, which they serve.

At any rate, it is a fact that while in Western Europe capitalist society is disintegrating and the intrinsic contra-

dictions of its development threaten to destroy it, at this very time approximately one half of the entire land under cultivation in Russia is still the common property of peasant communities. If the solution of the contradictions in the West by a reorganisation of society presupposes that all means of production, and hence also land, become the common property of society, what is the relation of the already existing, or rather still existing, common property in Russia to the common property in the West which has still to be created? Can it serve as a starting point for national action which would make it possible to bypass the whole capitalist period and by adding all the technical achievements of the capitalist era to Russian peasant communism transform it directly into modern socialist common ownership of all means of production? Or to use a passage written by Marx in a letter, which we shall quote below, where Marx has summed up Chernyshevsky's views thus: "must Russia destroy the peasant community first, as the Liberals demand, so as to advance to the capitalist system, or can she on the contrary, by developing further her own historically given preconditions, acquire the results of this system, without experiencing the suffering it causes?"

Posing the question thus already indicates the direction in which one must look for the answer. The Russian community has existed for hundreds of years without ever giving rise to any incentive to develop spontaneously a higher form of common property, nor did this occur in the German Mark organisation, the Celtic clans, or the Indian and other communities with primitive communist features. Under the influence of commodity production, which encircled them or arose in their own midst and gradually penetrated them, and of exchange between individual families and individuals, all these communities more and more lost their communist characteristics in the course of time and dissolved into communities of landowners independent of one another. Hence if the question can

be raised at all whether the lot of the Russian community will be different and better, this is not due to this community itself but solely to the circumstance that it has remained relatively vigorous in a European country at a time when not only commodity production as such but even its highest and ultimate form, capitalist production, has in Western Europe come into contradiction with the productive forces engendered by itself, when it demonstrates that it is unable to control these forces any longer, and when it is breaking down as a result of these internal contradictions and class conflicts corresponding to them. This alone is already sufficient to show that the initiative for any such transformation of the Russian community cannot come from the community itself, but solely from the industrial workers of the West. The victory of the West European proletariat over the bourgeoisie, and associated with it the supersession of capitalist production by socially controlled production, is an indispensable precondition for raising the Russian community to the same level.

Indeed, the agrarian communism handed down from the gentile society has nowhere and never produced anything of its own accord except its own dissolution. The Russian peasant community was even in 1861 a comparatively weakened form of this communism. Communal cultivation of land, which still exists in some parts of India and in the Southern Slav household community (*zádruga*), probably the ancestor of the Russian community, had to give way to cultivation by individual families. Common property asserted itself only in the periodic reallocations of land, which took place in different districts at very different intervals. These reallocations need only gradually cease or be abolished by a formal decision and we have a village consisting of peasants with their plots of land.

But the mere fact that alongside the Russian peasant community, capitalist production in Western Europe approaches the moment of its breakdown and already indi-

cates a new mode of production in which the means of production will belong to society and be used in a planned manner—this fact alone cannot give the Russian community the strength to create by itself this new social system. How should it be able to take over the huge productive forces of capitalist society and manage them as public property and machinery even before the accomplishment of this revolution by capitalist society itself? How should the Russian community be able to show the world how to run large-scale industry for the account of the community, when it has already forgotten how to cultivate its land for its common account?

It is true that there are quite a number of people in Russia who know very well the capitalist society in the West with all its irreconcilable contradictions and conflicts and see clearly the way out of this apparent impasse. But in the first place, the few thousand people who realise this do not live in such communities, and the approximately fifty million who still live at the stage of common property in land in Russia proper have not the slightest inkling of all this. Those few thousand people are for these millions just as strange and incomprehensible, as the plans Robert Owen devised to save the British workers were to the latter between 1800 and 1840. And the majority of the workers employed by Owen in his mills at New-Lanark were likewise people who grew up in the institutions and customs of a disintegrating communistic gentile society, the Celtic-Scottish clan, but he never mentions that these people showed greater appreciation of his ideas. And secondly, it is a historical impossibility for a lower economic phase to solve the puzzles and conflicts which arise, and can only arise, at a far higher stage. All forms of gentile communities which came into being before commodity production and individual exchange share only one feature with the future socialist society, i.e., that certain things, means of production, are owned in common and used in common by certain groups. But the one feature they have in common

does not enable a lower social form by itself to produce the future socialist society, this quite specific and final product of capitalism. Each particular economic formation must solve its own problems which originate in itself, to attempt to solve the problems of a different and quite unrelated formation would be utterly absurd. And this applies to the Russian community just as much as to the Southern Slav *zádruga*, the gentile households of the Indians and any other savage or barbarian social formation which is marked by common ownership of the means of production.

On the other hand it is not only possible but certain that after the victory of the proletariat and after the means of production become common property in the West European nations, the countries which just begin to be affected by capitalist production and in which gentile institutions or remnants of them still survive, can use these remnants of common property and the corresponding national customs as a powerful means of substantially shortening their development towards a socialist society and of avoiding the greater part of the suffering and struggle which we in Western Europe have to experience. But an indispensable condition of this is the example and active assistance of the present-day capitalist West. Only when capitalist economy is superseded in its place of origin and in the countries where it has reached its climax, only when such an object lesson has shown the backward countries "how it is done", how modern industrial forces of production are turned into public property and made to serve the whole society, only then can they attempt this shortened process of development. Then however they can be sure of success. And this applies to all pre-capitalist countries, not only to Russia. But it will be relatively easier in Russia because a section of her native population has already adopted the intellectual results of capitalist development, and during a revolutionary period it will therefore be possible to carry out the social transformation there more or less simultaneously with that in the West.

This was already stated by Marx and me on January 21, 1882, in the Preface to Plekhanov's Russian translation of the *Communist Manifesto*. It reads: "In addition to the rapidly developing capitalist swindle and bourgeois landed property, which is only just arising, we find that in Russia the larger part of the land is owned in common by peasants. The question is, can the Russian community, a form of primitive common ownership of land which is already rapidly disintegrating, be directly transformed into a higher communist form of landed property or will it first have to undergo a process of dissolution similar to that marking the historical development of the West?"

"The only reply one can give today is: If the Russian revolution serves as the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West, so that the two complement one another, it is possible that Russian landed property becomes the point of departure for a development towards communism."

Written in the first half of
January 1894

Translated from the Ger-
man
Published in English for
the first time

FREDERICK ENGELS

From THE HISTORY OF PRIMITIVE
CHRISTIANITY

The history of primitive Christianity presents peculiar points of affinity with the modern labour movement. Like the latter, Christianity was initially a movement of the oppressed, it emerged at first as a religion of slaves and freedmen, of the poor and the outcasts, of the peoples who were subjugated or scattered by Rome. Both Christianity and proletarian socialism promise impending deliverance from servitude and suffering. Christianity sets this deliverance in a life after death, in heaven, socialism sets it in this world, in a transformed society. Both were persecuted and harassed, their supporters ostracised and placed under special laws, the former as enemies of mankind, the latter as enemies of the state, of religion, of the family and of the social order. But both advanced victoriously and irresistibly, despite all persecutions and were even aided by them. Three hundred years after it came into being Christianity was the recognised official religion of the Roman empire, and in scarcely sixty years socialism has won a position which definitely ensures its victory.

Professor Anton Menger, who in his *Recht auf den vollen Arbeitsertrag* expresses his surprise that notwithstanding the immense centralisation of landed property under the Roman emperors and the excessive suffering of the working class, then consisting almost exclusively of slaves, "the fall of the Western Roman Empire was not succeeded by socialism", simply does not realise that "socialism", in

so far as it was feasible at the time, did indeed exist and hold sway in the form of Christianity. Except that Christianity wanted to bring about the social transformation not in this world—and this could not be otherwise in view of the historical preconditions—but in the hereafter, in heaven, in the eternal life after death, in the approaching “millennium”.

A comparison between the two historical phenomena suggests itself in connection with the first rebellions of oppressed peasants and especially urban plebeians as early as the Middle Ages. These rebellions, like all medieval mass movements, inevitably wore a religious mask and appeared to aim at the restoration of primitive Christianity in the face of rampant corruption,* but very solid mundane in-

* The religious uprisings in the Muslim world, and especially in Africa, form a peculiar contrast to this. Islam is a religion designed for Orientals, and Arabs in particular, that is for townspeople engaged in commerce and manufacture on the one hand, and for nomadic Bedouins on the other. This however contains the germ of periodically recurring conflicts. The urban people become rich, opulent, and lax in the observation of the “Law”. The Bedouins, poor and because of their poverty puritanical, view these riches and pleasures with envy and cupidity. Then they gather under a prophet, a Mahdi, to punish the apostates, to re-establish respect for the Law and the true Faith, and as a reward to seize the wealth of the unfaithful. A hundred years later they are of course in exactly the same position as those unfaithful were, another purge of the Faith is necessary, a new Mahdi arises and the game starts again at the beginning. This happened from the time of the African Almoravides’ and Almohades’ campaigns of conquest into Spain up to the latest Mahdi of Khartoum, who so successfully defied the English.¹⁵³ It was the same or an analogous situation that led to the uprisings in Persia and other Muslim countries. All these movements, which assume a religious cloak, have economic causes. But even when they succeed they leave the old economic conditions untouched. Everything remains as it was, and the clash becomes a periodic occurrence. On the other hand, in the popular uprisings of the Christian West, the religious cloak serves merely as a banner and a mask for attacks on an economic system which is becoming obsolete; in the end it is overthrown, a new one arises and the world advances. [*Note by Engels.*]

terests were always concealed behind the religious exaltation. This was most brilliantly demonstrated by the organisation of the Bohemian Taborites¹⁵⁴ led by Jan Žižka of glorious memory. But this feature ran right through the Middle Ages, until it gradually disappeared after the German Peasant War, to reappear again among the communist workers after 1830. . . .

What sort of people did the first Christians comprise? Mainly those "that labour and are heavy laden",* members of the lowest social strata, as befits a revolutionary group. And of whom were these strata composed? In the towns of down-and-out free men, of all manner of people similar to the mean whites in the Southern Slave States and the European loafers and adventurers in colonial and Chinese maritime towns, also of freedmen and especially of slaves; on the latifundia in Italy, Sicily and Africa of slaves, and in the rural districts of the provinces of small peasants who were falling more and more into debt slavery. A common way leading to the emancipation of all these elements did not exist. They had lost paradise, it was a thing of the past. For the ruined freedman paradise was his former polis, both city and state, where his ancestors had lived as free citizens in the old days; for the prisoner of war turned into a slave it was the time of his liberty before his subjugation and captivity; for the small peasant it was the destroyed gentile society and common ownership of land. The iron fist of the Roman conquerors, which levelled everything, had crushed all this. The largest social groups produced by antiquity were the tribe and the association of related tribes, organised in kinship groups among the barbarians, and in the form of a polis, comprising one or several related tribes, among the Greek and Italic peoples with their propensity for setting up cities. Philip and Alexander gave political unity to the Hellenic peninsula, but did not thereby create a Greek nation. Only the end of

* Matthew 11:28.—*Ed.*

Roman world supremacy made nations possible. Military power, Roman jurisdiction and the machinery for the collection of taxes led to the complete disintegration of the traditional internal organisation, and brought small associations to an end once and for all. The subjugated people did not only lose their independence and specific organisation but were also robbed by the military and civil authorities, who first of all seized their wealth and then lent it again to them at usurious rates of interest to be able to extort it from them once more. The burden of taxation and the need for money it caused in areas where natural economy existed either exclusively or predominantly, forced the peasants increasingly into debt slavery, led to wide differences in wealth, made the rich richer and completely impoverished the poor. And any resistance offered by individual small tribes or cities to the huge Roman empire was entirely hopeless. How could one find a way out, a solution for the enslaved, oppressed and impoverished, a way out that could be used jointly by all these diverse groups of people who had different or even contradictory interests? But such a way out had to be found if a single great revolutionary movement was to contain all of them.

This way out was found, but not in this world. In the given situation it could only be a religious way out. A new world was emerging just then. The continued existence of the soul after the death of the body was gradually recognised as an article of faith throughout the Roman world. It was also to an increasing extent generally accepted that some sort of reward or punishment awaited the souls of the dead for the actions they had performed on earth. As to the reward, it is true, things looked rather doubtful, antiquity was much too materialistic and near to nature not to value terrestrial life infinitely higher than that in the netherworld, and the Greeks looked upon survival after death as a sort of misfortune. Then appeared Christianity, it took reward and punishment in the life to come seriously and created heaven and hell, and that was the way out

which was to lead those that labour and are heavy laden from this terrestrial vale of woe to everlasting paradise. And it was indeed only the prospect of a reward in the hereafter that made it possible to turn the Stoic-Philonian renunciation of the world and asceticism into the main ethical principle of a new world religion capable of carrying along the oppressed masses of the people.

Written between June 19
and July 16, 1894

Translated from the Ger-
man

LETTERS

MARX TO PAVEL VASILYEVICH ANNENKOV

December 28 [1846]

Dear Mr. Annenkov,

You would long ago have received my answer to your letter of November 1 but for the fact that my bookseller only sent me Mr. Proudhon's book, *Philosophie de la misère*, last week. I have gone through it in two days in order to be able to give you my opinion about it at once. As I have read the book very hurriedly, I cannot go into details but can only tell you the general impression it has made on me. If you wish I could go into details in a second letter.

I must frankly confess that I find the book on the whole bad, indeed very bad. You yourself laugh in your letter at the "bits of German philosophy" which Mr. Proudhon parades in this unwieldy and pretentious work, but you assume that the economic argument has not been infected by the philosophic poison. I too am very far from imputing the faults in the economic argument to Mr. Proudhon's philosophy. Mr. Proudhon does not give us a false criticism of political economy because he has absurd philosophic views, but he gives us an absurd philosophic theory because he fails to understand the social system of today in its *engrenement*, to use a word which, like much else, Mr. Proudhon has borrowed from Fourier.

Why does Mr. Proudhon talk about God, about universal reason, about the impersonal reason of humanity which

never errs, which has always been equal to itself and which one need only understand properly in order to arrive at the truth? Why does he resort to feeble Hegelianism to give himself the appearance of a bold thinker?

He himself provides the answer to this riddle. Mr. Proudhon sees in history a series of social developments; he finds progress realised in history; finally he finds that men, as individuals, did not know what they were doing and were mistaken about their own movement, that is to say, their social development seems at the first glance to be distinct, separate and independent of their individual development. He cannot explain these facts, and the hypothesis of universal reason manifesting itself is pure invention. Nothing is easier than to invent mystical causes, that is to say, phrases which have no sense at all.

But when Mr. Proudhon admits that he understands nothing about the historical development of humanity—and he admits this by using such high-sounding words as: Universal Reason, God, etc.—is he not implicitly and necessarily admitting that he is incapable of understanding *economic development*?

What is society, whatever its form may be? The product of men's reciprocal action. Are men free to choose this or that form of society? By no means. Assume a particular level of development of men's productive forces and you will get a particular form of commerce and consumption. Assume particular stages of development in production, commerce and consumption and you will have a corresponding social system, a corresponding organisation of the family, of social estates or of classes, in a word, a corresponding civil society. Assume such a civil society and you will get a political system appropriate to it, a system which is only the official expression of civil society. Mr. Proudhon will never understand this because he thinks he is doing something great by appealing from the state to civil society—that is to say, from the official epitome of society to official society.

It is superfluous to add that men are not free to choose *their productive forces*—which are the basis of all their history—for every productive force is an acquired force, the product of former activity. The productive forces are therefore the result of practically applied human energy; but this energy is itself conditioned by the circumstances in which men find themselves, by the productive forces already acquired, by the social form which exists before they exist, which they do not create, which is the product of the preceding generation. Because of the simple fact that every succeeding generation finds itself in possession of the productive forces acquired by the previous generation, and that they serve it as the raw material for new production, a coherence arises in human history, a history of humanity takes shape which becomes all the more a history of humanity the more the productive forces of men and therefore their social relations develop. Hence it necessarily follows that the social history of men is always the history of their individual development, whether they are conscious of it or not. Their material relations are the basis of all their relations. These material relations are only the necessary forms in which their material and individual activity is realised.

Mr. Proudhon confuses ideas with things. Men never relinquish what they have won, but this does not mean that they never relinquish the social form in which they have acquired certain productive forces. On the contrary, in order that they may not be deprived of the results attained and forfeit the fruits of civilisation, they are obliged, when the mode of carrying on commerce no longer corresponds to the productive forces acquired, to change all their traditional social forms.—I am using the word “commerce” here in its widest sense, as we use *Verkehr* in German. For example: the privileges, the institution of guilds and corporations, the regulatory regime of the Middle Ages, were social relations that alone corresponded to the acquired productive forces and to the social condition which

had previously existed and from which these institutions had arisen. Under the protection of the regime of corporations and regulations, capital was accumulated, overseas trade was developed, colonies were founded. But the fruits of this would have been forfeited by men if they had tried to retain the forms under whose shelter these fruits had ripened. Hence two thunderclaps occurred, the Revolutions of 1640 and 1688. All the old economic forms, the social relations corresponding to them, the political system that was the official expression of the old civil society, were destroyed in England. Thus the economic forms in which men produce, consume, and exchange, are *transitory and historical*. With the acquisition of new productive forces, men change their mode of production and with the mode of production all the economic relations which are merely the relations appropriate to a particular mode of production.

This is precisely what Mr. Proudhon has not understood and still less demonstrated. Mr. Proudhon, incapable of following the real movement of history, produces a phantasmagoria which claims to be dialectical. He does not need to speak of the seventeenth, the eighteenth or the nineteenth century, for his history proceeds in the misty realm of imagination and is above space and time. In short, it is not history but trite Hegelian trash, it is not profane history—history of man—but sacred history—history of ideas. From his point of view man is only the instrument of which the idea or the eternal reason makes use in order to unfold itself. The *evolutions* of which Mr. Proudhon speaks are understood to be evolutions such as are accomplished within the mystic womb of the absolute idea. If one discards the veil of this mystical language, it means that Mr. Proudhon specifies the arrangement in which economic categories are classified inside his own mind. It will not require great exertion on my part to prove to you that it is the order of a very disorderly mind.

Mr. Proudhon begins his book with a dissertation on *value*, which is his pet subject. I will not enter on an examination of this dissertation today.

The series of economic evolutions of eternal reason begins with *division of labour*. To Mr. Proudhon division of labour is a perfectly simple thing. But was not the caste system also a particular type of division of labour? Was not the system of the corporations another division of labour? And was not the division of labour under the system of manufacture, which in England began in the middle of the seventeenth century and ended towards the end of the eighteenth, also totally different from the division of labour in large-scale, modern industry?

Mr. Proudhon is so far from the truth that he neglects what even the profane economists attend to. When he talks about division of labour he does not feel it necessary to mention the world *market*. Well, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when there were as yet no colonies, when America did not yet exist for Europe, and East Asia only existed through the medium of Constantinople, was not division of labour at that time bound to be fundamentally different from division of labour in the seventeenth century which already had a developed colonial system?

And that is not all. Is the whole internal organisation of nations, are all their international relations anything but the expression of a particular division of labour? And are they not bound to change when changes occur in the division of labour?

Mr. Proudhon has so little understood the problem of the division of labour that he does not even mention the separation of town and country, which took place, for instance, in Germany from the ninth to the twelfth century. Thus, this separation must become an eternal law for Mr. Proudhon since he knows neither its origin nor its development. All through his book he therefore speaks as if this creation of a particular mode of production would endure until the end of time. All that Mr. Proudhon says about

division of labour is only a summary, and moreover a very superficial and incomplete summary, of what Adam Smith and a thousand others have said before him.

The second evolution is *machinery*. The connection between division of labour and machinery is entirely mystical to Mr. Proudhon. Each kind of division of labour had its specific instrument of production. Between the middle of the seventeenth and the middle of the eighteenth century, for instance, people did not make everything by hand. They had instruments, and very complicated ones at that, such as looms, ships, levers, etc., etc.

Thus there is nothing more absurd than to declare that machines have come into being as a consequence of division of labour in general.

I may also remark, by the way, that since Mr. Proudhon has not understood the historical origin of machinery, he has still less understood its development. One can say that up to the year 1825—the period of the first general crisis—the demands of consumption in general increased more rapidly than production, and the development of machinery was a necessary consequence of the needs of the market. Since 1825, the invention and application of machinery has been simply the result of the war between workers and employers. But this is only true of England. As for the European nations, they were driven to adopt machinery owing to English competition both in their home markets and on the world market. Finally, in North America the introduction of machinery was due both to competition with other countries and to lack of hands, that is, to the disproportion between the population of North America and its industrial needs. From these facts you can see what sagacity Mr. Proudhon displays when he conjures up the spectre of competition as the third evolution, the antithesis to machinery!

Lastly, it is altogether absurd to make *machinery* an economic category alongside with division of labour, competition, credit, etc.

The machine is no more an economic category than the ox which draws the plough. The contemporary *use* of machines is one of the relations of our present economic system, but the way in which machinery is utilised is totally distinct from the machinery itself. Powder is powder whether used to wound a man or to dress his wounds.

Mr. Proudhon surpasses himself when he allows competition, monopoly, taxes or police, balance of trade, credit and property to develop inside his head in the order in which I have mentioned them. Almost the whole of the credit system had been developed in England by the beginning of the eighteenth century, before the invention of machinery. Government loans were only a fresh method of increasing taxation and satisfying the new demands created by the rise of the bourgeoisie to power. Finally, the last category in Mr. Proudhon's system is *property*. In the real world, on the other hand, division of labour and all Mr. Proudhon's other categories are social relations forming in their entirety what is today known as *property*; outside these relations bourgeois property is nothing but a metaphysical or legal illusion. The property of some other epoch, feudal property, develops under entirely different social relations. By presenting property as an independent relation, Mr. Proudhon commits more than a mistake in method: he clearly shows that he has not grasped the bond which holds together all forms of *bourgeois* production, that he has not understood the *historical* and *transitory* character of the forms of production in a particular epoch. Mr. Proudhon, who does not regard our social institutions as historical products, who is unable to understand either their origin or their development, can only produce dogmatic criticism of them.

Mr. Proudhon is therefore obliged to take refuge in a *fiction* in order to explain their development. He imagines that division of labour, credit, machinery, etc., were all invented to serve his fixed idea, the idea of equality. His

explanation is sublimely naive. These things were invented in the interests of equality but unfortunately they turned against equality. This constitutes his whole argument. In other words, he takes as his starting point an arbitrary assumption and then, since the actual development contradicts his fiction at every step, he concludes that there is a contradiction. He conceals, moreover, the fact that the contradiction exists solely between his fixed ideas and the real movement.

Thus, Mr. Proudhon, mainly because he lacks the historical knowledge, has not perceived that as men develop their productive forces, that is, as they live, they develop certain relations with one another and that the nature of these relations is bound to change with the change and growth of these productive forces. He has not perceived that *economic categories* are only *abstract expressions* of these actually existing relations and only remain true while these relations exist. He therefore falls into the error of the bourgeois economists, who regard these economic categories as eternal laws and not as historical laws which are valid only for a particular historical development, for a definite development of the productive forces. Instead, therefore, of regarding the politico-economic categories as abstract expressions of the real, transitory, historic social relations, Mr. Proudhon, owing to a mystic inversion, regards real relations merely as reifications of these abstractions. These abstractions themselves are formulas which have been slumbering in the bosom of God the Father since the beginning of the world.

But here our good Mr. Proudhon falls into severe intellectual convulsions. If all these economic categories are emanations from the bosom of God, if they constitute the hidden and eternal life of man, how does it come about, first, that there is such a thing as development, and secondly, that Mr. Proudhon is not a conservative? He explains these evident contradictions by a whole system of antagonisms.

To throw light on this system of antagonisms let us take an example.

Monopoly is a good thing, because it is an economic category and therefore an emanation of God. Competition is a good thing because it is also an economic category. But what is not good is the reality of monopoly and the reality of competition. What is still worse is the fact that monopoly and competition devour each other. What is to be done? As these two eternal ideas of God contradict each other, it seems obvious to him that there is also within the bosom of God a synthesis of these two ideas, in which the evils of monopoly are balanced by competition and *vice versa*. As a result of the struggle between the two ideas only their good side will manifest itself. One must snatch this secret idea from God and then apply it and everything will be for the best; the synthetic formula which lies hidden in the darkness of the impersonal reason of man must be revealed. Mr. Proudhon does not hesitate for a moment to come forward as the revealer.

But look for a moment at real life. In the economic life of the present time you find not only competition and monopoly but also their synthesis, which is not a *formula* but a *movement*. Monopoly produces competition, competition produces monopoly. But this equation, far from removing the difficulties of the present situation, as the bourgeois economists imagine it does, results in a situation still more difficult and confused. If therefore you alter the basis on which present-day economic relations rest, if you destroy the present *mode* of production, then you will not only destroy competition, monopoly and their antagonism, but also their unity, their synthesis, the movement, which is the real equalisation process of competition and monopoly.

Now I will give you an example of Mr. Proudhon's dialectics.

Freedom and *slavery* constitute an antagonism. I need not speak either of the good or of the bad sides of freedom. As to slavery, I need not speak of its bad sides. The

only thing that has to be explained is the good side of slavery. We are not dealing with indirect slavery, the slavery of the proletariat, but with direct slavery, the slavery of the black people in Surinam, in Brazil, and in the Southern States of North America.

Direct slavery is as much the pivot of our industry today as machinery, credit, etc. Without slavery no cotton; without cotton no modern industry. It is slavery which has made the colonies valuable; the colonies have created world trade; world trade is the necessary condition of large-scale machine industry. Thus, before the traffic in Negroes began, the colonies supplied the Old World with only very few products and made no visible change in the face of the earth. Slavery is therefore an economic category of the highest importance. Without slavery North America, the most progressive country, would be turned into a patriarchal land. If North America were wiped off the map of the world the result would be anarchy, the total decay of trade and of modern civilisation. But to let slavery disappear, is to wipe North America off the map of the world. Since slavery is an economic category, it has existed in every nation since the world began. Modern nations have merely known how to disguise slavery in their own countries while they openly imported it into the New World. After these observations on slavery, how will our worthy Mr. Proudhon proceed? He will look for the synthesis between freedom and slavery, the true *juste-milieu*, in other words equilibrium between slavery and freedom.

Mr. Proudhon has very well grasped the fact that men produce cloth, linen, silks, and it is really a great merit to have grasped such a small matter! But he has not grasped that, in accordance with their productive forces, these men also produce the *social relations* amid which they manufacture cloth and linen. Still less has he understood that men, who produce their social relations in accordance with their material productivity, also produce *ideas, categories*, that is to say the abstract ideal expressions of these same

social relations. Thus the categories are no more eternal than the relations they express. They are historical and transitory products. To Mr. Proudhon, on the contrary, abstractions, categories are the primary cause. According to him they, and not men, make history. The *abstraction*, the *category taken as such*, i.e., apart from men and their material activities, is of course immortal, unchangeable, immutable; it is simply an entity of pure reason, which is only another way of saying that the abstraction as such is abstract. An admirable *tautology*!

Thus, regarded as categories, economic relations for Mr. Proudhon are eternal formulas without origin or progress.

Let us put it in another way: Mr. Proudhon does not directly state that *bourgeois life* is for him an *eternal truth*; he states it indirectly by deifying the categories which express bourgeois relations in the form of thought. He regards the products of bourgeois society as spontaneously arisen eternal entities, endowed with lives of their own, since they present themselves to his mind in the form of categories, in the form of thought. Accordingly he does not rise above the bourgeois horizon. As he is operating with bourgeois ideas, as though they were eternal truths, he seeks a synthesis of these ideas, their equilibrium and does not see that the present method by which they reach equilibrium is the only possible one.

Indeed he does what all good bourgeois do. They all assert that in principle, that is, considered as abstract ideas, competition, monopoly, etc., are the only basis of life, but that in practice they leave much to be desired. They all want competition without the pernicious effects of competition. They all want the impossible, namely, the conditions of bourgeois existence without the necessary consequences of those conditions. None of them understands that the bourgeois form of production is historical and transitory, just as the feudal form was. This mistake arises from the fact that the bourgeois man is to them the

only possible basis of every society; they cannot imagine a society in which men have ceased to be bourgeois.

Mr. Proudhon is therefore bound to be a *doctrinaire*. The historical movement, which is overturning the present-day world, reduces itself for him to the problem of discovering the correct equilibrium, the synthesis, of two bourgeois thoughts. And so the clever fellow by virtue of his subtlety discovers the hidden thought of God, the unity of two isolated thoughts—which are only isolated because Mr. Proudhon has isolated them from practical life, from present-day production, which is the combination of the realities which they express. In place of the great historical movement arising from the conflict between the productive forces already acquired by men and their social relations, which no longer correspond to these productive forces; in place of the imminent terrible wars between the different classes within each nation and between different nations; in place of the real and violent action of the masses by which alone these conflicts can be resolved—in place of this vast, prolonged and complicated movement, Mr. Proudhon puts the whimsical motion of his own head. It is therefore the men of learning that make history, the men who know how to purloin God's secret thoughts. The common people have only to apply their revelations.

You will now understand why Mr. Proudhon is the declared enemy of every political movement. The solution of actual problems does not lie for him in public action but in the dialectical rotations of his own head. Since to him the categories are the motive force, it is not necessary to change practical life in order to change the categories. Quite the contrary. One must change the categories and the consequence will be a change in the existing society.

In his desire to reconcile the contradictions Mr. Proudhon does not even ask whether it is not the basis of those contradictions that must really be overthrown. He is exactly like the political doctrinaire who chooses to regard the king, the chamber of deputies and the chamber of peers as

integral parts of social life, as eternal categories. All he is looking for is a new formula by which to establish an equilibrium between these powers whose equilibrium consists precisely in the actually existing movement in which one power is now the conqueror and now the slave of the other. Thus in the eighteenth century a number of mediocre minds were busy finding the true formula which would bring the social estates, nobility, king, parliament, etc., into equilibrium, and they woke up one morning to find that all this—king, parliament and nobility—had disappeared. The true equilibrium in this antagonism was the overthrow of all the social relations which served as a basis for these feudal institutions and for the antagonisms of these feudal institutions.

Because Mr. Proudhon places eternal ideas, the categories of pure reason, on the one side and human beings and their practical life, which, according to him, is the application of these categories, on the other, one finds with him from the beginning a *dualism* between life and ideas, between soul and body, a dualism which recurs in many forms. You can see now that this antagonism is nothing but the incapacity of Mr. Proudhon to understand the profane origin and the profane history of the categories which he deifies.

My letter is already too long for me to speak of the absurd case which Mr. Proudhon puts up against communism. For the moment you will grant me that a man who has not understood the present social system may be expected to understand still less the movement which seeks to overthrow it, and the literary expressions of this revolutionary movement.

The *only point* on which I am in complete agreement with Mr. Proudhon is his dislike for socialist sentimentality. I had already, before him, drawn much enmity upon myself by ridiculing this stupid, sentimental, utopian socialism. But is not Mr. Proudhon strangely deluding himself when he sets up his petty-bourgeois sentimentality—

I am referring to his declamations about family life, conjugal love and all such banalities—in opposition to socialist sentimentality, which in Fourier, for example, goes much deeper than the pretentious platitudes of our worthy Proudhon? He is himself so well aware of the emptiness of his arguments, of his utter incapacity to speak about these things, that he bursts into violent fits of rage, vociferation and righteous wrath, foams at the mouth, curses, denounces, cries shame and murder, beats his breast and boasts before God and man that he is in no way connected with the socialist infamies! He does not criticise socialist sentimentalities, or what he regards as such. Like a holy man, a pope, he excommunicates poor sinners and sings the glories of the lower middle class and of the miserable patriarchal amorous illusions of the domestic hearth. And this is certainly no accident. From head to foot Mr. Proudhon is the philosopher and economist of the lower middle class. In an advanced society the petty bourgeois is compelled by his very position to become a Socialist on the one hand and an economist on the other; that is to say, he is dazed by the magnificence of the upper middle class and has sympathy for the sufferings of the people. He is at once both bourgeois and man of the people. Deep down in his heart he flatters himself that he is impartial and has found the right equilibrium, which claims to be something different from the *juste-milieu*. Such a petty bourgeois glorifies *contradiction* because contradiction is the essence of his existence. He is himself simply social contradiction in action. He must justify in theory what he is in practice, and Mr. Proudhon has the merit of being the scientific interpreter of the French petty bourgeoisie—a genuine merit, because the petty bourgeoisie will form an integral part of all the impending social revolutions.

I wish I could send you my book on political economy¹⁵⁵ with this letter, but it has so far been impossible for me to get this work, and the criticism of the German Philos-

ophers and Socialists* of which I spoke to you in Brussels, printed. You would never believe the difficulties which a publication of this kind comes up against in Germany, from the police on the one hand and from the publishers who are themselves the interested representatives of all the tendencies I am attacking, on the other. And as for our own Party, it is not merely that it is poor, but a large section of the German Communist Party is also angry with me for opposing their utopias and declamations.

Yours truly,

Karl Marx

PS. You will ask why I am writing to you in poor French rather than in good German. Because I am dealing with a French author.

I would be very grateful to you if you did not delay your answer too long, so that I might know whether you have understood me in the guise of my barbaric French.

Marx/Engels,
Werke, Bd. 27, Berlin, 1965,
S. 451-63

ENGELS TO MARX

June 6 [1853]

... The absence of property in land is indeed the key to the whole of the East. Herein lies its political and religious history. But how does it come about that the Orientals have not arrived at landed property, even in its feudal

* Marx is referring to *The German Ideology* (see Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Moscow, 1976).—Ed.

form? I think it is mainly due to the climate, taken in connection with the nature of the soil, especially with the great stretches of desert which extend from the Sahara straight across Arabia, Persia, India and Tatory¹⁵⁶ up to the highest Asiatic plateau. Artificial irrigation is here the first condition of agriculture and this is a matter either for the communes, the provinces or the central government. An Oriental government never had more than three departments: finance (plunder at home), war (plunder at home and abroad), and public works (provision for reproduction). The British Government in India has administered Nos. 1 and 2 in a more narrow-minded manner and dropped No. 3 entirely, so that Indian agriculture is being ruined. Free competition discredits itself there completely. The artificial fertilisation of the land, which immediately ceased when the irrigation system fell into decay, explains the fact which otherwise would be rather odd that whole regions which were once brilliantly cultivated are now waste and bare (Palmyra, Petra, the ruins in the Yemen, and countless districts in Egypt, Persia and Hindustan); it explains the fact that one single devastating war could depopulate a country for centuries and strip it of its whole civilisation. I think that the destruction of the South-Arabian trade before Mohammed, which you very rightly regard as one of the chief factors in the Mohammedan revolution, must also be included here. I do not know the commercial history of the first six centuries after Christ thoroughly enough to be able to judge how far the general material situation in the world made the trade route through Persia to the Black Sea and through the Persian Gulf to Syria and Asia Minor preferable to the route over the Red Sea. But in any case the relative security of the caravans in the ordered Persian Empire of the Sassanids was not without considerable effect, while between 200 and 600 A. D. the Yemen was almost continuously subjugated, invaded and plundered by the Abyssinians. The cities of Southern Arabia, which were still flourishing in

the time of the Romans, were sheer wastes and ruins in the seventh century: within five hundred years the neighbouring Bedouins had adopted purely mythical, fabulous traditions of their origin (see the Koran and the Arabian historian Novāiri), and the alphabet in which the inscriptions in those parts are written was almost totally unknown, although *there was no other*, so that even *writing* had actually fallen into oblivion. Besides a "superseding" caused perhaps by the general commercial situation things of this sort presuppose an act of direct and violent destruction which can only be explained by the Ethiopian invasion. The expulsion of the Abyssinians took place about forty years before Mohammed and was obviously the first act of the awakening Arab national consciousness, which was also stimulated by Persian invasions from the North, which penetrated almost as far as Mecca. I shall take up the history of Mohammed himself only in the next few days; so far, however, it seems to me to bear the character of a Bedouin reaction against the settled but demoralised fellaheen of the towns, whose religion at that time was also in a state of disintegration, it was a compound of a debased nature-cult with debased Judaism and Christianity. . . .

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 76-77

MARX TO ENGELS

March 8, 1855

... Some time ago I again went through (ancient) Roman history up to the time of Augustus. Rome's internal history plainly boils down to the struggle between small and big landed property, with slavery naturally

putting its specific stamp on it. The relations of indebtedness, which played such an important part since the origins of Roman history, are only the natural consequences of small landed property. . . .

Translated from the
German

ENGELS TO FERDINAND LASSALLE

May 18, 1859

. . . Now as far as the historical content* is concerned, the two sides of the movement of that time which were of greatest interest to you—the national movement of the nobility, represented by Sickingen, and the humanistic-theoretical movement with its further development in the theological and ecclesiastical sphere, the Reformation—have been depicted by you very vividly and with justified reference to subsequent developments. What I like most here is the scene between Sickingen and the Emperor and that between the legate and the archbishop of Treves. (Here you have succeeded in drawing fine individual portraits when you present the contrast between the well-bred, politically and theoretically far-seeing legate, who has an aesthetic and classical education and the narrow-minded German ecclesiastical prince,—a portrayal which nevertheless follows directly from the *representative* nature of the two characters.) The pen picture in the Sickingen-Karl scene is also very striking. In Hutten's autobiography, whose *content* you rightly described as essential, you have certainly chosen a desperate means of working this content into the drama. Of great importance is

* The reference is to Lassalle's drama *Franz von Sickingen*.—Ed.

also the talk between Balthasar and Franz in Act V, in which the former explains to his master the *really revolutionary* policy he should have followed. It is here that the really tragic manifests itself; and it seems to me that just because it is so significant it should have been emphasised somewhat more strongly already in Act III, where there are several convenient places. But I am again lapsing into minor matters.

The position of the cities and the princes of that time is also set forth on several occasions with great clarity and thus the *official* elements, so to speak, of the contemporary movement are fairly well accounted for. I have the impression however that you have not laid due stress upon the non-official, the plebeian and peasant elements and their concomitant representatives in the field of theory. The peasant movement was in its way just as national and just as much opposed to the princes as was that of the nobility, and the colossal dimensions of the struggle in which it succumbed contrast very strongly with the readiness with which the nobility, leaving Sickingen in the lurch, resigned itself to its historical calling, that of flunkeys. Even accepting your interpretation of the drama—which, as you will have seen, is somewhat too abstract, not realistic enough for me—I think the peasant movement deserves closer attention. Although the peasant scene with Fritz Joss is characteristic and the distinct personality of this “agitator” presented very correctly, it does not however depict with sufficient force the peasant unrest which already at that time was a swelling torrent, in contrast to the movement of the nobility. In accordance with *my* view of drama, which consists in not forgetting the realistic for the idealistic, Shakespeare for Schiller, the inclusion of the sphere of the so wonderfully variegated plebeian society of that day would have supplied, in addition, entirely new material for enlivening the drama, an invaluable background for the national movement of the nobility in the foreground, and would have set this move-

ment in the proper light. What peculiarly expressive types were produced during this period of the dissolution of the feudal bodies of retainers illustrated by the roaming beggar kings, unemployed *lansquenets* and adventurers of every description—a Falstaffian background which in an historical drama of *this* kind would have even greater effect than it did in Shakespeare! But apart from this, it seems to me that it is precisely by relegating the peasant movement to the rear that you have been induced, I believe, to misrepresent also one aspect of the national movement of the nobility and at the same time to allow the *really* tragic element in Sickingen's fate to escape you. As I see it, the majority of the nobility directly subject to the emperor had no intention of concluding an alliance with the peasantry at that time. Their dependence on incomes obtained by oppressing the peasants did not permit this. An alliance with the cities would have been more feasible. But no such alliance was effected, or was effected only to a very limited extent. But a national revolution of the nobility could have been accomplished only by means of an alliance with the towns and the peasants, particularly the latter. Precisely herein lies, in my opinion, the whole tragedy of the thing, that this fundamental condition, the alliance with the peasants, was impossible, that the policy of the nobility had therefore to be a petty one, that at the very moment when it wanted to take the lead of the national movement, the *mass* of the nation, the peasants, protested against its leadership and it thus necessarily had to collapse. I am unable to judge to what extent your assumption that Sickingen really did have some connection with the peasants has any basis in history, and it does not really matter. Incidentally, as far as I remember, wherever Hutten in his writings addresses the peasants, he just lightly touches on this ticklish question concerning the nobility and seeks to focus the wrath of the peasants on the priests. But I do not in the least dispute your right to depict Sickingen and Hutten as having intended to eman-

cipate the peasants. However, this put you at once up against the tragic contradiction that both of them were placed between the nobles, who were decidedly *against* this, and the peasants. Here, I dare say, lay the tragic collision between the historically necessary postulate and the practical impossibility of putting it into effect. By ignoring this aspect you reduce the tragic conflict to smaller dimensions, namely, that Sickingen, instead of at once tackling emperor and empire, tackled only a prince (although here too your correct intuition makes you bring in the peasants) and you simply let him perish as a result of the indifference and cowardice of the nobility. But the motivation of this would have been quite different if you had previously brought out more emphatically the rumbling peasant movement and the mood of the nobility which became undoubtedly more conservative on account of the earlier peasant conspiracies of the "*Bundschuh*" and "*Arme Konrad*".¹⁵⁷ This is of course only *one* way in which the peasant and plebeian movement could have been incorporated in the drama. At least ten other ways of doing this just as well or better are conceivable. . . .

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 110-13

MARX TO ENGELS

March 25, 1868

. . . *With regard to Maurer*. His books are exceptionally important. Not only primitive times but the whole later development of the free imperial cities, of the landlords who had immunity of public authority, and of the struggle between free peasantry and serfdom is given an entirely new form.

It is the same with human history as with paleontology. Even the best minds fail to see—on principle, owing to a certain judicial blindness—things which lie in front of their noses. Later, when the moment has arrived, one is surprised to find traces everywhere of what one has failed to see. The first reaction against the French Revolution and the Enlightenment¹⁵⁸ which is connected with it was naturally to regard everything mediaeval as romantic; even people like Grimm are not free from this. The second reaction is to look beyond the Middle Ages into the primitive age of every nation, and that corresponds to the socialist trend, although those learned men have no idea that they have any connection with it. Then they are surprised to find what is newest in what is oldest—even equalitarians, to a degree which would have made Proudhon shudder.

To show how much we all labour under this judicial blindness: Right in *my own* neighbourhood, on the *Hunsrück*,¹⁵⁹ the old Germanic system survived up till the *last few* years. I now remember that my father *being a lawyer* talked to me about it! Another proof: Just as the geologists, even the best, like Cuvier, interpreted certain facts quite wrongly, so philologists of the calibre of a Grimm *mistranslated* the simplest Latin sentences because they were under the influence of Möser (who, I remember, was enchanted that “liberty” never existed among the Germans but that “the air makes the serf”) and others. For example, the well-known passage in Tacitus: “*Arva per annos mutant et superest ager*,”¹⁶⁰ which means: they exchange the fields, *arva* (by lot, hence *sortes* in all the later *Leges Barbarorum*¹⁶¹) and common land (*ager* as *ager publicus* in contrast to *arva*) remains over—is translated by Grimm, etc.: they cultivate fresh fields every year and still there is always (uncultivated) land left over!

So too the passage: “*Colunt discreti ac diversi*”^{*} is supposed to prove that from time immemorial the Germans

* “They till the land *separately* and independently.”—*Ed.*

carried on cultivation on individual farms like Westphalian junkers. But the same passage continues: "*Vicos locant non in nostrum morem connexis et cohaerentibus aedificiis: suum quisque locum spatio circumdat*"*; and such primitive Germanic villages still exist here and there in Denmark in the form described. Scandinavia was of course bound to become as important for German jurisprudence and economics as for German mythology. And only by starting from there were we able to decipher our past again. Besides, even Grimm, etc., find in Caesar that the Germans always settled as kinship groups and not as individuals: "*gentibus cognationibusque, qui uno coiereant*."**

But what would old Hegel say if he heard in the next world that the *general* [*das Allgemeine*] in German and Norse means nothing but the common land, and the *particular* [*das Sondere, Besondere*]-nothing but the separate property divided off from the common land? The logical categories are in that case damn well arising out of "our intercourse".

Klima und Pflanzenwelt in der Zeit, eine Geschichte beider [*Climate and the Vegetable World Throughout the Ages, a History of Both*], by Fraas (1847), is very interesting, that is as a demonstration that climate and flora have changed in *historic* times. He is a Darwinist before Darwin and makes even the *species* arise in historic times. But he is also an agronomist. He asserts that as a result of cultivation and in proportion to its degree, the "moisture" so much beloved by the peasant is lost (hence plants migrate from south to north) and eventually the formation of steppes begins. The first effects of cultivation are useful, but in the end it lays the land waste owing to deforestation,

* "They do not build their villages of connected and adjoining buildings, as is our custom: each surrounds his dwelling with a clear strip of land."-Ed.

** "In gentes and kinships, which settled together."-Ed.

etc. This man is both a very learned philologist (he has written books *in Greek*) and a chemist, agronomist, etc. The conclusion is that cultivation when it progresses spontaneously and is not *consciously controlled* (as a bourgeois he of course does not arrive at this), leaves deserts behind it—Persia, Mesopotamia, etc., Greece. Hence again socialist tendencies without being aware of them! . . .

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 188-90

ENGELS TO MARX

November 22, 1882

. . . The other day I managed at last to get a second-hand, bound, copy of the complete *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*. Can you guess from whose disposed-of library it comes? *Dr. Strousberg's!* Now I have found a passage in Plutarch's *Marius* which, together with Caesar and Tacitus,* makes the whole agrarian concatenation clear.

The Cimbri "emigrated, not however in one push so to speak, nor in a continuous march, but advancing year after year always during the good season; thus fighting and waging war they moved across the continent for a long time."¹⁶²

This passage considered in connection with the Suevi's annual change of cultivated land, as described by Caesar 70 years later, indicates how the Germans migrated—in the spring they sowed the land where they had spent the winter and after the harvest they moved on until winter brought them to a halt. There can hardly be any doubt that *as a rule* during the summer they tilled the soil (unless

* Caesar, *The Gallic War*; Tacitus, *Germania*.—Ed.

robbery served as a substitute) for these people had brought the knowledge of agriculture with them from Asia. In the case of the Cimbri we still see the process of migration, in Caesar its end, since the Rhine had become an impassable border. The two facts taken together explain why Caesar¹⁶³ writes *privati ac separati agri apud eos nihil est**: only communal cultivation organised according to kinship groups was possible during migration, to measure off individual fields would have been absurd. The advance or regression to separate cultivation with common ownership is then described by Tacitus. . . .

Translated from the
German

ENGELS TO MARX

December 15, 1882

Dear Moor,

I am enclosing the appendix on the Mark.** Be so kind as to send it back on *Sunday*, so that I can revise it on Monday—I was not able to conclude the final revision today.

I consider the view expounded here regarding the condition of the peasantry in the Middle Ages and the rise of a *second* serfdom in the middle of the fifteenth century on the whole incontrovertible. I have been right through Maurer to look up all the relevant passages and find nearly all my propositions there, *supported, moreover, by evidence*, and alongside them the exact opposite, but either

* There are no individual or enclosed fields.—*Ed.*

** The reference is to *Die Mark* by Engels first published at the end of 1882 as an appendix to the first German edition of Engels' *Entwicklung des Sozialismus von der Utopie zur Wissenschaft*.—*Ed.*

unsupported by evidence or taken from a period which is *not* under discussion. This applies in particular to *Fronhöfe* Volume 4, Conclusion.* These contradictions arise in Maurer: 1) from his habit of adducing evidence and examples from all periods side by side and jumbled together, 2) from the remnants of his legalistic bias, which always gets in his way whenever it is a question of understanding a process of *development*, 3) from the insufficient importance which he attaches to *force* and the part it plays, 4) from his enlightened prejudice that since the dark Middle Ages a steady progress to a better state of things *must* surely have taken place; this prevents him from seeing not only the antagonistic character of real progress, but also the individual retrogressions.

You will find that my thing is by no means all of one piece but a regular patchwork. The first draft was all of one piece but unfortunately wrong. I mastered the material only by degrees and that is why there is so much patching.

Incidentally the general reintroduction of serfdom was one of the reasons why no industry could develop in Germany in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the first place there was the *reversed* division of labour among the guilds—the opposite of that in manufacture: the work was divided *among the guilds* instead of inside the workshop. In England migration to the guild-free countryside took place at this stage, but in Germany this was prevented by the transformation of the country people and the inhabitants of the agricultural market towns into serfs. But this also caused the ultimate collapse of the guilds as soon as the competition of foreign manufacture arose. The other reasons which also played a part in holding back German manufacture I will here omit.

* The reference is to Georg Ludwig von Maurer, *Geschichte der Fronhöfe, der Bauernhöfe und der Hofverfassung in Deutschland.*—Ed.

Today again fog and gas light the whole day long. Hartmann's battery probably a failure for lighting; can be used at best for telegraphy, etc. More about this as soon as something definite has been established.

Keep well. I hope you'll soon get weather you're allowed to go out in.

Yours,
F.E.

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 334-35

ENGELS TO MARX

December 16, 1882

... The point about the almost total disappearance—legal or actual—of serfdom in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is the most important to me, because formerly you expressed a divergent opinion on this score. In the East Elbe region the colonisation has established that the *German* peasants were free; Maurer admits* that in Schleswig-Holstein at that time "all" the peasants regained their freedom (perhaps somewhat later than the fourteenth century). He also admits that in South Germany this was the period when the bondmen were treated best. More or less the same applies to Lower Saxony (e.g., the new "meiers"*** who were in fact hereditary tenants). He is

* G. L. Maurer, *Geschichte der Fronhöfe, der Bauernhöfe und der Holverfassung in Deutschland*.—Ed.

** Prosperous peasants (in many cases former feudal headmen, or meiers) who were tenants of large holdings, often comprising several holdings of forcibly evicted peasants. The meiers, who were nominally temporary tenants, actually acquired hereditary right to the land.—Ed.

only opposed to Kindlinger's view* that serfdom first arose in the sixteenth century. But that it was refurbished and appeared in a second edition seems to me indubitable. Meitzen** gives the dates at which serfs begin to be mentioned again in East Prussia, Brandenburg, Silesia: the middle of the sixteenth century; Hanssen*** gives the same data for Schleswig-Holstein. If Maurer calls this a *milder* form of serfdom he is right in comparison with the ninth to eleventh centuries, when the old Germanic slavery still continued, and right too with regard to the legal powers which the lord still had then and later—according to the thirteenth-century law-books—over his serfs. But compared with the *actual* position of the peasants in the thirteenth, the fourteenth and, in North Germany, also the fifteenth centuries, the new serfdom was anything but an improvement. Especially after the Thirty Years' War¹⁶⁴! It is also significant that while in the Middle Ages the degrees of servitude and serfdom were unnumerable, so that the *Sachsenspiegel*¹⁶⁵ gave up speaking of the rights of bondmen, this became remarkably simple after the Thirty Years' War. In brief, I am very anxious to know your opinion. . . .

Translated from the
German

* N. Kindlinger, *Geschichte der Deutschen Hörigkeit insbesondere der sogenannten Leibeigenschaft.*—Ed.

** A. Meitzen, *Der Boden und die landwirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse des Preussischen Staates.*—Ed.

*** G. Hanssen, *Die Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft und die Umgestaltung der gutsherrlichbäuerlichen Verhältnisse überhaupt in den Herzogthümern Schleswig und Holstein.*—Ed.

ENGELS TO MARX

December 22, 1882

... I am glad that on the history of serfdom* we "proceed in agreement", as they say in business. It is certain that serfdom and bondage are not a peculiarly medieval-feudal form, we find them everywhere or nearly everywhere where conquerors have the land cultivated for them by the old inhabitants—e.g., very early in Thessaly. This fact has even misled me and many other people about servitude in the Middle Ages; one was much too much inclined to base it simply on conquest, this made everything so neat and easy. See Thierry** among others.

The position of the Christians in Turkey during the height of the old Turkish semi-feudal system was something similar. . . .

Translated from the
German

ENGELS TO KARL KAUTSKY

February 16, 1884

... There exists an *important* book on the conditions of primitive society, as important as Darwin is in biology, and of course it is again Marx who discovered it: Morgan, *Ancient Society*, 1877. Marx spoke about it but my head was full of other things at that time and he never returned to it. This must have suited him for he *himself* wanted to publicise the book among the Germans, as I see from the

* See this book, pp. 514-16.—Ed.

** A. Thierry, *Histoire de la conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands, etc.*—Ed.

quite extensive extracts he made.* Morgan has quite independently discovered the Marxian materialist conception of history within the limits prescribed by his subject and he concludes with directly communist propositions in relation to present-day society. The Roman and Greek gens is for the first time fully explained on the basis of that of savages, particularly American Indians, thus creating a firm foundation for the history of primitive times. If I had the time I would work up the material, with Marx's notes, for a feature article in the *Sozialdemokrat* or the *Neue Zeit*,¹⁶⁶ but that is out of the question.¹⁶⁷ All that humbug by Tylor, Lubbock & Co. about endogamy, exogamy and whatever else that rubbish is called has now been definitely squashed. These gentlemen suppress the book here as much as they can. It was printed in America. I ordered it five weeks ago but can't get it, although a London firm appears on the title page as co-publisher. . . .

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 347-48

ENGELS TO FRIEDRICH SORGE

March 7, 1884

. . . Do read Morgan (Lewis H.), *Ancient Society*, published in America in 1877. He gives an excellent exposition of the primeval period and its communism. He *has spontaneously rediscovered Marx's theory of history* and ends with communist conclusions for the present time. . . .

Translated from the
German

* Karl Marx, "Abstract of Morgan's *Ancient Society*".—Ed.

ENGELS TO PAUL LAFARGUE

[about August 11, 1884]

... P. 1 and 4: Maine does not in any way deserve to be cited in the same breath with Maurer; he discovered nothing, he is but the disciple of the disciples of Maurer; the common ownership of land in India was known and described long before him by Campbell,* etc.; that in Java by Money,** etc.; that in Russia by Haxthausen.*** His only merit is that of being the first Englishman to accept and popularise Maurer's discoveries.

P. 5: Must be entirely recast. Your examples do not apply to the point under discussion. The peasant's plot of land which becomes capital would be *land capital*, a very complicated matter which M[arx] discusses only in the *third book*.**** Your slave-owner producing for the N[ew] Orleans market is not a capitalist, no more than is the Rumanian boyar who exploits peasants liable to corvée labour. There is no capitalist but the owner of the means of production *who exploits the free worker!*

You should rather say: the small peasant's weaving-loom of the time before the revolution, used for weaving clothing for the family, was not capital; nor yet is it capital when the peasant sells to the merchant cloth he has been able to make during the long winter evenings; but if he employs a wage-earner to weave commodities for the merchant and pockets the difference between the costs of production and the sale-price of the cloth, there you have the weaving-loom transformed into capital. The given aim of production—to produce commodities—*does not impart* the

* Sir George Campbell, *Modern India*, 1852.—Ed.

** I.W.G. Money, *Java or How to Manage a Colony*, London, 1861.—Ed.

*** A. Haxthausen, *Die landliche Verfassung Russlands*, Leipzig, 1861.—Ed.

**** *Of Capital*.—Ed.

character of capital to the instrument. The prod[uction] of commodities is one of the pre-conditions for the existence of capital; but so long as the producer sells only *his own product*, he is not a capitalist; he becomes one only at the point when he employs his instrument *to exploit the paid work of another*. This applies to page 6 as well. How is it possible that you failed to make that distinction?

Instead of your impossible slave-owner (don't be so *Reache!*) you might say: The feudal lord whose fields are worked by his *corvée-labourers* and who in addition collects their tribute in eggs, poultry, fruit, cattle, etc., is not a capitalist. He lives on the surplus-labour of others, but he does not transform the product of that surplus-labour into surplus-value; he does not sell it, he consumes it, spends it, wastes it. But should this lord, as he did frequently in the 18th century, get rid of some part of his *corvée-labourers*, should he combine their plots in one large farm, rented to the big industrial farmer so dear to the Physiocrats¹⁶⁸; should this big farmer employ the erst-while *corvée-labourers* as wage-labourers in the cultivation of his land, then you have feudal agriculture transformed into capitalist agriculture, and the farmer into a capitalist. . . .

Frederick Engels, Paul and
Laura Lafargue, *Correspondence*,
Vol. 1, Moscow, 1959, p. 229

ENGELS TO JOSEPH BLOCH

September 21 [-22], 1890

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 3rd of this month was sent on to Folkestone, but since I did not have the book in question with me, I was unable to reply. When I got home on the

12th, such an accumulation of urgent work awaited me that only today I have found time to write a few lines to you. I mention this to explain the delay and to ask you to accept my apologies.

To 1. Firstly you will see on p. 19 of the *Origin*¹⁶⁹ that the evolution of the punaluan family is described as proceeding so gradually that even in this century marriages of brother and sister (*children of the same mother*) occurred in the royal family in Hawaii. We find examples of marriages between brother and sister throughout the ancient world, e.g. among the Ptolemy. But secondly, one must distinguish between brothers and sisters who are children of the *same mother* or merely of the *same father*; αδελφός, αδελφή are derived from δελφός — womb, hence originally they only mean brothers and sisters who have the *same mother*. And from the period of matriarchy a feeling has survived for a long time that children who have the same mother, though different fathers, are closer to one another than children having the same father but different mothers. The punaluan family excludes marriages only between the former, but certainly not between the latter, who (since matriarchy prevails) *are not even related* according to the ideas corresponding to this type of family. Now the cases of marriage between brother and sister which occurred in Hellenic antiquity are restricted, so far as I know, either to people who have different mothers, or to people about whose mothers nothing is known and therefore it is not excluded that they had different mothers, consequently they are not inconsistent with the punaluan custom. You have simply overlooked the fact that between the punaluan period and Greek monogamy the jump from matriarchy to patriarchy took place, which altered matters considerably.

According to Wachsmuth's *Hellenische Alterthümer* the Greeks of the heroic age

"had no misgivings whatever about too close consanguinity of marriage partners, apart from the relationship of parents and

children" (Vol. III, p. 157). "Marrying one's own sister was not considered improper in Crete" (ibid. p. 170).

The last example is taken from Strabo, Book X,* but I cannot find the passage at the moment because the book is not subdivided into chapters. Until I see proof to the contrary, I shall interpret *one's own* sister as sister having the same father. . . .

To 2. With regard to your first main question.

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

We make our history ourselves, but, in the first place, under very definite antecedents and conditions. Among

* Strabo, *Geographica*.—Ed.

these the economic ones are ultimately decisive. But the political ones, etc., and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds also play a part, although not the decisive one. The Prussian state also arose and developed from historical, ultimately economic, causes. But it could scarcely be maintained without pedantry that among the many small states of North Germany, it was precisely Brandenburg that had to become the great power embodying the economic, linguistic and, after the Reformation, also the religious differences between North and South, because of economic necessity and not also because of other factors (above all its entanglement with Poland, owing to the possession of Prussia, and hence with international political relations—which were indeed also decisive in the formation of the Austrian dynastic power). It is hardly possible, without making oneself ridiculous, to explain in terms of economics the existence of every small state in Germany, past and present, or the origin of the High German consonant shift, which widened the geographic partition formed by the mountain ranges, from the Sudetes to the Taunus, into a regular fissure running across Germany.

In the second place, however, history proceeds in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, and every one of them is in turn made into what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant—the historical event. This may in its turn again be regarded as the product of a power which operates as a whole *unconsciously* and without volition. For what each individual wills is obstructed by everyone else, and what emerges is something that no one intended. Thus history has proceeded hitherto in the manner of a natural process and is essentially subject to the same laws of motion. But from the fact that the wills of individuals—each of whom desires what he is impelled to by his physical constitution and external, in the last resort economic,

circumstances (either his own personal circumstances or those of society in general)—do not achieve what they want, but are merged into an aggregate mean, a common resultant, it must not be concluded that they are equal to zero. On the contrary, each contributes to the resultant and is to this extent included in it.

I would furthermore ask you to study this theory from its original sources and not at second-hand; it is really much easier. Marx hardly wrote anything in which it did not play a part. But especially *Der 18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte* [*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*] is a most excellent example of its application. There are also many allusions to it in *Kapital*. Perhaps I may also refer you to my writings: *Herrn Eugen Dühring's Umwälzung der Wissenschaft* [*Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*] and *Ludwig Feuerbach und der Ausgang der klassischen deutschen Philosophie* [*Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*], in which I have given the most detailed account of historical materialism which, as far as I know, exists.

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

To 1. Yesterday (I am writing this on 22 September) I

found the following conclusive passage in Schoemann, *Griech[ische] Alterthümer*, Berlin, 1855, Vol. I, p. 52:

"It is well known however that marriages between half-brother and half-sister who *had different mothers* were not considered incestuous in the late Greek period."

It entirely confirms the exposition I have given above.

I hope the frightful parenthetical insertions, which slipped in when I tried to be concise, will not put you off.

I remain,

yours faithfully,

F. Engels

Marx/Engels, *Werke*,
Bd. 37, Berlin, 1967,
S. 462-65

ENGELS TO CONRAD SCHMIDT

October 27, 1890

...Where there is division of labour on a social scale the separate labour processes become independent of each other. In the last instance production is the decisive factor. But as soon as trade in products becomes independent of production proper, it has a movement of its own, which, although by and large governed by that of production, nevertheless in particulars and within this general dependence again follows laws of its own inherent in the nature of this new factor; this movement has phases of its own and in its turn reacts on the movement of production. The discovery of America was due to the thirst for gold which had previously driven the Portuguese to Africa (cf. Soetbeer's *Edelmetall-Produktion* [*Production of Precious Metals*]), because European industry and accordingly trade

which had grown enormously in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries required more means of exchange than Germany, the great silver country from 1450 to 1550, could provide. The conquest of India by the Portuguese, Dutch and English between 1500 and 1800 had *imports from* India as its object—nobody dreamt of exporting anything there. And yet what colossal repercussions upon industry had these discoveries and conquests, which were called forth solely by trade interests; it was only the need for *exports* to these countries that created and developed modern large-scale industry.

So it is, too, with the money market. As soon as trade in money becomes separate from trade in commodities it has—under definite conditions determined by production and commodity trade and within these limits—a development of its own, specific laws determined by its own nature and distinct phases. Add to this the fact that money trade, developing further, comes to include trade in securities and that these securities are not only government papers but also industrial and transport stocks, consequently money trade gains direct control over a portion of the production by which it is on the whole itself controlled, thus the repercussions of money trading on production become still stronger and more complicated. The money-dealers become owners of railways, mines, iron works, etc. These means of production take on a double aspect: their operation is governed sometimes by the interests of direct production, sometimes however also by the requirements of the shareholders, in so far as they are money-dealers. The most striking example of this is furnished by the North American railways, whose operation is entirely dependent on the daily stock exchange transactions of a Jay Gould or a Vanderbilt, etc., which have nothing whatever to do with the particular railway and its interests as means of communication. And even here in England we have seen contests lasting decades between different railway companies over the boundaries of their respective territories—contests

on which an enormous amount of money was thrown away, not in the interests of production and communication but simply because of a rivalry whose sole object usually was to facilitate the stock exchange transactions of the shareholding money-dealers.

With these few indications of my conception of the relation of production to commodity trade and of both to money trade, I have actually answered your questions about "historical materialism" generally. The thing is easiest to grasp from the point of view of the division of labour. Society gives rise to certain common functions which it cannot dispense with. The persons appointed for this purpose form a new branch of the division of labour *within society*. This gives them particular interests, distinct, too, from the interests of their mandators; they make themselves independent of the latter and—the state is in being. And now things proceed in a way similar to that in commodity trade and later in money trade: the new independent power, while having in the main to follow the movement of production, reacts in its turn, by virtue of its inherent relative independence—that is, the relative independence once transferred to it and gradually further developed—upon the conditions and course of production. It is the interaction of two unequal forces: on the one hand, the economic movement, on the other, the new political power, which strives for as much independence as possible, and which, having once been set up, is endowed with a movement of its own. On the whole, the economic movement prevails, but it has also to endure reactions from the political movement which it itself set up and endowed with relative independence, from the movement of the state power, on the one hand, and of the opposition simultaneously engendered, on the other. Just as the movement of the industrial market is, in the main and with the reservations already indicated, reflected in the money market and, of course, in *inverted* form, so the struggle between the classes already existing and fighting with one another is reflected in the struggle

between government and opposition, but likewise in inverted form, no longer directly but indirectly, not as a class struggle but as a fight for political principles, and it is so distorted that it has taken us thousands of years to get to the bottom of it.

The retroaction of the state power upon economic development can be of three kinds: it can proceed in the same direction, and then things move more rapidly; it can move in the opposite direction, in which case nowadays it [the state] will go to pieces in the long run in every great people; or it can prevent the economic development from proceeding along certain lines, and prescribe other lines. This case ultimately reduces itself to one of the two previous ones. But it is obvious that in cases two and three the political power can do great damage to the economic development and cause extensive waste of energy and material.

Then there is also the case of the conquest and brutal destruction of economic resources, as a result of which, in certain circumstances, the entire economic development in a particular locality or in a country could be ruined in former times. Nowadays such a case usually has the opposite effect, at least with great peoples: in the long run the vanquished often gains more economically, politically and morally than the victor.

Similarly with law. As soon as the new division of labour which creates professional lawyers becomes necessary, another new and independent sphere is opened up which, for all its general dependence on production and trade, has also a specific capacity for reacting upon these spheres. In a modern state, law must not only correspond to the general economic condition and be its expression, but must also be an *internally coherent* expression which does not, owing to internal conflicts, contradict itself. And in order to achieve this, the faithful reflection of economic conditions suffers increasingly. All the more so the more rarely it happens that a code of law is the blunt, unmitigated, unadulterated expression of the domination of a class—this in

itself would offend the "conception of right". Even in the *Code Napoléon*¹⁷⁰ the pure, consistent conception of right held by the revolutionary bourgeoisie of 1792-96 is already adulterated in many ways, and, in so far as it is embodied in the Code, has daily to undergo all sorts of attenuations owing to the rising power of the proletariat. This does not prevent the *Code Napoléon* from being the statute book which serves as the basis of every new code of law in every part of the world. Thus to a great extent the course of the "development of law" simply consists in first attempting to eliminate contradictions which arise from the direct translation of economic relations into legal principles, and to establish a harmonious system of law, and then in the repeated breaches made in this system by the influence and compulsion of further economic development, which involves it in further contradictions. (I am speaking here for the moment only of civil law.)

The reflection of economic relations in the form of legal principles is likewise bound to be inverted: it goes on without the person who is acting being conscious of it; the jurist imagines he is operating with *a priori* propositions, whereas they are really only economic reflections; everything is therefore upside down. And it seems to me obvious that this inversion, which, so long as it remains unrecognised, forms what we call *ideological outlook*, influences in its turn the economic basis and may, within certain limits, modify it. The basis of the right of inheritance is an economic one, provided the level of development of the family is the same. It would, nevertheless, be difficult to prove, for instance, that the absolute liberty of the testator in England and the severe and very detailed restrictions imposed upon him in France are due to economic causes alone. But in their turn they exert a very considerable effect on the economic sphere, because they influence the distribution of property.

As to the realms of ideology which soar still higher in the air—religion, philosophy, etc.—these have a prehistoric

stock, found already in existence by and taken over in the historical period, of what we should today call nonsense. These various false conceptions of nature, of man's own being, of spirits, magic forces, etc., have for the most part only a negative economic factor as their basis; the low economic development of the prehistoric period is supplemented and also partially conditioned and even caused by the false conceptions of nature. And even though economic necessity was the main driving force of the increasing knowledge of nature and has become ever more so, yet it would be pedantic to try and find economic causes for all this primitive nonsense. The history of science is the history of the gradual clearing away of this nonsense or rather of its replacement by fresh but less absurd nonsense. The people who attend to this belong in their turn to special spheres in the division of labour and they think that they are working in an independent field. And to the extent that they form an independent group within the social division of labour, their output, including their errors, exerts in its turn an effect upon the whole development of society, and even on its economic development. But all the same they themselves are in turn under the predominant influence of economic development. In philosophy, for instance, this can be most readily proved true for the bourgeois period. Hobbes was the first modern materialist (in the sense of the eighteenth century) but he was an absolutist at a time when absolute monarchy was in its heyday throughout Europe and began the battle against the people in England. Locke was in religion and in politics the child of the class compromise of 1688.¹⁷¹ The English deists and their consistent followers, the French materialists, were the true philosophers of the bourgeoisie, the French even of the bourgeois revolution. The German philistinism runs through German philosophy from Kant to Hegel, sometimes in a positive and sometimes negative way. But the precondition of the philosophy of each epoch regarded as a distinct sphere in the division of labour is a definite body of thought which

is handed down to it by its predecessors, and which is also its starting point. And that is why economically backward countries can still play first fiddle in philosophy: France in the eighteenth century as compared with England, on whose philosophy the French based themselves, and later Germany as compared with both. But both in France and in Germany philosophy and the general blossoming of literature at that time were the result of an economic revival. The ultimate supremacy of economic development is for me an established fact in these spheres too, but it operates within the terms laid down by the particular sphere itself: in philosophy, for instance, by the action of economic influences (which in their turn generally operate only in their political, etc., make-up) upon the existing philosophic material which has been handed down by predecessors. Here economy creates nothing anew, but it determines the way in which the body of thought found in existence is altered and further developed, and that too for the most part indirectly, for it is the political, legal and moral reflexes which exert the greatest direct influence on philosophy.

As regards religion I have said everything necessary in the last section on Feuerbach.*

Hence if Barth alleges that we altogether deny that the political, etc., reflections of the economic movement in their turn exert any effect upon the movement itself, he is simply tilting at windmills. He should only look at Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*, which deals almost exclusively with the particular part played by political struggles and events, of course within their general dependence upon economic conditions. Or *Kapital*, the section on the working day, for instance, where legislation, which is surely a political act, has such a drastic effect. Or the section on the history of

* Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*.—Ed.

the bourgeoisie. (Chapter XXIV.)* And why do we fight for the political dictatorship of the proletariat if political power is economically impotent? Force (that is, state power) is also an economic power.

But I have no time to criticise the book** now. Volume III must first be published and besides I think that Bernstein, for instance, could very well deal with it.

What these gentlemen all lack is dialectics. They always see only cause here, effect there. That this is an empty abstraction, that such metaphysical polar opposites exist in the real world only during crises, and that the whole vast process goes on in the form of interaction—though of very unequal forces, the economic movement being by far the strongest, the primary and most decisive and that in this context everything is relative and nothing absolute—they cannot grasp at all. As far as they are concerned Hegel never existed. . . .

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 397-
402

ENGELS TO LAURA LAFARGUE

June 13, 1891

... Anyhow, I have just finished the introduction to the new edition which I shall send to Kautsky for the *Neue Zeit* if he likes to have it.*** But before sending it off there is

* The corresponding chapters in the English edition of Marx's *Capital* are XXVI–XXXII.—Ed.

** The reference is to Barth's *Geschichtsphilosophie Hegel's und der Hegelianer bis auf Marx und Hartmann*.—Ed.

*** The Introduction to the 4th edition of *The Origin of the Family* appeared on June 29, 1891, in No. 41 of *Die Neue Zeit* (IX. Jahrgang, II, Band, S. 460-67).

one point on which I should like to be sure. I state Bachofen's new discoveries to be these: 1) hetairism as he calls it, 2) Mutterrecht, as its necessary corollary, 3) women consequently held in high esteem in ancient times, and 4) dass der Uebergang zur Einzelehe, wo die Frau *einem* Mann ausschliesslich gehörte, eine Verletzung des altherkömmlichen Anrechts der übrigen Männer auf dieselbe Frau in sich schloss, eine Verletzung die gebüsst, oder deren Duldung erkaufte werden musste durch eine zeitlich beschränkte Preisgebung der Frau.*

Now as to this point No. 4 I am not quite certain. You have no idea what thieves those prehistoric bookmakers are, and therefore all I recollect [is] that *somewhere* I have found Bachofen quoted as the discoverer of this fact, and, I believe, even a reference to Mutterrecht, preface p. XIX. But I cannot find it again. Now as you have my copy of Bachofen with you, would you mind (unless you remember it without looking) referring and letting me know whether I am, *generally speaking*, justified in attributing this discovery to Bachofen? It is so long since I have looked at the book, and as in defence of Morgan's claims I have to be rather severe on a lot of his exploiters, I should not like them to catch me in the wrong box. As soon as I have your answer, the Ms. can go off and then Ravé can have a proofsheets to go on with. . . .

Frederick Engels, Paul and
Laura Lafargue, *Correspondence*, Vol. 3, Moscow,
1963, p. 75.

* That the change over to monogamy, where the woman belonged exclusively to *one* man, contained violation of the traditional rights of the other men to the same woman, which violation had to be expiated, or the toleration of which had to be paid for by the temporary prostitution of the woman.—Ed.

ENGELS TO FRANZ MEHRING

July 14, 1893

Dear Mr. Mehring,

Today is my first opportunity to thank you for the *Les-sing-Legende* you were kind enough to send me. I did not want to reply with a bare formal acknowledgment of receipt of the book but intended at the same time to say something about it, about its contents. Hence the delay.

I shall begin at the end—the appendix “Über den historischen Materialismus” [“On Historical Materialism”], in which you have summarised the main points excellently and for any unprejudiced person convincingly. If I find anything to object to it is that you give me more credit than I deserve, even if I count everything which I might perhaps have found out for myself—in time—but which Marx with his more rapid *coup d’oeil* and wider vision discovered much more quickly. When one had the good fortune to work for forty years with a man like Marx, one usually does not during his lifetime get the recognition one thinks one deserves. Then, when the greater man dies, the lesser easily gets overrated and this seems to me to be just my case at present; history will set all this right in the end and by that time one has managed to kick the bucket and does no longer know anything about anything.

Otherwise only one more point is lacking, which, however, Marx and I always failed to stress enough in our writings and in regard to which we are all equally guilty. That is to say, in the first instance we all laid, and *were bound to lay*, the main emphasis on the *derivation* of political, juridical and other ideological notions, and of actions arising through the medium of these notions, from basic economic facts. But at the same time we have on account of the content neglected the formal side—the manner in which these notions, etc., come about. This has given our adversaries a welcome opportunity for misun-

derstandings and distortions, of which Paul Barth is a striking example.

Ideology is a process which is indeed accomplished consciously by the so-called thinker, but it is the wrong kind of consciousness. The real motive forces impelling him remain unknown to the thinker; otherwise it simply would not be an ideological process. Hence he imagines false or illusory motive forces. Because it is a rational process he derives its form as well as its content from pure reasoning, either his own or that of his predecessors. He works exclusively with thought material, which he accepts without examination as something produced by reasoning, and does not investigate further for a more remote source independent of reason; indeed this is a matter of course to him, because, as all action is *mediated* by thought, it appears to him to be ultimately *based* upon thought.

The historical ideologist (historical is here simply a comprehensive term comprising political, juridical, philosophical, theological—in short, all the spheres belonging to *society* and not only to nature) thus possesses in every sphere of science material which has arisen independently out of the thought of previous generations and has gone through its own independent course of development in the brains of these successive generations. True, external facts belonging to one or another sphere may have exercised a co-determining influence on this development, but the tacit presupposition is that these facts themselves are also only the fruits of a process of thought, and so we still remain within that realm of mere thought, which apparently has successfully digested even the hardest facts.

It is above all this semblance of an independent history of state constitutions, of systems of law, of ideological conceptions in every separate domain that dazzles most people. If Luther and Calvin "overcome" the official Catholic religion, or Hegel "overcomes" Fichte and Kant, or Rousseau with his republican *Contrat social*¹⁷² indirectly "overcomes" the constitutional Montesquieu, this is a pro-

cess which remains within theology, philosophy or political science, represents a stage in the history of these particular spheres of thought and never passes beyond the sphere of thought. And since the bourgeois illusion of the eternity and finality of capitalist production has been added to this, even the overcoming of the mercantilists by the physiocrats and Adam Smith is regarded as a sheer victory of thought; not as the reflection in thought of changed economic facts but as the finally achieved correct understanding of actual conditions subsisting always and everywhere—in fact, if Richard Coeur-de-Lion and Philip Augustus had introduced free trade instead of getting mixed up in the crusades we should have been spared five hundred years of misery and stupidity.

This aspect of the matter, which I can only indicate here, we have all, I think, neglected more than it deserves. It is the old story: form is always neglected at first for content. As I say, I have done that too and the mistake has always struck me only later. Hence I am not only far from reproaching you with this in any way—as the older of the guilty parties I certainly have no right to do so, on the contrary, but I would like all the same to draw your attention to this point for the future.

Connected with this is the fatuous notion of the ideologists that because we deny an independent historical development to the various ideological spheres which play a part in history we also deny them any *effect upon history*. The basis of this is the common undialectical conception of cause and effect as rigidly opposite poles, the total disregard of interaction. These gentlemen often almost deliberately forget that once an historic element has been brought into the world by other, ultimately economic causes, it reacts, and can react on its environment and even on the causes that have given rise to it. For instance, Barth when he speaks of the priesthood and religion, your page 475. I was very glad to see how you settled this fellow, whose banality exceeds all expectations; and such a man

is made professor of history in Leipzig! Old Wachsmuth—also rather a bonehead but greatly appreciative of facts—was after all quite a different chap.

As for the rest, I can only repeat about the book what I repeatedly said about the articles when they appeared in the *Neue Zeit*; it is by far the best presentation in existence of the genesis of the Prussian state. Indeed, I may well say that it is the only good presentation, correctly developing in most matters their interconnections down to the very details. One regrets only that you were unable to include the entire further development down to Bismarck and one cannot help hoping that you will do this another time and present a complete coherent picture, from the Elector Frederick William down to old William.* For you have already made the preliminary investigations and, in the main at least, they are as good as finished. The thing has to be done sometime anyhow before the shaky old shanty comes tumbling down. The dissipation of the monarchical-patriotic legends, although not really a necessary precondition for the abolition of the monarchy which screens class domination (for a *pure*, bourgeois republic of Germany has been made obsolete by events before it has come into existence) is nevertheless one of the most effective levers for that purpose.

Then you will also have more space and opportunity to depict the local history of Prussia as part of Germany's general misery. This is the point where I occasionally depart somewhat from your view, especially in the conception of the preliminary conditions for the dismemberment of Germany and of the failure of the bourgeois revolution in Germany during the sixteenth century. If I get down to reworking the historical introduction to my *Peasant War*, which I hope I shall do next winter, I shall be able to develop there the points in question. Not that I consider

* William I.—Ed.

those you indicated incorrect, but I put others alongside them and group them somewhat differently.

In studying German history—the story of a continuous state of wretchedness—I have always found that only a comparison with the corresponding French periods produces a correct idea of proportions, because what happens there is the direct opposite of what happens in our country. There, the establishment of a national state from the scattered parts of the feudal state precisely at the time we pass through the period of our greatest decline. There, a rare objective logic during the whole course of the process; with us, increasingly dreary desultoriness. There, during the Middle Ages, the English conqueror, who intervenes in favour of the Provençal nationality against the Northern French nationality, represents foreign intervention, and the wars with England represent, in a way, the Thirty Years' War, which there, however, ends in the ejection of the foreign invaders and the subjugation of the South by the North. Then comes the struggle between the central power and Burgundy, the vassal, which relies on its foreign possessions, and plays the part of Brandenburg-Prussia, a struggle which ends, however, in the victory of the central power and conclusively establishes the national state. And precisely at that moment the national state completely collapses in our country (in so far as the "German kingdom" within the Holy Roman Empire can be called a national state) and the plundering of German territory on a large scale sets in. This comparison is most humiliating for Germans but for that very reason the more instructive; and since our workers have put Germany back again in the forefront of the historical movement it has become somewhat easier for us to swallow the ignominy of the past.

Another especially significant feature of the development of Germany is the fact that not one of the two member states which in the end partitioned Germany between them was purely German—both were colonies on conquered Slav

territory: Austria a Bavarian and Brandenburg a Saxon colony—and that they acquired power *within* Germany only by relying upon the support of foreign, non-German possessions: Austria upon that of Hungary (not to mention Bohemia) and Brandenburg that of Prussia. On the Western border, the one in greatest jeopardy, nothing of the kind took place; on the Northern border it was left to the Danes to protect Germany against the Danes; and in the South there was so little to protect that the frontier guard, the Swiss, even succeeded in tearing themselves loose from Germany!

But I am speaking of all kinds of extraneous matter, let this palaver at least serve you as proof of how stimulating an effect your work has upon me.

Once more cordial thanks and greetings from

Yours,

F. Engels

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 433-37

ENGELS TO W. BORGIUS

January 25, 1894

Dear Sir,

Here is the answer to your questions:

1. By economic relations, which we regard as the determining basis of the history of society, we understand the manner in which men in a given society produce their means of subsistence and exchange the products (in so far as division of labour exists). They comprise therefore the *entire technique* of production and transport. According to our conception this technique also determines the mode of exchange and, furthermore, of the distribution of products

and hence, after the dissolution of gentile society, also the division into classes, and consequently the relations of lordship and servitude and consequently the state, politics, law, etc. The economic relations comprise also the *geographical basis* on which they operate and those remnants of earlier stages of economic development which have been actually transmitted and have survived—often only as a result of tradition or inertia; and of course also the external environment which surrounds this form of society.

If, as you say, technique largely depends on the state of science, science depends far more still on the *state* and the *requirements* of technique. If society has a technical need, that advances science more than ten universities. The whole of hydrostatics (Torricelli, etc.) was called forth by the necessity for regulating the mountain streams of Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Only since the technical applicability of electricity was discovered do we know anything rational about it. But unfortunately it is customary in Germany to write the history of the sciences as if they had fallen from the skies.

2. We regard economic conditions as that which ultimately determines historical development. But race is itself an economic factor. In this context, however, two points must not be overlooked:

a) Political, legal, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic basis. One must not think that the economic situation is *cause, and solely active*, whereas everything else is only passive effect. On the contrary, interaction takes place on the basis of economic necessity, which *ultimately* always asserts itself. The state, for instance, exercises an influence by protective tariffs, free trade, good or bad fiscal system; and even the extreme debility and impotence of the German philistine, arising from the wretched economic condition of Germany from 1648 to 1830 and expressing them-

selves at first in pietism,¹⁷³ then in sentimentality and cringing servility to princes and nobles, were not without economic effect. That was one of the greatest obstacles to recovery and was not shaken until the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars made the chronic misery an acute one. The economic situation therefore does not produce an automatic effect as people try here and there conveniently to imagine, but men make their history themselves, they do so however in a given environment, which conditions them, and on the basis of actual, already existing relations, among which the economic relations—however much they may be influenced by other, political and ideological, relations—are still ultimately the decisive ones, forming the keynote which alone leads to understanding.

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

that the time was ripe for it and that it simply *had* to be discovered.

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

In Germany the greatest hindrance to correct understanding is the irresponsible neglect by literature of economic history. It is very difficult not only to rid oneself of the historical notions drilled into one at school but still more to take up the necessary material for doing so. Who, for instance, has read even old G. von Gülich, whose dry collection of material* nevertheless contains so much stuff for the clarification of innumerable political facts!

By the way, the fine example which Marx has given in *The Eighteenth Brumaire* should, I think, provide a fairly good answer to your questions, precisely because it is a practical example. It seems to me moreover that I have already touched on most of the points in *Anti-Dühring* I, chs. 9-11, and II, 2-4, as well as in III, 1, or Introduction, and also in the last section of *Feuerbach*.

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

* G. von Gülich, *Geschichtliche Darstellung des Handels, der Gewerbe und des Ackerbaus der bedeutendsten handeltreibenden Staaten unsrer Zeit.*—Ed.

Please give my regards to Mr. . . . * and also my thanks for sending the . . . * which I found very enjoyable.

Yours respectfully.

F. Engels

Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd.
39, Berlin, 1968, S. 205-07

ENGELS TO CONRAD SCHMIDT

March 12, 1895

...Did feudalism ever correspond to its concept? Founded in the kingdom of the West Franks,¹⁷⁴ further developed in Normandy by the Norwegian conquerors, its formation continued by the French Norsemen in England and Southern Italy, it came nearest to its concept—in the ephemeral kingdom of Jerusalem, which in the *Assises de Jérusalem*¹⁷⁵ left behind it the most classic expression of the feudal order. Was this order a fiction because in a really classical form it achieved only in Palestine a shortlived existence, and even that, for the most part, on paper only? . . .

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 458-59

ENGELS TO PAUL LAFARGUE

April 3, 1895

...As for the material itself, the main point of criticism is in the chapter on consanguineous communism. There you lay too much emphasis, I think, on the form in which

* Thus in *Der sozialistische Akademiker*, No. 20, Berlin 1895, where this letter was published.—Ed.

that phase has been maintained up to our own times, *in France*, and on the form of its dissolution in that country. The form of coparcenary under which the consanguineous community has gone on so long in France is already in itself a *subdivision* of the *large* family community, continued to our day in the *Zadruga* of the Serbians and Bulgarians. This form, it appears certain, preceded the *peasant commune* in Russia, in Germany, etc.; in breaking up, the Slav *Zadruga*, the German *Hausgenossenschaft* (genealogy of *lex Alamannorum*¹⁷⁶) passed over to the commune of separate families (or, quite often at first, and still to-day in Russia, to coparcenaries), with *separately cultivated* fields, though *subject to periodic redistribution*—that is to say, what emerged from it was the Russian *mir* and the German *Markgenossenschaft*. The more restricted community of several families which was kept up in France was no more, as I see it, than an integral part of the *Markgenossenschaft*, at any rate in the North (the *Frankish* region); in the South (former Aquitaine) it may perhaps have formed a unity holding its land under the superior ownership of the *lord of the manor* alone, without being subject to the control of the village *commune*. It is only this special French form which, on breaking up, could pass in one leap to the individual ownership of the land. . . .

Frederick Engels, Paul and
Laura Lafargue, *Corres-
pondence*, Vol. 3, Moscow,
1963, p. 370

ENGELS TO KARL KAUTSKY

May 21, 1895

. . . As for your book¹⁷⁷ I can say that it gets better the further one reads. Plato and Early Christianity are still inadequately treated, according to the original plan. The

mediaeval sects much better, and *crescendo*, the best are the Taborites, Münzer, and the Anabaptists.¹⁷⁸ Very many important economic analyses of political events, paralleled however by commonplaces where there were gaps in research. I have learnt a great deal from the book; it is an indispensable preliminary study for my new revision of the *Peasant War*. There seem to be two important shortcomings:

1) A very inadequate examination of the development and role of the declassed, almost pariah-like, elements, who were wholly outside the feudal structure and who were bound to come into existence whenever a town was formed and constituted the lowest stratum of the population of every mediaeval town, they were outside the pale of the law and separated from the *Markgenossenschaft*,* from feudal dependence and from the craft guild. It is difficult [to do this], but it is the *main basis*, for by degrees, as the feudal ties were loosened, these elements became the *pre-proletariat*, which in 1789 made the revolution in the suburbs of Paris and which absorbed all the outcasts of feudal and guild society. You speak of proletarians—the expression is ambiguous—and bring in the weavers, whose importance you describe quite correctly, but only *after* declassed journeymen weavers came to exist outside the guilds, and only *in so far as* there were such, can you regard them as part of your “proletariat”. Here there is still much room for improvement.

2) You have not fully grasped Germany's position in the world market, in so far as it is possible to speak of it, Germany's international economic position at the end of the 15th century. This position *alone* explains why the middle class-plebeian movement in religious form, which succumbed in England, the Netherlands and Bohemia, could achieve *some* success in Germany in the 16th cen-

* Mediaeval village community.—*Ed.*

ture: the success of its *religious disguise*, whereas the success of the middle-class content was reserved for the next century and for Holland and England, the countries lying along the new world trade routes which had arisen in the meantime. This is a lengthy subject, which I hope to deal with *in extenso* in the *Peasant War*. If only I were already at it! . . .

Marx and Engels,
Selected Correspondence,
Moscow, 1975, pp. 463-64

NOTES

¹ Marx quotes G.W.F. Hegel's *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*. p. 28

² This presumably refers to the petty-bourgeois views of Sismondi, who idealised the patriarchal form of private landed property. p. 30

³ Here Marx has the word *Verschacherung*, which is hard to render in English. Echoing Fourier's views, the socio-critical literature of those years was wont to denounce private trade as a vile and base pursuit. Here and elsewhere in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* Marx's treatment of commerce is to a certain degree influenced by that of earlier economists, at least in his use of terms. p. 30

⁴ The term *Stamm* used by Marx is translated as "tribe" in English editions of *The German Ideology* (see, e.g., Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 32). It had a wider range of meaning in the 1840s than it has at present. It was used to denote a community of people descended from a common ancestor, and comprised the modern concepts of "gens" and "tribe". The first to define and differentiate these concepts was the American ethnologist and historian Lewis Henry Morgan in his main work *Ancient Society* (1877). Morgan showed for the first time the significance of the gens as the primary cell of the primitive communal system and thereby laid the scientific foundations for the history of primitive society as a whole. In his work *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884) Engels showed the far-reaching significance of Morgan's discoveries and revealed the full content of the concepts "gens" and "tribe". p. 38

⁵ The agrarian law proposed by Licinius and Sextius, Roman tribunes of the people, was passed in 367 B.C. as a result of the struggle waged by the plebeians against the patricians.

- It prohibited Roman citizens from holding more than 500 *yugera* (about 309 acres) of common land (*ager publicus*). p. 39
- ⁶ The *Anti-Corn Law League* was an organisation of the British industrial bourgeoisie founded by the Manchester manufacturers Cobden and Bright. The Corn Laws, which imposed high tariffs on agricultural imports and under certain conditions banned them altogether, had been adopted in the interests of the big landlords. Urging unrestricted free trade and, in particular, the repeal of the Corn Laws, the League aimed at reducing workers' wages and weakening the economic and political positions of the landed aristocracy. The repeal of the Corn Laws, in June 1846, signified a victory of the industrial bourgeoisie over the landed aristocracy. p. 41
- ⁷ The *Union* (*Verein*) was Max Stirner's designation of a voluntary association of egoists. p. 43
- ⁸ The *Eastern Roman Empire* (later called Byzantium) was set up in 395 with its capital in Constantinople. It comprised the Eastern provinces of the former slave-owning Roman Empire and survived until 1453, when it was conquered by the Turks. p. 45
- ⁹ The *Hanseatic League*—commercial and political alliance of medieval German towns along the southern coasts of the North and Baltic Seas and the rivers flowing into them; its aim was to establish a trade monopoly in Northern Europe. The heyday of the Hanseatic League was the second half of the 14th century. p. 53
- ¹⁰ *Death taxes* (*Sterbefall*, *Todfall*) were levied on the land and property inherited from the deceased peasant on the basis of the feudal lord's right. In Germany the feudal lords usually took the best cattle. p. 57
- ¹¹ *Protection moneys* (*Schutzgelder*)—a tax levied by the feudal lord on his subjects in payment for the "patronage" and "judicial protection" he claimed to extend to them. p. 57
- ¹² The *general Pfennig* (*der gemeine Pfennig*)—a tax combining a poll-tax and a property tax. The brunt of it was borne by the peasants. p. 59
- ¹³ *Annates*—the first-fruits paid to the Roman Curia by bishops, etc., on their appointment to a see or benefice. In most cases the annates equalled one year's revenue of the benefice. p. 59
- ¹⁴ Engels refers to the German bourgeois liberals who were in the majority in the Frankfurt National Assembly and in the assemblies of some German states during the 1848-49 revolu-

tion. In the early months of the revolution the liberals headed "Constitutional governments" in a number of states, but were later replaced by members of the bureaucracy and nobility. The Constitutionals wanted to preserve the monarchy as a means of preventing the further development and spread of the revolution while simultaneously limiting its power by a liberal-bourgeois Constitution. Their conciliatory tactics and treacherous deals with the reactionary parties were in great measure responsible for the defeat of the revolution. p. 61

¹⁵ The reference is to Charles V's criminal statutes (*Constitutio criminalis Carolina*) adopted by the Imperial Diet in Regensburg in 1532. They envisaged extremely severe penalties. p. 64

¹⁶ This refers to the revolution of 1789. p. 65

¹⁷ The *religion of Lingam*—the worship of the god Siva. The Lingayats (from "Linga", the symbol of Siva), a South Indian Hindu sect, deny caste distinctions, sacrifices and pilgrimages.

Juggernaut (Jagannath)—an incarnation of Vishnu, one of the principal Hindu gods; also the idol of Vishnu. The cult of the Juggernaut was noted for the pomp of its ritual and the fanaticism of believers. On great religious festivals devotees sometimes allowed themselves to be crushed beneath the wheels of the car on which the idol was being drawn in procession. p. 70

¹⁸ The *Moguls* were Turkic conquerors who in the early 16th century invaded India from the eastern part of Central Asia and in 1526 founded the Empire of the Great Moguls (so called after the name of the ruling dynasty) in Northern India. The founders of the empire were considered by contemporaries to be the descendants of the Mongolian conquerors of Genghis Khan's times (hence the name Moguls). Their empire attained considerable might. In the middle of the 17th century the Moguls ruled the greater part of India and part of Afghanistan. However, the empire was undermined by peasant uprisings, the mounting resistance of the Indian peoples to the Moslem conquerors, constant intestine wars and the growth of feudal separatist tendencies, and virtually disintegrated in the first half of the 18th century. p. 70

¹⁹ *Heptarchy*—the term used in English historiography to denote the political system of England in the early Middle Ages (6th-8th centuries) when the country was divided into seven Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. By analogy, Marx uses the term in reference to the feudal fragmentation of the Deccan (Central and Southern India) prior to its conquest by Moslems. p. 70

- ²⁰ The *East India Company* (1600-1858) was a British commercial company that served as an instrument of Britain's predatory colonial policy in India, China and other Asian countries. For a long time it had the monopoly of trade with India and performed highly important administrative functions there. The 1857-59 national liberation uprising in India compelled Britain to revise the forms of her colonial rule. In 1858 the Company was abolished. p. 70
- ²¹ *Salsette Island*, situated to the North of Bombay, is famous for its 109 Buddhist cave temples. p. 70
- ²² *Tartary* was the name applied to Central Asia and part of Turkestan in the 19th century. p. 71
- ²³ *Laissez-faire, laissez-aller*, which literally means "let (people) do (as they think best), let (persons or things) go", was the formula of bourgeois economists who advocated free trade and non-interference by the state into economic relations. p. 72
- ²⁴ Marx quotes a House of Commons report published in 1812. The passage occurs in the book by G. Campbell, *Modern India: a Sketch of the Systems of Civil Government*, London, 1852, pp. 84-85. p. 74
- ²⁵ The *war of the Holy League* (1520-22)—uprising of Castile cities (comuneros) against the absolutism of Charles I. Originally a struggle to retain the cities' feudal privileges, it assumed an anti-feudal character in 1521 when it was joined by the lower urban strata and part of the peasantry.
- The Holy League (or Junta) was formed by the insurgent cities in Avila in July 1520. In September its headquarters had to move to Tordesillas and in November to Valladolid, where Cortes were convened, with representatives of ten cities taking part. p. 78
- ²⁶ *Ayuntamientos*—organs of local self-government in Spain, which played an important role during the Reconquista, the struggle for the country's liberation from Arab rule (8th-15th centuries). After the suppression of the Comuneros uprising (16th century) most *Ayuntamientos* were abolished. Restoration of the *Ayuntamientos* was one of the democratic demands during the bourgeois revolutions in the early 19th century. They were restored under the Constitution of 1812 and by decree of the Cortes in 1820, but were subsequently disbanded again. p. 79
- ²⁷ The reference is to the Castilian Cortes held in Valladolid in January and February 1518. They were to endorse Charles as King of Castile, swear allegiance to him and in turn administer the oath to the King obliging him to abide by the *Fueros*—

charters recording the special rights and privileges of the cities and rural communities in self-government, taxation, military service and the like in medieval Spain. The *Fueros* restricted the arbitrariness of the feudal lords, but at the same time stimulated particularist tendencies.

Here Marx has a slip of the pen: the Cortes met before Charles was elected Emperor (1519) and went to Germany for the coronation (1520). p. 80

- ²⁸ The *Santa Hermandad* (Holy Brotherhood) was an alliance of Spanish cities set up at the end of the 15th century with the approbation of the king, which tried to use the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the big feudal lords in the interests of absolutism. From the mid-16th century onwards the armed forces of the Santa Hermandad performed police functions. p. 81
- ²⁹ See Note 4. p. 85
- ³⁰ *Quirites*—citizens enjoying full rights in ancient Rome. p. 91
- ³¹ Niebuhr quotes this sentence from Book IX of *Roman Archaeology*, the main work of the Greek historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus, written between 30 and 7 B.C. p. 93
- ³² *Phyle* originally meant tribe. By a reform introduced in Attica by Cleisthenes at the end of the 6th century B.C. the division of the country into phylae (tribes) was replaced by a division into territorial units, also called phylae. Each phyle was in its turn divided into *demes* (districts) whose inhabitants enjoying full rights were called *demos*. p. 93
- ³³ *Dithmarschen* (Ditmarsh)—a region in North Germany. p. 93
- ³⁴ *Gaels*—the indigenous population of the North and West Scottish highlands descended from the ancient Celts. p. 94
- ³⁵ See Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Moscow, 1976, p. 197. p. 101
- ³⁶ Ζῶον πολιτικόν (in Latin transliteration: *zoon politikon*) means literally "political animal" and, in a broader sense, "social animal". This is how Aristotle describes man at the beginning of Book I of his *Politics*. In Volume I of *Capital* Marx interprets the term in its narrower sense as follows: "Strictly, Aristotle's definition is that man is by nature a town-citizen." (*Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1977, p. 309.) p. 111
- ³⁷ *Panem et circenses*—"bread and circuses". Marx refers to the period of the full development of the Roman slave-owning state, when the lower strata of the population were excluded from

production and lived mainly on sops from the state and rich slave-owners, who provided them with "bread and circuses".
p. 117

- ³⁸ The *Guelphs* and *Ghibellines* were two political parties in Italy at the time of the struggle between the Roman Popes and the German Emperors (12th-15th cent.). The Guelphs, who supported the Pope, represented the rich urban merchants and artisans. The Ghibellines—supporters of the Emperor—were mostly members of the feudal aristocracy. p. 118
- ³⁹ *Clientship* (clientele)—originally, a form of dependence in ancient Rome. Here the dependence of free servants on their feudal seigniors in the Middle Ages. p. 119
- ⁴⁰ On the role of legislation in the reign of Henry VII, Henry VIII and other English kings and queens see Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1974, pp. 686-93. p. 126
- ⁴¹ Adam Smith, *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, Book III, Chapter IV. p. 127
- ⁴² This and the subsequent remarks on the original meanings of the word "capital" and the texts illustrating them were taken by Marx from Du Cange's *Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infimae latinitatis*, Tomus II, Parisiis, 1842, pp. 139-41. p. 133
- ⁴³ Adam H. Müller, *Die Elemente der Staatskunst*. Erster Theil, Berlin, 1809, pp. 226-41. p. 134
- ⁴⁴ The *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* (German-French Yearbooks) was published in German in Paris under the editorship of Karl Marx and Arnold Ruge. Only the first issue, a double one, appeared (in February 1844). p. 137
- ⁴⁵ *Deism*—a religious and philosophic teaching which recognises God as an impersonal and rational primal cause of the world but denies his interference into the life of nature and society. p. 141
- ⁴⁶ The ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus, basically a materialist and atheist, held that there was an infinite number of worlds, which arose and existed according to their own natural laws. There were gods too, but they dwelled in space between the worlds and exerted no influence either on the universe or on man. p. 141
- ⁴⁷ The revolution of the world market means here the sharp decline in the role of Genoa, Venice and other North Italian cities in transit trade which set in at the end of the 15th century as a

result of the great geographical discoveries made at that time: the discovery of Cuba, Haiti and the Bahamas, of the North American continent, of the sea route to India round the southern tip of Africa and, lastly, of the South American continent.

p. 147

⁴⁸ J. Stuart, *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*, Vol. I, Dublin, 1770, p. 52. p. 149

⁴⁹ "*Pauper ubique jacet*" ("The poor are miserable everywhere")—from Ovid's *Fasti*, Book I, Verse 218. p. 153

⁵⁰ See Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1977, pp. 130-34. p. 159

⁵¹ *Knights* were rich citizens in the early period of ancient Rome who enjoyed various privileges and were subject to military service as horsemen. Later the term was applied to members of the trading and money-lending sections of the Roman slave-owning class. They made up the Order of Equites. p. 163

⁵² The *monts-de-piété* were pawnshops established in France and Italy in the 14th-16th centuries to fight petty usurers. According to the original plan, they were to be a kind of charitable institutions granting small loans to the poor on security of their property. Actually, the *monts-de-piété* served the interests of the usurers. p. 168

⁵³ An inaccuracy in Marx's text. Thomas Manley was not the author of the anonymous treatise *Interest of Money Mistaken* published in London in 1668. p. 171

⁵⁴ An allusion to the English economist John Law, who propounded the totally untenable theory that the state could increase the wealth of the nation by the issue of unbacked bank notes. In 1716 he tried to put it into effect by founding a private bank in France, which was turned into a state bank in 1718. The Law Bank engaged in the unlimited issue of paper money while simultaneously calling in hard cash. This led to an unprecedented rise in stock-exchange speculation, which in 1720 culminated in a disastrous bankruptcy of the bank and the "Law system" itself. p. 172

⁵⁵ Marx quotes from the pamphlet "Bank Credit; or the Usefulness and Security of the Bank of Credit examined, in a Dialogue between a Country Gentleman and a London Merchant", which is included in J. Francis' *History of the Bank of England*, third ed., Vol. I, London, 1848, pp. 39-40. p. 172

⁵⁶ The reference is to the *Société Générale du Crédit Mobilier*, a big joint-stock concern founded by the Pereira brothers in 1852 and legalised by a government decree on November 18, 1852.

The Crédit Mobilier mediated credit and participated in the establishment of industrial and other enterprises. It took an active part in railway construction in France, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Spain and Russia. Its main source of income was stock-exchange speculation. The Crédit Mobilier issued shares which were guaranteed solely by the securities of other enterprises and used the money thus earned to buy up the shares of various companies guaranteed by their property. As a result one and the same real property gave rise to a double fictitious capital. The Crédit Mobilier was closely associated with Napoleon III's government and enjoyed its protection. The concern went bankrupt in 1867 and was liquidated in 1871. The Crédit Mobilier was a financial enterprise of a new type that was called into being by the unprecedented rise in stock-exchange speculation which marked the period of reaction in the 1850s. Concerns similar to the Crédit Mobilier were set up in a number of Central European states.

p. 174

⁵⁷ The reign of Napoleon III, Emperor of the French (December 2, 1852 to September 4, 1870).

p. 174

⁵⁸ A loan of 100 guildens with interest payable in three instalments at the Leipzig Fairs held three times annually: New Year's, Easter and Michaelmas.

p. 181

⁵⁹ The *Physiocratic school*—a trend in bourgeois classical political economy which emerged in France in the 1750s. The physiocrats resolutely supported big capitalist landed property and urged the abolition of the social estates and protectionism. They realised the need to end feudal practices, but wanted to achieve this by peaceful reforms, without detriment to the ruling classes and the absolutist system. The physiocrats' philosophic views were close to those of the French bourgeois Enlighteners of the 18th century. Some of the economic reforms proposed by the physiocrats were carried out during the French bourgeois revolution.

p. 191

⁶⁰ The reference is to the *Theories of Surplus-Value* (Volume IV of *Capital*).

p. 191

⁶¹ See Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Moscow, 1971, pp. 157-58.

p. 191

⁶² Marx means the Tithe Commutation Acts, passed between 1836 and 1860, which abolished tithes in kind and introduced periodical rent charges.

p. 196

⁶³ *Bandes Noires* (Black bands)—associations of speculators in France in the 19th century which bought large estates and sold

- them in small plots, these being in greater demand and costing relatively more than large tracts of land. p. 226
- ⁶⁴ *Ryot*-Indian peasant. Jones applied the term to those peasants in India and other Asian countries who paid rent (taxes) in kind to their sovereign, who was considered the supreme owner of all land. p. 232
- ⁶⁵ Engels is quoting from Volume I of *Capital* (see Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1977, p. 65). p. 236
- ⁶⁶ The *mark* was a community of neighbours in West European countries in the Middle Ages. For details see Engels' article "The Mark" (this book, pp. 274-93). p. 238
- ⁶⁷ Goethe, *Faust*, Part I, Scene 4 ("Studierzimmer"). p. 243
- ⁶⁸ This refers to the series of wars between the leading European states waged in the 17th and 18th centuries for hegemony in trade with India and America and for control of colonial markets. At first the rivalry was mainly between Britain and the Netherlands, later between Britain and France. Britain emerged victorious and towards the end of the 18th century held almost the whole of world trade in its hands. p. 251
- ⁶⁹ Engels is quoting from Volume I of *Capital* (see Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1977, pp. 410 and 457). p. 253
- ⁷⁰ See Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1977, p. 435. p. 253
- ⁷¹ See Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1977, p. 604. p. 254
- ⁷² Ch. Fourier, *Oeuvres complètes*, t. VI, Paris, 1845, pp. 393-94. p. 255
- ⁷³ The *Royal Maritime Company (Seehandlung)* was a commercial and credit concern founded in Prussia in 1772. It enjoyed important state privileges, granted big loans to the government and was virtually its banker and broker. In 1904 it was transformed into the State Bank of Prussia. p. 258
- ⁷⁴ A "free people's state" was one of the main demands and the favourite slogan of the German Social-Democrats in the 1870s. p. 262
- ⁷⁵ The figures on the total wealth of Great Britain and Ireland quoted here are taken from R. Giffen's report "Recent Accumulations of Capital in the United Kingdom", which was delivered in the Statistical Society on January 15, 1878, and printed in the *London Journal of the Statistical Society* in March of that year. p. 264

- ⁷⁶ The congress met in Berlin on February 21 and 22, 1878. p. 265
- ⁷⁷ Marx's letter to the editorial board of the *Otechestvenniye zapiski* was written in late 1877 in connection with N. K. Mikhailovsky's article "Karl Marx before the Tribunal of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky", which gave a distorted interpretation of *Capital*. Marx did not send the letter. After his death it was rewritten and dispatched to Russia by Engels. It was first published in Geneva, in 1886, and later in Russia (1888). p. 270
- ⁷⁸ *Pan-Slavism*—a reactionary political trend which aimed at the unification of the Slav countries under the aegis of tsarist Russia and tried to exploit the struggle of the Slavs against Turkish and Austrian oppression for that purpose. p. 270
- ⁷⁹ In 1861 serfdom was abolished in Russia. p. 271
- ⁸⁰ The reference is to *De bello Gallico* by Gaius Julius Caesar. The fact mentioned here is to be found in Book VI, Chapter 22. p. 275
- ⁸¹ "Emperor's Law"—the laws promulgated by the central authorities of the medieval German Empire for the whole country. p. 276
- ⁸² The *leges Barbarorum* (called *Germanische Volksrechte* in German)—records of the common law of the Germanic tribes which established a number of kingdoms and duchies in the territory of the former Western Roman Empire and the adjacent regions between the 5th and 7th centuries. They were drawn up between the 5th and 9th centuries. p. 278
- ⁸³ "Riparian law"—the common law of the Riparian Franks, a Germanic tribe which inhabited the area between the Rhine and the Meuse in the 4th and 5th centuries. p. 279
- ⁸⁴ Engels means the law on forest thefts passed on April 15, 1878, which among other things prohibited the gathering of herbs, berries and mushrooms without special police permission. p. 282
- ⁸⁵ The reference is to the *Schöffengerichte*, jury-courts introduced in a number of German states after the 1848 revolution and throughout Germany in 1871. The *Schöffengerichte* consisted of a Crown judge and two jurors (*Schötten*) who, unlike ordinary juries, not only gave their verdict of Guilty or Not guilty but also fixed the penalty. These jury-courts were picked from members of the ruling classes. p. 283
- ⁸⁶ The *Western Frankish Kingdom* emerged as a result of the disintegration of Charlemagne's empire, whose ultimate division occurred in 843. p. 285

- ⁸⁷ The *Thirty Years' War* (1619-48) was an all-European war caused by the struggle between Protestants and Catholics. It was mainly fought on German soil, with Germany providing the main object of pillage and territorial claims of the belligerents. p. 289
- ⁸⁸ *Code civil*—the civil code of Napoleon I. It was also introduced in the western and southwestern regions of Germany following their capture by the French. The code continued in operation in the Rhine Province even after it was incorporated into Prussia. p. 291
- ⁸⁹ The rout of the Prussian army at Jena on October 14, 1806, which led to Prussia's surrender to Napoleonic France, revealed the corruption of the social and political system of the Hohenzollern feudal monarchy. p. 291
- ⁹⁰ Engels uses the designation *Aryans* to denote the peoples of the Indo-European family of languages. This usage is based on the erroneous view, current in the 19th century, of the racial and cultural unity of these peoples in the past and is considered obsolete at present. In modern bourgeois literature the term is applied to the Indo-Iranian peoples speaking Indo-European languages. p. 300
- ⁹¹ Plutarch, *Vitae parallelae*, Emilius Paulus, cap. 12. p. 304
- ⁹² Dio Cassius, *Historiae Romanae*, liber LV, cap. 10a. p. 305
- ⁹³ Caesar, *De bello Gallico*, liber IV, cap. 1 and liber VI, cap. 22. p. 307
- ⁹⁴ Strabo, *Geographicae*, liber VII, cap. I. p. 308
- ⁹⁵ Gaius Plinius Secundus, *Historiae Naturalis* in 37 books, liber IV, cap. XIV. p. 312
- ⁹⁶ Dio Cassius, *Historiae Romanae*, liber LIV, cap. 33. p. 315
- ⁹⁷ Dio Cassius, *Historiae Romanae*, liber LV, cap. 6. p. 317
- ⁹⁸ Gaius Velleius Paterculus, *Historia Romana*, liber II, cap. 97. p. 317
- ⁹⁹ Dio Cassius, *Historiae Romanae*, liber LVI, cap. 18. p. 320
- ¹⁰⁰ Gaius Velleius Paterculus, *Historia Romana*, liber II, cap. 117. p. 320
- ¹⁰¹ Dio Cassius, *Historiae Romanae*, liber LVI, cap. 18. p. 321
- ¹⁰² Here and above Engels is quoting from Gaius Velleius Paterculus' *Historia Romana*, liber II, cap. 118. p. 323
- ¹⁰³ Dio Cassius, *Historiae Romanae*, liber LVI, cap. 19. p. 324
- ¹⁰⁴ Engels is quoting from Tacitus' *Annales*, liber I, cap. 61. p. 325

- ¹⁰⁵ Strabo, *Geographicae*, liber IV, cap. IV. p. 327
- ¹⁰⁶ Strabo, *Geographicae*, liber VII, cap. I. p. 327
- ¹⁰⁷ General Yorck, who in 1812 commanded a Prussian auxiliary corps of the Napoleonic army in Russia, concluded the Tauroggen Convention with the Russian command on December 30, 1812, pledging to take no part in the fighting against the Russian army for two months.
In the Battle of Leipzig between the allied Russian, Austrian, Prussian and Swedish forces and the army of Napoleon I (October 16-19, 1813) the Saxon Corps, which fought in the ranks of Napoleon's army, at a critical moment suddenly went over to the enemy's side and turned its guns against the French. p. 327
- ¹⁰⁸ The *Pannonian revolt*—an uprising against Roman rule in Pannonia (an area on the Middle Danube) and Dalmatia in A.D. 6-9. p. 328
- ¹⁰⁹ The reference is to the ancient burial place discovered near the town of Hallstatt in Southwest Austria in 1846 which gave the name to the Hallstatt culture (c. 1000-500 B.C.). p. 332
- ¹¹⁰ Tacitus, *Annales*, liber II, cap. 62. p. 333
- ¹¹¹ Tacitus, *Germania*, cap. 23. p. 335
- ¹¹² The *denarius period*—designation of a period of Scandinavian history at the beginning of the Christian era. Many finds relating to it contain the denarius, a Roman silver coin. p. 338
- ¹¹³ Einhardus, *Vita Karoli Magni*, cap. 2. p. 366
- ¹¹⁴ Engels is quoting from the *Historia Francorum* (History of the Franks), Book VI, Chapter 46, by Gregory of Tours. p. 367
- ¹¹⁵ *Capitularies* were royal legislative acts and ordinances in the early Middle Ages. The Aachen Capitulary, which noted the fact of the wholesale seizure of peasant land by ecclesiastical and secular feudal lords, is one of the major sources on the history of the Frankish state. p. 367
- ¹¹⁶ See Note 115. p. 370
- ¹¹⁷ *Precaria* (from Latin *precarius*—obtained by entreaty)—conditional (precarious) tenure of land granted for a stipulated number of years or for life by a big owner to a peasant who in return undertook to pay tribute or do corvée for the landlord. p. 370
- ¹¹⁸ *Benefice* (from Latin *beneficium*, which means well-doing)—land holdings granted by the king or a big seignior for life for the performance of certain services, mostly military service in the

- cavalry. In the 9th and 10th centuries the benefices became hereditary holdings (feuds or fees). p. 371
- ¹¹⁹ *Antrustions*—warriors of the Merovingians, a dynasty of early Frankish kings (they ruled up to 751). The antrustions formed a privileged group. p. 378
- ¹²⁰ *Formulas* were models for the drawing up of deeds relating to property and other matters. The formula quoted by Engels occurs in the collection *Formulae Turoneses vulgo Sirmondicae dictae*. p. 378
- ¹²¹ *Commendation*—ritual formalising the dependence of one person on another in the early Middle Ages. p. 378
- ¹²² The reference is to the *Annales Bertiniani*, an important source on the history of the Carolingian empire. The *Annales*, which owe their name to the St. Bertin Monastery in France, are a chronicle covering the period from 830 to 882 and consisting of three parts written by different authors. p. 380
- ¹²³ The *Stellinga* (from *Stellinga*—Sons of the Old Law) was a union of free and semi-free Saxons which led an uprising against Saxon as well as Frankish noblemen in Saxony in 841 and 842. The rebels urged the restoration of old feudal customs. p. 387
- ¹²⁴ See L. H. Morgan, *Ancient Society*, London, 1877, p. 19. p. 392
- ¹²⁵ *Pueblo* is the name of a group of Indian tribes who lived in New Mexico (at present the southwestern part of the USA and Northern Mexico) and shared a common history and culture. The Spanish word *pueblo* means people, village, community. The Spanish conquerors used it as a name for the Indian tribes in question because of the special nature of the latter's dwellings: five- or six-storey fortress-like houses capable of accommodating up to 1,000 people. The name *pueblo* was also applied to the villages of these Indians. p. 395
- ¹²⁶ This refers to the *metoikos*, aliens who settled permanently in Attica. They were free but were denied the rights of Athenian citizens. The *metoikos*—mostly artisans and traders—were obliged to pay a special tax and have "patrons" from among Greek citizens, who acted as their spokesmen before the authorities. pp. 118, 407
- ¹²⁷ The *Laws of the Twelve Tables* were promulgated in the middle of the 5th century B.C. as a result of the plebeians' struggle against the patricians. They were written on twelve tablets and reflected the stratification of Roman society, the development of slavery and the formation of a slave-owning state. p. 411

- ¹²⁸ The *Second Punic War* (218-201 B.C.) was waged by Rome and Carthage, two major slave-owning states of antiquity, for domination in the Western Mediterranean and the seizure of territory and slaves. The war ended in defeat for Carthage. p. 413
- ¹²⁹ Livy (Titus Livius), *History of Rome from the City's Foundation* p. 414
- ¹³⁰ *Angariae*—the obligation of the population of the Roman Empire to provide horses and porters for government convoys. Later the term came to mean peasant corvée. p. 432
- ¹³¹ The *Song of Hildebrand*—an 8th-century Germanic epic preserved in fragmenst.
In the *Battle of Hastings* (1066) the troops of Duke William of Normandy, who had invaded England, clashed with the Anglo-Saxons. The Anglo-Saxons, ill-armed and preserving relics of the communal system in their military organisation, were defeated. Their king, Harold, fell in battle. William was crowned King of England under the name of William I, the Conqueror. p. 441
- ¹³² Karl Marx, "Conspectus of L. H. Morgan's book *Ancient Society*" (*Marx/Engels Archives*, Vol. IX, pp. 153-54). p. 443
- ¹³³ *Dithmarschen* (*Ditmarsh*)—a region in the southwestern part of what is now Schleswig-Holstein. In antiquity it was inhabited by Saxons. Conquered by Charlemagne in the 8th century, it was subsequently owned by various ecclesiastical and secular feudal lords. In the mid 12th century Dithmarschen's population, which consisted mostly of free peasants, began gradually to assert their independence, and from the early 13th century to the middle of the 16th century Dithmarschen was virtually independent. At this period it was a conglomeration of self-governing peasant communities, many of which were based on old peasant families. Up to the 14th century supreme power in Dithmarschen was exercised by the assembly of all the free landowners, later it passed to three elected collegiums. In 1559 the troops of King Frederick II of Denmark and dukes John and Adolph of Holstein broke Dithmarschen's resistnace and divided it between the conquerors. However, the communal system and partial self-government were retained until the second half of the 19th century. p. 449
- ¹³⁴ G.W.F. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, §§ 257 and 360. p. 449
- ¹³⁵ The *First Empire* in France—the reign of Emperor Napoleon I (1804-14 and March 20 to June 22, 1815). For the *Second Empire* see Note 57. p. 452
- ¹³⁶ See Note 9. p. 461

- ¹³⁷ *Das Ludwigslied*—anonymous poem written in the Frankish dialect in the late 9th century, a panegyric of the West Frankish king Louis III glorifying his victory over the Normans in 881. p. 465
- ¹³⁸ The reference is to the Old High German and Old French texts of the oaths of loyalty sworn to each other by the East Frankish King Louis the German and the West Frankish King Charles the Bald and by their vassals in Strasbourg in 842. p. 465
- ¹³⁹ A large group of West Slavonic tribes which lived in Central Europe between the rivers Labe (Elbe) and Odra (Oder). p. 465
- ¹⁴⁰ *Lotharingia*—a state which emerged as a result of the break-up of Charlemagne's empire. Lotharingia lay between the West Frankish and East Frankish kingdoms and had an ethnically heterogeneous population. It was divided in two duchies in the 10th century. p. 465
- ¹⁴¹ Engels means the victories won by the English in the *Hundred Years' War* waged by England and France (1337-1453). The war was caused by the aggressive appetites of the two countries' feudal nobility. In the course of the war the English repeatedly seized large portions of French territory, but were ultimately driven out, retaining only the port of Calais. p. 469
- ¹⁴² The reference is to the Battle of Courtrai (1302) in which the Flemish infantry, composed of artisans and peasants, defeated the French knights of King Philip IV the Fair. p. 469
- ¹⁴³ At *Crécy* (Northeastern France) one of the major battles of the Hundred Years' War was fought on August 26, 1346. The English troops, whose nucleus consisted of foot-soldiers recruited among free peasants, defeated the French, whose main force was the undisciplined cavalry of knights.
At *Waterloo* the British, Dutch and Prussian forces defeated Napoleon's army on June 18, 1815. p. 470
- ¹⁴⁴ The kingdoms of Aragon and Castile merged in 1479. p. 471
- ¹⁴⁵ The reference is to the victory won by King Louis XI of France over Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy at Nancy in 1477, as a result of which Burgundy lost her independence. The lands of the Burgundian duke, which stretched in a narrow strip between France and Germany, mostly fell into Louis XI's hands. p. 471
- ¹⁴⁶ Taking advantage of Milan's struggle against the King of Naples, King Charles VIII of France invaded Italy in 1494. p. 471
- ¹⁴⁷ When he speaks of the *Reformation* in France, Engels means the movement of the Huguenots which arose under Calvinist slogans in the 16th century. It involved different social strata, inclu-

ding peasants and artisans, and was exploited by the feudal aristocracy and landed nobility discontent with the centralising policy of the nascent absolutist state. As a result of the Huguenot wars (1562-94) the feudals and the bourgeoisie, frightened by the vast scope of the popular movement, united round Henry of Navarre, the former leader of the Huguenots, who embraced Catholicism and became King of France under the name of Henry IV, founding the new Bourbon dynasty. p. 471

¹⁴⁸ This refers to the Wars of the Roses (1455-85), the wars fought between the adherents of the House of Lancaster, which ruled England in 1399-1461, and the House of York, which claimed the throne. The two parties used the red and the white rose respectively as their badges. p. 471

¹⁴⁹ In 1476 Ivan III, the Grand Prince of Moscow, who had united most Russian lands into a single state, refused to pay tribute to the Tartar Khans. In 1480 the Tartar overlordship, imposed on Russia in 1243, was finally overthrown. p. 471

¹⁵⁰ The *interregnum*—the period between the death of the last Emperor of the Hohenstaufen dynasty (1254) and the election of Prince Rudolf von Habsburg to the throne of the German Empire (1273). It was marked by a fierce struggle for the Imperial crown between the various pretenders and incessant strife between the princes, knights and towns. p. 473

¹⁵¹ The development of capitalist relations in Russia, her defeat in the Crimean War (1853-56) and the revolutionary situation that had taken shape towards the late 1850s compelled Emperor Alexander II of Russia to carry out a reform freeing the peasants from serfdom (1861). Hence the appellation "Liberator". p. 475

¹⁵² *Cossacks*—originally, a free population of fugitive peasant serfs and poor townsmen who settled in outlying areas of the Russian state: on the Don, the Yaik [Ural], the Dnieper. By the 18th century the Cossacks formed a privileged section of the agricultural population holding state land in return for military service. p. 476

¹⁵³ Engels is referring to the national liberation uprising of the Nubians, Arabs and other peoples of the Sudan headed by the Moslem preacher Mohammed Ahmed, who called himself Mahdi, i.e., Saviour. It broke out in 1881 and reached its peak in 1883-84, when almost the whole country was freed from the English colonial forces. In the course of the uprising an independent centralised Mahdist state was formed. It was not until 1899 that the English, taking advantage of the internal weakening of that state caused by incessant wars and tribal strife, and relying on their vast superiority in arms, conquered the Sudan. p. 483

- ¹⁵⁴ *Taborites*—the revolutionary and democratic wing of the Hussite national liberation and Reformation movement in Bohemia in the first half of the 15th century which was directed against the German feudals and the Catholic Church. The Taborites had their headquarters in a fortified camp (*tabor* in Czech—hence the name Taborites) near the fortress of Kotnov. Their demands reflected the striving of the peasant masses and the lower urban strata for the total abolition of the feudal system and included religiously disguised calls for equality in property. The Taborites established a military organisation of their own and formed the nucleus of the Hussite army, which repulsed five crusades against Bohemia organised by the Pope and the German Emperor. The Taborites were defeated (1437) and the Hussite movement crushed only because of the treachery of the Czech nobility and rich townsmen, who concluded a compromise with alien feudal reactionaries. p. 484
- ¹⁵⁵ This refers to the work *Critique of Politics and Political Economy* which Marx intended to write. p. 502
- ¹⁵⁶ See Note 22. p. 504
- ¹⁵⁷ The *Bundschuh* and the *Arme Konrad*—secret peasant unions in Germany whose actions prepared the ground for the Peasant War of 1525. Engels describes these unions in Chapter 3 of his *The Peasant War in Germany*. p. 509
- ¹⁵⁸ *Enlightenment*—an eighteenth-century cultural and philosophical movement associated with the struggle of the nascent bourgeoisie and the masses against feudalism. p. 510
- ¹⁵⁹ *Hunsrück*—a mountain range in the Rhine Province. p. 510
- ¹⁶⁰ Tacitus, *Germania*, cap. 26. p. 510
- ¹⁶¹ See Note 82. p. 510
- ¹⁶² Engels quotes from Plutarch's *Marius' Life*, Chapter p. 512
- ¹⁶³ Caesar, *De bello Gallico*, liber IV, cap. 1. p. 513
- ¹⁶⁴ See Note 87. p. 516
- ¹⁶⁵ *Sachsenspiegel (Saxon Mirror)*—medieval code of Saxon common law. p. 516
- ¹⁶⁶ *Der Sozialdemokrat*—daily newspaper, central organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, appeared from 1879 to 1890, first in Zurich and later in London.
Die Neue Zeit—German Social-Democratic journal, appeared in Stuttgart from 1883 to 1923. p. 518
- ¹⁶⁷ Engels wrote *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* in the course of two months, from late March to late

- May 1884. In his work, he drew on the notes of Marx and used the extensive material of his own research. p. 518
- ¹⁶⁸ See Note 59. p. 520
- ¹⁶⁹ Marx and Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1977, p. 217. p. 521
- ¹⁷⁰ *Code Napoléon*—the reference here is to the system of bourgeois law adopted under Napoleon I between 1804 and 1810. It consisted of five codes: civil, civil procedural, commercial, criminal, and criminal procedural. p. 529
- ¹⁷¹ The reference is to the coup d'état of 1688 in Britain in which the Stuart dynasty was deposed. In 1689 the constitutional monarchy of William of Orange was established as a result of a compromise between the landed aristocracy and the big bourgeoisie. The coup d'état has gone down in British history as the Glorious Revolution. p. 530
- ¹⁷² According to Rousseau, people originally lived in a natural condition and all were equal. With the advent of private property and inequality in possessions, they passed from the natural condition to the civil condition and formed the state, based on a social contract. In the course of further development political inequality leads to violations of the social contract and a new natural condition. The latter is to be removed by a rational state based on a new social contract. p. 535
- ¹⁷³ *Pietism*—a mystical trend in Protestantism in the late 17th and the 18th century which placed religious feeling above dogma. p. 540
- ¹⁷⁴ See Note 86. p. 543
- ¹⁷⁵ *Assizes de Jérusalem*—a collection of legal documents of the Jerusalem Kingdom, which was set up in Palestine and Syria as a result of the first crusade (1099). The collection was compiled in the second half of the 12th century. p. 543
- ¹⁷⁶ *Lex Alamannorum*—a section of the *Alemannic Code* recording the common law of the Alemanni peoples in the early 8th century. p. 544
- ¹⁷⁷ The reference is to Karl Kautsky's work *Von Plato bis zu den Wiedertäufern*, Bd. I, T. I, published in *Die Geschichte des Sozialismus in Einzeldarstellungen*, Stuttgart, 1895. p. 544
- ¹⁷⁸ *Anabaptists* or *Rebaptists*—members of a Christian sect advocating the baptism of adults formerly baptised as infants. The Anabaptists were active in the Peasant War in Germany in 1524-25, in which they expressed the interests of the revolutionary peasant and plebeian masses. p. 544

NAME INDEX

A

- Adrian* or *Hadrian* (*Publius Aelius Hadrianus*) (76-138)—Roman Emperor (117-38).—78, 331
- Agrippa, Marcus Vipsanius* (c. 63-12 B.C.)—Roman general and statesman; ruled with Augustus from 21 B.C.—314-15, 317
- Albrecht I* (c. 1250-1308)—Austrian duke; German Emperor from 1298.—469
- Alexander III of Macedon* (*Alexander the Great*) (356-323 B.C.)—general and statesman.—484
- Alexander II* (1818-1881)—Russian Emperor (1855-81).—475
- Almohades*—a Berber dynasty that ruled over North Africa and South Spain in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.—483
- Almoravides*—a Berber dynasty that ruled over North Africa and South Spain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.—483
- Alvaro de Luna*—see *Luna*
- Ammianus Marcellinus* (c. 332-c. 400)—Roman historian.—362
- Anastasius I* (c. 430-518)—Byzantine Emperor (491-518).—340
- Anne* (1665-1714)—Queen of Great Britain and Ireland (1702-14).—180
- Annenkov, Pavel Vasilyevich* (1812-1887)—Russian liberal landowner and man of letters.—489
- Appius Claudius Crassus* (died c. 448 B.C.)—Roman consul (471, 451) and decemvir (451-50); strove to attain dictatorial powers.—413
- Archbishop of Trier*—see *Richard Arioivistus* (1st cent. B.C.)—chief of the Suevi, a German tribe; fought against Julius Caesar.—304
- Aristides* (c. 540-467 B.C.)—Athenian statesman and general.—406
- Aristotle* (384-322 B.C.)—Greek philosopher.—269
- Arminius* (c. 17 B.C.—A.D. 21)—chief of the Cheruski, a German tribe; headed the struggle of German tribes against the Romans and defeated the latter in the Teutoburg Forest in A.D. 9.—322-24, 326-27, 330

- Arnd, Karl* (1788-1877)—German vulgar economist.—198
- Artaxerxes I, Longimanus* ("Longhand") (d. 424 B.C.)—Persian King of the Achaemenid dynasty (reigned c. 464-c. 424).—419
- Aspren (Lucius Nonius Asprenus)* (c. 28 B.C.-c. A.D. 30)—Roman statesman and general; fought in the wars against the Germans.—322, 325
- Athelstan* (895-940)—King of the Anglo-Saxons (924-40).—134
- Augustus* (63 B.C.—A.D. 14)—Roman Emperor (27 B.C.—A.D. 14).—118, 304, 306, 314, 317-18, 326-28, 330, 334, 336, 412-13, 423, 505, 536, 541
- Aurung-zeb (Aurungzeb)*—(1618-1707)—Emperor of Hindustan (1658-1707) of the ruling dynasty of the Great Moguls.—70
- B**
- Bachofen, Johann Jakob* (1815-1887)—Swiss historian and lawyer, author of *Das Mutterrecht*.—533
- Bacon, Francis, Baron Verulam* (1561-1626)—English materialist philosopher, natural scientist and historian.—150-51
- Balboa, Vasco Núñez de* (1475-1517)—Spanish explorer and conquistador; the first European to cross the Isthmus of Panama; he discovered the Pacific Ocean.—81-82
- Balthasar*—see *Slör*
- Bancroft, Hubert Howe* (1832-1918)—American historian, author of several works on the history and ethnography of North and Central America.—437
- Barth, Ernst Emil Paul* (1858-1922)—German philosopher, sociologist and teacher.—532, 535-36
- Berlepsch, Maria Josephe Gertrud* (d. 1723)—maid of honour in the service of Maria Anna von Neuburg, Queen of Spain; expelled from the country after the popular uprising of 1699.—77
- Bernstein, Eduard* (1850-1932)—German Social-Democrat, writer; after Engels' death leader of the opportunist wing of the German Social-Democratic Party and of the Second International; sought to revise Marxism along reformist lines.—532
- Bismarck, Otto* (1815-1898)—statesman of Prussia and Germany; forcibly united Germany under the supremacy of Prussia; sworn enemy of the working-class movement; passed the Anti-Socialist Law in 1878.—258, 282-83, 452-53, 537
- Blackett, John Fenwick* (1821-1856)—British M.P.—69
- Bleichröder, Gerson von* (1822-1893)—German financier, Bismarck's private banker.—453
- Bloch, Joseph* (1871-1936)—student of Berlin University; subsequently journalist, publisher and editor of *Sozialistische Monatshette*.—520
- Bonaparte*—see *Napoleon I*
- Borgius, W.*—539
- Bourbons*—royal dynasty in France (1589-1792), 1814-15

- and 1815-30) and Spain (1700-1868 and 1874-1931).—82
- Bréquigny, Louis Georges*—publisher of Merovingian diplomas.—368
- Briscoe, John* (end of the 17th cent.)—English proprietor, author of a project for establishing a land bank as a means to get rid of usury.—169
- Brutus, Marcus Junius* (85-42 B.C.)—Roman politician; one of Caesar's assassins; engaged in usury in his youth.—100
- Buret, Antoine Eugène* (1810-1842)—French petty-bourgeois socialist.—216
- C**
- Caesar (Gaius Julius Caesar)* (c. 100-44 B.C.)—Roman general, statesman and writer.—275-76, 294, 298, 303-12, 314, 327-28, 335, 346, 354-57, 397, 422, 511-13, 541
- Calvin, John* (1509-1564)—prominent figure in the Reformation, founder of Calvinism, a trend in Protestantism.—535
- Campbell, George* (1824-1892)—British colonial official in India from 1843 to 1874, with intervals; author of several works on India.—94, 519
- Cantillon, Richard* (1680-1734)—English economist, forerunner of the Physiocrats.—190
- Carey, Henry Charles* (1793-1879)—American vulgar economist, author of the reactionary theory of the harmony of class interests in capitalist society.—161
- Carolingians*—the Frankish dynasty that ruled from 751 until 987 in France, until 911 in Germany and until 887 in Italy.—352, 361, 366, 373, 378-79, 538
- Cato, Marcus Porcius, the Elder* (234-149 B.C.)—Roman statesman and writer, author of the treatise *De Agricultura*.—100, 195
- Chamberlayne, Hugh* (1630-1720)—English physician and economist; in the late seventeenth century put forward a proposal to establish a land bank as a means of getting rid of usury.—169
- Charlemagne* (c. 742-814)—Frankish king (768-800) and Emperor of the West (800-814).—47, 163, 166, 194, 283, 285, 362, 367, 372, 377, 379, 381, 383-88, 431-33, 473
- Charles I*—see *Charles V*
- Charles I* (1600-1649)—King of Great Britain and Ireland (1625-49); executed during the English bourgeois revolution.—152-53
- Charles II* (1630-1685)—King of Great Britain and Ireland (1660-85).—77, 132, 180
- Charles IV* (1748-1819)—King of Spain (1788-1808).—78
- Charles V* (1500-1558)—Holy Roman Emperor (1519-56) and King of Spain as Charles I (1516-56).—78-81, 506, 509
- Charles VIII* (1470-1498)—King of France (1483-98).—471
- Charles I or II, the Bald* (823-877)—King of France as Charles I (840-77), Holy Roman Emperor as Charles II (875-77).—374

- Charles the Bold* (1433-1477)—Duke of Burgundy (1467-77).—466, 538
- Charles Martel* (c. 688-741)—Frankish ruler (715-41).—365, 367-68, 370, 372, 383
- Chernyshevski, Nikolai Gavrilovich* (1828-1889)—Russian revolutionary democrat, scholar, writer and literary critic.—271, 475-77
- Child, Josiah* (1630-1699)—English mercantile economist, banker and merchant.—171-72
- Chilpéric I* (d. A.D. 584)—Merovingian King of Neustria (the western part of the dominions of the Franks) (561-84).—367
- Cicero, Marcus Tullius* (106-43 B.C.)—Roman statesman, orator and author.—93
- Claudius*—Roman patrician gens.—412
- Claudius I (Tiberius Claudius Drusus Nero Germanicus)* (10 B.C.-A.D. 54).—Roman Emperor (41-54).—329
- Cleisthenes*—Athenian statesman; carried out reforms in 510-07 B.C. to abolish the survivals of the tribal system and establish a slave-owning democracy in Athens.—93, 407
- Comte, François Charles Louis* (1782-1837)—French liberal writer, vulgar economist.—186
- Constantine I* (c. 274-337)—Roman Emperor (306-37).—340
- Cortez, Hernando* (1485-1547)—Spanish conqueror of the Aztec empire in Mexico (1519-21).—81
- Crassus, Marcus Licinius* (c. 115-53 B.C.)—Roman politician and general; suppressed the uprising led by Spartacus in 71 B.C.; twice elected consul.—304, 310
- Crocker, Roger*.—152
- Cromwell, Oliver* (1599-1658)—leader of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisified nobility during the English bourgeois revolution; Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland (1653-58).—152, 541
- Cuvier, Georges* (1769-1832)—French naturalist, zoologist and paleontologist.—510

D

- Dahlmann, Friedrich Christoph* (1785-1860)—German historian and politician, author of several works on the history of Denmark and Germany.—352
- Daire, Eugène* (1798-1847)—French economist.—193
- Darwin, Charles Robert* (1809-1882)—British naturalist; expounded the theory of evolution by natural selection.—252, 511, 517
- Dawkins, William Boyd* (1837-1929)—English geologist, anthropologist, paleontologist and archaeologist; author of works on the primitive people inhabiting Europe.—242, 332
- Dio Cassius* (c. 155-c. 235)—Roman historian and statesman; wrote the eighty-volume *History of Rome* in Greek.—304, 317, 320-21, 324, 350
- Diodorus Siculus* (c. 80-29 B.C.)—Greek historian and rhetorician, author of *Bibliothecae historicae*.—142, 422
- Dombasle, Christophe Joseph*

Alexandre Mathieu de (1777-1843)—French agronomist.—227

Domitius Ahenobarbus (d. A.D. 25)—Roman military leader and statesman; led campaigns against the Germans early in the first century.—305, 318, 320-21

Drusus (Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus) (c. 38-9 B.C.)—Roman general; led campaigns against the Germans in 12-9 B.C.—314-17, 319, 330

Dureau de la Malle, Adolphe Jules César Auguste (1777-1857)—French poet and historian.—421

E

Eden, Frederick Morton (1766-1809)—English economist, disciple of Adam Smith.—154

Einhard (c. 770-840)—Frankish historiographer, biographer of Charlemagne.—365

Elizabeth I (1533-1603)—Queen of England (1558-1603).—153

Engelhardt, Helvig Conrad (1825-1881)—Danish archaeologist, director of the Flensburg museum of northern antiquities.—341

Engels, Frederick (1820-1895).—50, 52, 174

Epicurus (c. 341-c. 270 B.C.)—Greek materialist philosopher and atheist.—141, 165

F

Fabians—Roman patrician gens.—417

Fecenia Hispalla—Roman freed slave.—415

Ferdinand V, the Catholic (1452-1516)—King (1474-1504) and

ruler (1507-16) of Castile; King of Aragon as Ferdinand II (1479-1516).—78, 81

Ferdinand VII (1784-1833)—King of Spain (1808, 1814-33).—78

Feuerbach, Ludwig (1804-1872)—German materialist philosopher of the pre-Marxian period.—524, 537

Fichte, Johann Gottlieb (1762-1814)—classical German philosopher, subjective idealist. 535

Fletcher, Andrew (1655-1716)—Scottish politician, championed Scotland's independence.—154

Florus, Licinius Annaeus (A.D. 2nd cent.)—Roman historian.—316-17

Fortescue, John (c. 1394-c. 1476)—English jurist, author of several works on the English political system.—148, 150

Fourier, François Marie Charles (1772-1837)—French utopian socialist.—174, 252, 255-56, 434, 459, 489, 503

Fraas, Karl (1810-1875)—German botanist and agronomist.—511

Franz—see *Sickingen, Franz von*

Frederick II (1194-1250)—King of Sicily (1198-1250); Holy Roman Emperor (1215-50)—164

Frederick William (1620-1688)—Elector of Brandenburg (1640-88)—537

Freeman, Edward Augustus (1823-1892)—English historian, professor of Oxford University; Liberal.—391

G

Germanicus, Julius Caesar (15 B.C.—A.D. 19)—Roman gen-

- al; led several campaigns against the Germans.—310, 325, 330
- Gerville-Réache, Gaston Marie* (b. 1854)—French lawyer and politician, member of the Chamber of Deputies for the Antilles.—520
- Giffen, Robert* (1837-1910)—English economist and statistician, specialised in finances.—264
- Godoy, Manuel de* (1767-1851)—Minister of Charles IV of Spain, virtual ruler of the country (1792-98 and 1801-08); bore the title of Prince of Peace from 1795; facilitated the occupation of Spain by the French; overthrown in 1808 as a result of a popular uprising.—78
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von* (1749-1832)—German writer and thinker.—76
- Gould, Jay* (1836-1892)—American millionaire, financier and railroad magnate.—526
- Gregory I (the Great), Saint* (c. 540-604)—Pope (590-604).—368
- Gregory of Tours, Saint* (c. 540-594)—Bishop of Tours (from 573); author of *Historia Francorum*.—367
- Grimm, Jacob* (1785-1863)—German philologist, a founder of comparative historical philology.—313, 349, 351-57, 387, 510-11
- Guérard, Benjamin Edme Charles* (1797-1854)—French historian, author of several works on the history of medieval France.—369, 387
- Guizot, François Pierre Guil-
laume* (1787-1874)—French historian and statesman; directed home and foreign policy of France from 1840 to the February 1848 revolution; represented the interests of the big financial bourgeoisie.—137, 541
- Gülich, Gustav von* (1791-1847)—German economist and historian.—542
- Guntram* (c. 525-593)—King of Burgundy (561-93).—367, 372
- Gustavus I Vasa* (c. 1496-1560)—King of Sweden (1523-60).—472

H

- Habsburgs*—German dynasty of emperors of the Holy Roman Empire (1273-1806, with intervals), of Austria (from 1804) and of Austria-Hungary (1867-1918).—82
- Hanssen, Georg* (1809-1894)—German economist, author of works on the history of agrarian relations.—516
- Harrison, William* (1534-1593)—English clergyman, author of works on the history of sixteenth-century England.—149
- Hartmann, Lev Nikolayevich* (1850-1908)—Russian revolutionary, Narodnik; participated in an attempt to assassinate Tsar Alexander II (1879); emigrated to France, then to England, and in 1882 to the USA.—515, 532
- Haxthausen, August* (1792-1866)—Prussian official and writer, author of works on the remnants of the communal system in Russia's agrarian relations.—50, 270, 519

- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich* (1770-1831)—German philosopher, objective idealist.—29, 137, 184, 449, 490, 492, 511, 530, 532, 535
- Henry IV* (1425-1474)—King of Castile (1454-65 and 1468-74).—77
- Henry VII* (1457-1509)—King of England (1485-1509).—126, 150
- Henry VIII* (1491-1547)—King of England (1509-47).—126, 150, 180
- Herod* (73-4 B.C.)—King of Judaea by Roman nomination (40-4 B.C.)—419
- Herodotus* (c. 484-c. 425 B.C.)—Greek historian.—301
- Herrenschwand, Jean* (1728-1812)—Swiss economist.—194
- Herzen, Alexander Ivanovich* (1812-1870)—Russian revolutionary democrat, materialist philosopher and writer.—270, 475
- Hildebrand, Hans Olof* (1842-1913)—Swedish archaeologist, historian and numismatist, author of works on the ancient and medieval history of Sweden.—338, 441
- Hildebrann (us)* (3rd cent. A.D.)—owner of the estate Patricia-cum (Percy) near Autun (France).—372
- Hincmar Remensis* (c. 806-882)—archbishop of Rheims from 845; author of the third part of *Annales Bertiniani* covering the years 861-82.—384
- Hinkmar* (830-882)—bishop of Laon (France).—368, 374
- Hobbes, Thomas* (1588-1679)—English philosopher, mechanistic materialist.—530
- Hogg, James Weir* (1790-1876)—English politician; President of the Board of Directors of the East India Company in 1846-47 and 1852-53.—69
- Hohenstaufens*—dynasty of emperors of the Holy Roman Empire ruling between 1138 and 1254.—473
- Homer*—Greek epic poet, author of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.—382
- Hume, Joseph* (1777-1855)—English politician, a leader of bourgeois radicals, M.P.—69
- Hunter, Henry Julian*—English physician, author of reports on the plight of workers.—152
- Huschke, Georg Philipp* (1801-1886)—German jurist, author of works on Roman law.—417
- Hutten, Ulrich von* (1488-1523)—German humanist poet and supporter of Reformation; ideologist of the German knights; joined in the knights' uprising of 1522-23.—506, 508

I

- Irminon* (died c. 826)—abbot of the Saint-Germain-des-Prés Monastery in France (812-17).—386, 432
- Isabella I* (1451-1504)—Queen of Castile (1474-1504).—78
- Ivan III Vasilyevich* (1440-1505)—Grand Duke of Muscovy (1462-1505).—471

J

- James I* (1566-1625)—King of Great Britain (1603-25).—152-53, 180
- John VIII*—Pope (872-882).—368, 371

- Johnston, James Finlay Weir* (1796-1855)—English agricultural chemist.—186
- Jones, Richard* (1790-1855)—English economist, one of the last representatives of classical bourgeois political economy.—232
- Jordanes* (born c. 500)—Gothic historian.—336
- Jornandes*—see *Jordanes*
- Joss, Fritz* (died c. 1517)—organiser of peasants' secret societies and conspiracies in Southern Germany in the early sixteenth century.—507
- Juan de Pacheco*—see *Pacheco*
- Juan II* (1405-1454)—King of Castile and Léon (1406-54).—77
- K**
- Kant, Immanuel* (1724-1804)—German idealist philosopher, founder of classical German philosophy.—530, 535
- Kautsky, Karl* (1854-1938)—German Social-Democrat, writer; sided with Marxism in the 1880s; later became an opportunist and ideologist of Centrism in the German Social-Democratic Party and the Second International.—532, 544
- Kindlinger, Niklas* (1749-1819)—German historian.—516
- Khuli-Khan*—see *Nadir Shah*
- L**
- Lassalle, Ferdinand* (1825-1864)—German petty-bourgeois writer a founder of the General Association of German Workers (1863); supported the policy of uniting Germany from above under Prussia's hegemony; initiated an opportunist trend in the German working-class movement.—457, 506-07
- Lelewel, Joachim* (1786-1861)—Polish historian and revolutionary; took part in the Polish insurrection of 1830-31; subsequently a leader of the democratic wing of the Polish émigrés.—303
- Leo Africanus* (*al Hasan ibn-Muhammad al-Wazzan*) (1495 or 1496-1550)—Arabian scholar and traveller, author of *The History and Description of Atrica*.—347
- Leonhardt, Gerhard Adolf* (1815-1880)—German lawyer and reactionary statesman; Minister of Justice for Hanover (1865-66) and Prussia (1867-79).—283
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim* (1729-1781)—German dramatist, critic and philosopher, prominent Enlightener.—534
- Licinius Calvus Stolo, Gaius*—Roman statesman of the first half of the fourth century B.C.—39
- Liebig, Justus* (1803-1873)—German chemist.—229
- Linguet, Simon Nicolas Henri* (1736-1794)—French lawyer, historian and economist.—200
- Liutprand of Cremona* (c. 922-c. 972)—prominent clerical and political figure and historian of the Middle Ages; bishop of Cremona from 961; author of *Antapodosis*.—427
- Livy (Titus Livius)* (59 B.C.—A.D. 17)—Roman historian, author of *History of Rome*.—414, 417
- Locke, John* (1632-1704)—English dualist philosopher, sensualist, bourgeois economist.—530

- Louis I (le Débonnaire)* (778-840)—King of France (814-40).—372-73, 382, 386-87
- Louis II, the Stammerer* (846-879)—King of Aquitania from 867, King of the Franks (877-79).—382
- Louis XI* (1423-1483)—King of France (1461-83).—54, 78, 471
- Louis Napoleon*—see *Napoleon III*
- Lubbock, Sir John* (1834-1913)—English biologist, Darwinist.—518
- Luna, Alvaro de* (1388-1453)—Minister of King Juan II of Castile.—77
- Luther, Martin* (1483-1546)—German Reformation leader, founder of Protestantism (Lutheranism) in Germany; ideologist of the German burghers; sided with the princes against the insurgent rural and urban poor during the Peasant War of 1525.—182, 535
- M**
- Macrinus* (164-218)—Roman Emperor (217-18).—341
- Maine, Sir Henry James Sumner* (1822-1888)—English jurist and law historian.—519
- Manley, Thomas* (1628-1690)—English writer and mercantile economist.—171
- Marcianus* (about 5th cent.)—Greek geographer; described the North Sea coast.—341
- Marcus Aurelius Antoninus* (121-180)—Roman Emperor (161-80), Stoic philosopher.—334, 338
- Marius, Gaius* (c. 156-86 B.C.)—Roman general and statesman, consul (107, 104-100, 86 B.C.).—304, 328, 512
- Maroboduus* (d. A.D. 41)—chief of Germanic tribe of Marcomanni (8 B.C.—A.D. 19); set up a union of Germanic tribes in the Rhine area and waged war on Rome.—306, 318-19, 326, 333
- Maron, H.*—author of a pamphlet on agriculture.—222
- Marx, Karl* (1818-1883).—134, 174, 222, 237, 244, 246, 253-54, 389, 435, 443, 475, 477, 481, 503, 513, 518-19, 522, 524, 532, 534, 542
- Massie, Joseph* (d. 1784)—English political economist.—226
- Maurer, Georg Ludwig* (1790-1872)—German historian; investigated the social system of ancient and medieval Germany.—50, 274, 294, 365, 384, 509, 513-16, 519
- Mehring, Franz* (1846-1919)—prominent figure in the German working-class movement, historian and writer; a founder of the Communist Party of Germany.—534
- Meitzen, August* (1822-1910)—German statistician and historian, author of works on the history of agrarian relations.—516
- Melgar, Juan Thomas Cabrera, Count* (1652-1705)—Minister of Charles I of Spain (1693-99); expelled from the country after the popular uprising of 1699.—77
- Menger, Anton* (1841-1906)—Austrian jurist, professor of Vienna University.—482

- Menke, Heinrich Theodor von* (1819-1892)—German geographer.—464
- Merovingians*—the first royal dynasty in the Frankish state ruling from the end of the fifth to the mid-eighth century.—285, 361, 365, 368, 370, 376, 378, 382
- Metternich, Prince Klemens Wenzel Nepomuk Lothar von* (1773-1859)—Austrian reactionary statesman and diplomat; Minister of Foreign Affairs (1809-21) and Chancellor (1821-48).—258
- Mignet, François Auguste Marie* (1796-1884)—French historian of the Restoration period.—541
- Mikhailovsky, Nikolai Konstantinovich* (1842-1904)—Russian sociologist, writer and literary critic; ideologist of Narodism and opponent of Marxism.—270
- Mohammed* (c. 570-632)—Arab prophet and founder of Islam.—504-05
- Mommsen, Theodor* (1817-1903)—German historian; author of works on the history of Ancient Rome.—195, 413-17, 419
- Money, J.W.B.*—author of *Java or How to Manage a Colony*.—519
- Montesquieu, Charles de* (1689-1755)—French sociologist, economist and writer; prominent Enlightenment; theoretician of constitutional monarchy.—535
- More, Sir Thomas* (1478-1535)—English statesman and humanist writer; one of the early utopian communists, author of *Utopia*.—150-51
- Morgan, Lewis Henry* (1818-1881)—American anthropologist and ethnologist, authority on primitive society; spontaneous materialist.—50, 388-91, 393, 397-98, 408, 416-17, 435, 459, 517-18, 533, 541
- Möser Justus* (1720-1794)—German conservative bourgeois historian and writer.—200, 510
- Mounier, A.*—French historian of the mid-nineteenth century.—222, 226
- Müllenhoff, Karl Viktor* (1818-1884)—German philologist and historian; investigated German antiquities, myths and medieval literature.—303
- Müller, Adam* (1779-1829)—German writer and economist, representative of the so-called romantic school expressing the interests of the feudal aristocracy; opponent of Adam Smith's economic teaching.—134
- Münzer, Thomas* (c. 1490-1525)—German revolutionary, leader and ideologist of the peasant and plebeian camp during the Reformation and the Peasant War of 1525; propagated the ideas of egalitarian utopian communism.—63, 545

N

- Nadir Shah (Khuli Khan)* (1688-1747)—Shah of Persia (1736-47); led a predatory expedition to India in 1738 and 1739.—70
- Napoleon I Bonaparte* (1769-1821)—Emperor of the French

- (1804-14 and 1815).-78, 258, 291, 529, 541
- Napoleon III (Louis Napoleon Bonaparte)* (1808-1873)-nephew of Napoleon I; President of the Second French Republic (1848-51) and Emperor of the French (1852-70).-327
- Nero, Claudius Caesar Drusus Germanicus* (37-68)-Roman Emperor (54-68).-334, 341
- Newman, Francis William* (1805-1897)-English philosopher and writer, author of works on religious, political and economic questions; bourgeois radical.-160, 226
- Niebuhr, Barthold Georg* (1776-1831)-German historian, authority on the ancient world.-91-92, 118-19, 142, 418, 449
- North, Dudley* (1641-1691)-English economist, one of the first representatives of classical bourgeois political economy.-182
- Novairi* (c. 1280-c. 1332)-Arabian historian.-505
- Numa Pompilius* (late 8th-early 7th cent. B.C.)-semi-legendary second King of Ancient Rome.-91, 118
- Numonius Vala* (d. A.D. 9)-Quintilius Varus' legate; commanded the cavalry and was killed during his flight after the Roman defeat at Teutoburg Forest.-325
- O**
- Oropesa, Emanuel Joachim* (1642-c. 1707)-Minister of Charles II of Spain (1685-91 and 1698-99); expelled from the country after the popular uprising of 1699.-77
- Orosius, Paulus* (c. 380-c. 420)-Spanish-born Roman historian.-316
- Otto I* (912-973)-King of Germany (936-73); first Holy Roman Emperor (962-73).-473
- Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso)* (43 B.C.-c. A.D. 17)-Roman poet.-327
- Owen, Robert* (1771-1858)-English utopian socialist.-174, 479
- P**
- Pacheco, Juan, Marquis de Villena* (1419-1474)-Minister of King Henry IV of Castile.-77-78
- Padilla, Juan* (c. 1490-1521)-Spanish nobleman, a leader of the 1520-22 uprising of Castilian towns; executed after the defeat at Villalar.-80
- Passy, Hippolyte Philibert* (1793-1880)-French vulgar economist and politician; Minister of Finance during the Second Republic.-190, 193, 198
- Paterson, William* (1658-1719)-founder of the Bank of England.-172
- Pecqueur, Constantin* (1801-1887)-French economist and utopian socialist.-178
- Pepin the Short* (714-768)-Frankish mayor of the palace (741-51) and the first Carolingian King of the Franks (751-68).-369, 371-73
- Péreire, Jacob Emile* (1800-1875)-French banker; sided with the Saint-Simonists in the

- 1820s and 1830s; Bonapartist during the Second Empire; with his brother Isaac founded the *Crédit Mobilier*, a joint-stock bank, in 1852.—174
- Perseus* (212-166 B.C.)—the last King of Macedon (179-68 B.C.).—304, 423
- Petty, Sir William* (1623-1687)—English economist and statistician.—190-91
- Philip II* (c. 382-336 B.C.)—King of Macedon (359-36 B.C.).—484
- Philip II* or *Philip Augustus* (1165-1223)—King of France (1180-1223); a leader of the third crusade (1189-91).—536
- Philip II* (1527-1598)—King of Spain (1556-98).—328
- Philip IV* (1605-1665)—King of Spain (1621-65).—77
- Philo Judaeus* (c. 20 B.C.-c. A.D. 54)—Hellenistic Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, exerted great influence on the formation of Christian theology.—486
- Pisistratus* (c. 600-527 B.C.)—tyrant of Athens (560-27 B.C., with intervals).—410
- Pizarro, Francisco* (c. 1475-1540) Spanish conquistador; leader in the Spanish conquest of the Incaic Empire in Peru in the 1530s.—82
- Plato* (c. 427-c. 347 B.C.)—Greek idealist philosopher.—544
- Plekhanov, Georgi Valentinovich* (1856-1918)—prominent figure in the Russian and international working-class movement, philosopher and propagandist of Marxism in Russia, founder of the Emancipation of Labour group, the first Russian Marxist organisation (1883); subsequently a Menshevik.—481
- Pliny (Gaius Plinius Secundus)* (23-79)—Roman scholar, author of *Natural History* in thirty-seven books.—310-14, 332, 336, 348-53, 356, 358, 423
- Plutarch* (c. 46-c. 125)—Greek biographer and moralist; idealist philosopher.—304, 512
- Probus, Marcus Aurelius* (232-282)—Roman Emperor (276-82).—345
- Procopius of Caesarea* (late 5th cent.-c. 562)—Byzantine historian; took part in several military campaigns as counsellor and secretary to the general Belisar and described them in his *Histories* (of the Persian, Vandal, and Gothic Wars) in the reign of Justinian.—351
- Proudhon, Pierre Joseph* (1809-1865)—French journalist, economist and sociologist; ideologist of the petty bourgeoisie and one of the founders of anarchism.—101, 177, 489-502, 510
- Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemaeus)* (A.D. 2nd cent.)—Greek astronomer, mathematician and geographer; father of the astronomical system with the earth at the centre of the universe.—332-34, 338, 342, 347-49, 351, 353, 356, 358, 521
- Pytheas* (4th cent. B.C.)—Greek traveller and astronomer; sailed to the shores of north-western Europe about 325 B.C.—303, 309

Q

Quintilia—an ancient Roman patrician gens whose best known branch was *Varus*.—412

R

Raffles, Thomas Stamford (1781-1826)—British colonial official; lieutenant-governor of Java (1811-16); author of *The History of Java*.—70

Rave, Henri—French journalist; translated Engels' works into French.—533

Réache—see *Gerville-Réache*

Remi (Remigius) (437-533)—archbishop of Reims; spread Christianity among the Franks.—368

Richard (1467-1531)—elector and archbishop of Trier (1511-31); sworn enemy of the Reformation; took part in suppressing the uprising of the knights in 1522-23 and the peasant uprising in 1525.—516

Richard I (Coeur de Lion) (1157-1199)—King of England (1189-99).—536.

Rodbertus-Jagetzow, Johann Karl (1805-1875)—German vulgar economist and politician; ideologist of the bourgeoisified Prussian junkers.—213

Rogers, James Edwin Thorold (1823-1890)—English economist, author of works on the history of the British national economy.—154

Roth, Paul Rudolf (1820-1892)—German historian, author of works on the origin of feudalism in Western Europe.—365, 367-69, 375, 377, 383

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1712-1778)—French Enlightener and democrat.—535

Rubichon, Maurice (1766-1849)—French vulgar economist.—222, 226

S

Saint-Simon, Henri Claude (1760-1825)—French utopian socialist.—173-74, 177-78

Salvianus (c. 390-c. 484)—Christian preacher and writer, Marseilles clergyman, author of *De gubernatione Dei*.—428, 432

San Luis—see *Sartorius, Luis José, conde de San Luis*

Santa Coloma de Queralt, Delmacio, Count—(d. 1640)—Spanish statesman; killed during the popular uprising in Barcelona.—77

Sartorius, Luis José, conde de San Luis (1820-1871)—Spanish reactionary statesman and writer; Minister of the Interior (1847-51) and Prime Minister (1853-54).—77-78

Sassanidae—dynasty of Persian kings (226-651).—504

Schaaffhausen, Hermann (1816-1893)—German anthropologist and physiologist.—301

Schiller, Friedrich von (1759-1805)—German poet and dramatist.—507

Schneider, Jacob (1818-1898)—German archaeologist, author of works on the ancient history of Germany.—331

Schömann, Georg Friedrich (1793-1879)—German philologist and historian, author of works on Greek history.—525

- Sebastian, Saint*—Roman martyr of the late third century A.D.; would-be relics of his body could be found in different places in the Middle Ages.—368
- Segestes* (A. D. 1st cent.)—chief of a Germanic tribe, the Cherusci; supporter of the Romans.—324, 357
- Segimerus* (A.D. 1st cent.)—chief of the Cherusci, father of Arminius.—322, 324, 357
- Segimundus*.—357
- Sentius Saturninus* (1st cent. A.D.)—Roman general, led campaigns against the Germans.—319
- Septimius Severus, Lucius* (146-211)—Roman Emperor (193-211) and general.—337, 340-41
- Servius, Tullius* (578-534 B.C.)—semi-legendary sixth King of Rome.—420
- Shakespeare, William* (1564-1616)—English dramatist and poet.—507-08
- Sickingen, Franz von* (1481-1523)—German knight who joined the Reformation; headed the knights' uprising of 1522-23.—506-09
- Sirmond, Jacques* (1559-1651)—French historian.—378
- Sismondi, Jean Charles Léonard Simonde de* (1773-1842)—Swiss historian and economist, representative of economic romanticism.—142, 216
- Slör, Balthasar*—participant in the 1525 Peasant War in Germany, friend and counsellor to Franz von Sickingen.—507
- Smith, Adam* (1723-1790)—Scottish economist.—127, 143, 195, 494, 536
- Snigge*—doctor of law.—153
- Soetbeer, Georg Adolf* (1814-1892)—German economist and statistician.—525
- Solon* (c. 638-c. 558 B.C.)—Athenian lawgiver; carried out several reforms directed against the aristocracy.—400, 405-07, 420, 457
- Stamford Raffles*—see *Raffles, Thomas Stamford*
- Stewart, James* (1712-1780)—English economist, one of the last mercantilists.—149, 193
- Strabo* (c. 63 B.C.-c. A.D. 20)—Greek geographer and historian.—308, 310, 326, 347, 522
- Stroussberg, Bethel Henry* (1823-1884)—German-born English railway contractor.—512
- Suetonius (Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus)* (c. 70-c. 160)—Roman historian.—316

T

- Tacitus, Cornelius* (c. 55-c. 120)—Roman historian.—276, 278, 294, 298, 306, 312-13, 322, 328, 330-38, 340, 341, 346, 348-51, 353, 355-56, 391, 397, 422, 510, 512-13
- Tapper*—Warsaw banker.—183
- Tarquinius (Lucius Tarquinius Superbus)* ("The Proud") (534-c. 509 B.C.)—semi-legendary seventh king of Ancient Rome; according to legend, was expelled from Rome as a result of a popular uprising, after which the monarchy was abolished and a republic founded.—419, 422

- Theodoric*—name of three kings of the Goths: two kings of the Visigoths, *Theodoric I* (reigned c. 418-51) and *Theodoric II* (reigned c. 453-66), and the king of the Ostrogoths, *Theodoric the Great* (reigned 474-526).—419
- Thierry, Jacques Nicolas Augustin* (1795-1856)—French liberal-bourgeois historian of the Restoration.—517, 541
- Thiers, Louis Adolphe* (1797-1877)—French statesman and historian; Prime Minister (1836, 1840); President of the Republic (1871-73); brutally suppressed the Paris Commune.—144
- Thornton, William Thomas* (1813-1880)—English economist.—150
- Tiberius (Tiberius Claudius Nero Caesar)* (42 B.C.—A.D. 37)—Roman Emperor (14-37).—317-19, 329-30, 341, 419
- Tkachev, Pyotr Nikitich* (1844-1885)—Russian revolutionary and writer, ideologist of Narodism.—475
- Tocqueville de, Alexis Charles Henri Maurice* (1805-1859)—French historian and politician; legitimist and supporter of constitutional monarchy.—216
- Tooke, Thomas* (1774-1858)—English economist, adhered to the classical school of political economy; criticised Ricardo's theory of money.—221
- Toricelli, Evangelista* (1608-1647)—Italian mathematician and physicist.—540
- Trajan (Marcus Ulpius Trajanus)* (53-117)—Roman Emperor (98-117) and general.—340
- Tudors*—royal dynasty in England (1485-1603).—471
- Tylor, Edward Burnett* (1832-1917)—English ethnographer, founder of the evolutionary school in the history of culture and ethnography.—518

U

- Ulfila (Wulfila)* (c. 311-c. 383)—politician and bishop of the Visigoths; introduced Christianity among the Goths; invented the Gothic alphabet and translated the Bible into Gothic.—419

V

- Vanderbilts*—dynasty of American financial and industrial magnates.—526
- Varus, Publius Quintilius* (c. 53 B.C.—A.D. 9)—Roman politician and general.—320-27, 357, 412
- Vasco da Gama* (1469-1524)—Portuguese navigator; was the first to reach India by sea around Africa (1497-98).—53
- Vasco Núñez de Balboa*—see *Balboa, Vasco Núñez de*
- Vasconcellos, Miguel de* (d. 1640)—Minister of Margaret of Savoy, the Spanish ruler of Portugal; killed during a popular uprising against Spanish rule.—77
- Velleius (Gaius Paterculus Velleius)* (19 B.C.—A.D. 31)—Roman historian; took part in military expeditions to Ger-

many, Pannonia and Dalmatia.-317-18, 320, 323, 326, 348
Vercingetorix (d. 46 B.C.)-Gallic chief; led a general uprising of the Gauls against Roman rule (52-51 B.C.).-327

Villena-see *Pacheco, Juan*

Vinicius, Marcus-Roman general and consul; took part in the wars in Pannonia and Germany.-318

Virchow, Rudolf (1821-1902)-German natural scientist, author of works on anthropology.-300

W

Wachsmuth, Ernst Wilhelm (1784-1866)-German historian, author of works on ancient and European history.-521, 537

Waitz, Georg (1813-1886)-German historian specialising in medieval law, publisher of *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*.-354

Wellington, Arthur Wellesley, First Duke of (1769-1852)-British general and statesman.-469

Wiberg, Carl Fredrik (1813-1881)-Swedish historian, author of works on ancient history of Baltic countries.-333, 336

Wood, Charles (1800-1885)-British statesman, Whig; President of the Board of Control of the East India Company (1852-55); Secretary of State for India (1859-66).-69, 70

Worsaae, Jens Jacob (1821-1885)-Danish archaeologist; proved the existence of the Bronze Age.-335

Y

Yorck von Wartenburg, Hans David Ludwig (1759-1830)-Prussian general; fought in the wars against Napoleonic France.-327

Z

Zeuss, Johann Kaspar (1806-1856)-German linguist; gave a detailed description of Celtic languages.-349, 350, 352, 356

Zhukovsky, Yuli Galaktionovich (1822-1907)-Russian vulgar economist and writer, author of the article "Karl Marx and His Book on Capital", containing malicious attacks on Marxism.-270-71

Žižka, Jan (c. 1360-1424)-Bohemian general and politician, one of the leaders of the Hussite movement and military leader of the Taborites.-484

INDEX OF LITERARY AND MYTHOLOGICAL NAMES

- Adam* (Bib.)—the first man created by God.—143
- Ermin* (Ger. myth.)—one of the three sons of Mannus, forefather of the Germans.—351
- Falstaff*—a fat, merry, ribald and boastful knight in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Henry IV.*—508
- Georges Dandin*—the title character of Molière's play.—446
- Hephaestus*—the Greek god of fire and metalworking.—253
- Ing* (Ger. myth.)—one of the three sons of Mannus, forefather of the Germans.—350
- Isk* (Ger. myth.)—one of the three sons of Mannus, forefather of the Germans.—350
- Mannus*—according to Tacitus, son of the ancient Germans' god *Tuisko*, and father of three sons—Ing, Isk and Ermin, originators of the three main groups of Germanic tribes, Ingaevones, Istaevones and Herminones.—350
- Moses* (Bib.)—Hebrew prophet and lawgiver and deliverer of the Israelites from the Egyptian pharaohs.—91
- Nerthus*—according to Tacitus, an ancient German fertility goddess.—351
- Prometheus* (Greek Myth.)—a Titan who stole fire from Olympus for man. Zeus doomed him to be bound to Mt. Caucasus and to have a vulture daily consume his liver.—253
- Robinson Crusoe*—the title character of Defo's novel *Robinson Crusoe.*—140
- Romulus* (Roman Myth.)—the legendary founder and first king of Rome.—91, 412, 418
- Theseus* (Greek Myth.)—the chief Attic hero; King of Athens, said to have founded the Athenian state.—400

SUBJECT INDEX

A

- Absolute monarchy*—See *Monarchy*
- Absolute rent*—218
- Africa*—298, 300, 305, 336, 347, 424, 463, 484, 525
- Ager publicus*—85, 89, 90, 92, 94-95, 103, 108, 510
- Agrarian communism*—478
See also *Russian peasant communism*
- Agricultural labourers*—see *Workers*
- Agriculture*—37, 185-86, 441, 444
—as the first form of production—83
—pre-capitalist—39, 40, 53, 84, 92, 96-97, 109-10, 194, 220-23, 284, 307-09, 310-11, 345, 363, 394-98, 426-27, 432, 438-42.
—in Asia—71-75, 85-89, 109-10, 239-41, 284, 308, 437-38, 503-04, 512-20
—capitalist—185-87, 222, 227-29, 292-93, 520
- Alloidium*—363, 370, 376, 383, 428
- Almänningar*—275
- America*—133, 174, 236, 398, 394, 399, 437, 463
—discovery of America—525
—United States of America—48, 174, 217, 269, 427, 451, 453
—slavery—238, 498
—Indians—see *Indians, American*
—North America—494-95
- Anabaptists*—545
- Anarchy in capitalist production*
—250-56, 260-62, 264-65, 456
- Ancient history*—521
- Ancient society, ancient world*
—38-40, 46, 84, 88-92, 98-99, 158, 162, 398-422, 423-27, 452, 456
—ancient communal and state property—See *Property*
—transition from antiquity to the feudal system—46
See also *Athens, Ancient; Attica; Creece, Ancient; Rome, Ancient; Roman Empire; Slavery*
- Angariae*—432
- Animal husbandry*—110, 284, 304, 307, 310-11, 345-46, 364, 394-98, 437-40
- Annales Bertiniani*—380, 382
- Annates*—59
- Anti-Corn Law League*—41
- Antrustions*—365, 378

- Appropriation*-259-60
 -in the Middle Ages-247-48
 -capitalist-245-49, 252, 255, 260-61, 263
 -direct social (under communism)-261
- Arabia*-71, 142, 504
- Arabs*-79, 470, 483, 505
- Archons*-400, 408
- Aristocracy*-30, 448
 -in Spain-81-82
 -in Ancient Athens-401-02, 450
 -in Ancient Rome-449
 -in the Frankish state-378, 380
- Art*-242, 397, 458
 -as superstructure-137, 540
- Asia*-71, 75, 76, 94, 110, 113, 118, 185, 274, 298, 301, 474, 503-04
 -Asiatic community-86, 87-88, 95-97, 98-99, 104-05, 107, 187-88, 233, 363
 -Asiatic form of property-see *Property*
 -pre-capitalist forms of rent-200, 206-07, 232
 -Asiatic despotism-29, 70, 75, 87, 239, 241
 -agriculture in-71-75, 85-88, 239-41, 284, 309, 438, 504
 -town and country-88, 94, 109
 -Asiatic mode of production-see *Mode of Production*
 -social revolution in-76
 See also *China; East; Egypt; India; Japan*
- Asia Minor*-504
- Assizes de Jérusalem*-543
- Association*-33, 402
- Athens, Ancient*-398-410, 445, 446, 449, 450, 452, 457
 See also *Attica*
- Attica*-398, 399, 401, 407-08
 See also *Athens, Ancient*
- Australia*-299
- Austria*-538-39
- Ayuntamientos*-79
- B**
- Banks*-170-78
 -history of banking-168-73
- Barbarism, barbarians*-39, 41, 45, 46, 67, 75, 309, 389, 391-98, 402, 422, 425, 428, 434-39, 440-44, 447, 458, 480, 484
- Basileus*-398, 400, 419, 442
- Basis and superstructure*-37, 137-38, 140, 201-03, 243, 447, 490-92, 522-23, 525-32, 534-36, 539-42
 See also *Art; Economic Relations, Economics and politics; Law; Morals; Philosophy; Politics as superstructure; Production relations; Religion; Social relations; Social system; State*
- Being (social)*
 -and consciousness-137-38
- Belgium*-299, 301, 462, 464, 469
- Benefices, beneficiaries*-371-80, 382-86, 430, 433
- Bonapartism*-452
- Bondsmen*-55-58, 64, 210, 285-87, 380, 431-32, 474
- Bourgeoisie*-66, 82, 244-46, 257-60, 263-64, 495
 -history of its development-244-45
 -and feudalism-235-36, 243-45
 -and the proletariat-48-49, 249
 -its economic, political and intellectual bankruptcy-258-59, 263
 See also *Capitalists; Petty bourgeoisie*

- Bourgeois economists*
 -criticism of-495-96
 See also *Vulgar political economy; Physiocrats*
- Bourgeois society*-51, 83, 112, 139, 243-44, 499
 See also *Capitalist society*
- Brasil*-498
- Britain*-53-54, 79, 104, 129, 172-74, 176, 181-82, 194-96, 220, 231, 264, 274, 279, 298, 299, 343, 345, 353, 389, 424, 429, 434, 453, 469-70, 471, 472-73, 492, 493-95, 514, 526-27, 529, 531, 545-46
 -expropriation of the peasants from the land-34-35, 210, 213-14, 272
 -and India-71, 73
- Burghers*-59-65, 460-63, 466, 467, 470
 -and monarchy-466-67
- Byzantine Empire*-45
- Byzantium*-124
- C**
- Capital*-32, 34-35, 42, 44, 84, 102-03, 114, 118, 121-26, 129, 131-34, 152, 155-58, 159-60, 163, 167-68, 175-79, 193, 210-15, 218-19, 221-26, 230, 232-33, 253-54, 256, 519-20
 -original formation of capital -119-36
 -and wage-labour-121, 136
 -industrial-35-36, 122, 170, 179-80, 192
 -monetary-121, 123-25, 129-32, 158-60, 230
 -merchant's-155-58, 178, 181, 246
 -usurer's-see *Usurer's capital*
 -estate-44
 -interest-bearing-167-68, 178-79
- See also *Primitive accumulation of capital*
- Capitalist ground-rent*
 -genesis of-188-228
- Capitalist mode of production*
 -138-39, 142, 143-45, 147, 155, 157, 159-62, 166-67, 175-77, 179, 185, 189-91, 192-96, 199, 203, 214, 217, 219-20, 224-25, 227-28, 243-64, 272, 478-79, 499
 -its history and tendency of its development-155-58, 159-60, 163-64, 194, 209-15, 225, 227, 244-46, 248-51, 272, 479-80
 -its contradictions-138-39, 248, 251, 254-55
 -capitalist appropriation-see *Appropriation*
 -as material conditions for communism-139, 233, 261-62, 272
 -necessity of transition from capitalist production to socially controlled production -263-64, 265-66, 478
 -and distribution of products -254
- See also *Anarchy in capitalist production; Bourgeoisie; Capital; Capitalists; Competition; Crises; Genesis of capitalist production relations; Industry; Labour; Labourpower, conditions for its sale; Large-scale industry; Proletariat; Property; Workers; World-market*
- Capitalists*-34, 113, 122-23, 132-34, 142, 146, 161, 167-68, 174-75, 192, 211, 247-49, 252, 256-57, 272, 453, 520
 See also *Bourgeoisie*
- Capitalist society*-145, 257-59, 475, 479

- See also *Bourgeois society*;
Capitalist mode of production
- Carthage*-194
- Castes*-75, 493
- Catholicism*-535
- Chance*-455, 522-23
 See also *Necessity and accident*
- China*-52
- Christianity*-70, 235, 366, 427, 505
 -primitive-482-86, 544
- Church*-154, 366-69, 370-74, 382-83, 428, 431-32
 See also *Clergy*
- Civilisation*-41, 72, 389, 391, 393, 397-98, 435, 444-45, 454-59
- Civil society*-137, 490, 492
- Clan (Celtic)*-94, 239, 477, 479
- Classes*-48-51, 213-14, 243, 320, 458, 528-29, 540
 -their origin-41-42, 50, 239-42, 263, 364-65, 400, 420-21, 441-42, 444-45, 447-48, 453, 456
 -as a product of economic relations-243, 364-65, 490-91, 539-40
 -antagonism between-242, 253-54, 262, 390, 409-18, 458
 -their abolition-261-63, 454
 -in ancient society-38, 39, 48-49, 50-51, 399-400, 405-07, 409-10, 420-21, 448-49, 451, 456
 -in feudal society-39-40, 48-49, 50-51, 52-66, 396-70, 433, 452
 -in bourgeois society-48-49, 253-54, 452-53
 See also *Class struggle*
- Class struggle*-50, 262, 390, 450-54, 501, 522, 527-28
 -in slave-owning society-447-48
 -under feudalism-43-44, 50
 -in bourgeois society-51, 454
- Clergy*-55, 57-61, 64, 65, 81, 377, 382, 467
- Code Civil*-291
 See also *Code Napoléon*
- Code Napoléon*-529
 See also *Code Civil*
- Coloni*-119, 369, 386-87, 426-27, 431-33
- Colonies*-67, 492-94, 498, 526
- Comitia*
 -centuriata-421
 -curiata-418, 420-21
- Commendation*-378, 433
- Commercial wars of the 17th and 18th centuries*-251
- Commodity*-31-32, 141, 155-57, 227, 246-47, 249-51, 403, 445
- Commodity-production*-141, 155-58, 166, 210-14, 264-65, 363-64, 399, 403, 441-42, 454-56, 477, 519-20
- Communism, consanguineous*-543-44
- Communism, primaeval*-518
- Communism (a social-economic formation)*-259-60, 263-66, 272
 -abolishing of classes-263
 -dying out of the state-262
 -integral development of individual-264-65, 272
 -material pre-conditions for-233, 260-62, 272-73
- Communism, scientific*
 -antagonism between scientific and utopian communism-501-02
- Community, communal property*
 -50, 84-88, 91-92, 97-99, 103-13, 116, 185, 238-41, 274, 294-97, 438, 442, 454, 479, 510-11, 544
 -primaeval-50, 99, 104-12, 234, 238-39, 241, 294-96

- ancient-88-90, 92-96, 108, 113, 400
- Asiatic-85-88, 92, 95, 96, 105, 107, 109, 113, 200, 233, 241, 295, 364-65
- in India-50, 73-75, 88, 104, 194, 199, 239, 241, 438, 477, 478, 489, 504, 519, 526
- among the Germanic peoples-91-97, 113, 238, 294, 476-77, 510-11
- Russian; prospects for its development-241-42, 270, 271, 294, 363, 475, 477, 478, 480, 519, 544
- Southern Slav household community (*zadruga*)-478, 480, 544
- among the Slavs-84, 88, 104, 113
- in Java-519-20
- in France-544
- in Ireland-51, 284
- Polish and Rumanian-87, 216
- in Mexico and Peru-88, 104
- among the ancient Celts-88, 104, 477
- in Sweden-275
- agricultural community, its distinctive features-294-97
- possibility of its direct transformation into modern socialist common ownership of all means of production-477, 479, 481
- disintegration and ruin of community together with the property relations on which it is based-99, 107-12, 221
See also *Almänningar*, *Mark*
- Competition*-34, 49, 244, 250, 494, 497-98
- and monopoly-497
- Conquest and its role in history*
-39, 45-47, 71-72, 104, 517, 528
- Consumption*
-at lower stages of society-454
-its dependence on the development of productive forces-491
-personal consumption of feudal lords-520
See also *Distribution of products*
- Contradiction*
-between socialised production and capitalistic appropriation-247-48, 252, 254-55
-between relations of production and productive forces-137-38
- Contrat social*-535
- Cooperation*-245
- Copyholders*-369-70, 376-80
- Cortes*-79-82
- Corvée system, corvée peasant*-57, 64, 140, 142, 198, 199-207, 216, 232, 285, 288-92, 370, 432, 462, 520
- Cottagers*-125, 151-52
- Country*-see *Town and country*
- Counts in the Frankish state*-376-77, 379-84, 431
- Craft industry, crafts*-40-41, 42-45, 49, 52, 90, 92-93, 113, 115-16, 125, 127, 220-21, 236, 245, 246-47, 403, 407, 439, 444, 447, 461
-handicraftsman as a producer of commodities-230, 245-46, 249-50
-transformation of handicraft into manufacture-251
- Credit*-168, 176, 495-96, 498
-banking and credit system-177
-credit associations-169

See also *Banks*
Crédit mobilier-174
Crises-263-64
 -under capitalism-254-56, 258
 -commercial-445, 456
Crown lands-371, 372, 375-76
Crusades-433, 536
 -and position of the peasants
 -287
Curia-411, 418, 419, 421

D

Day-labourers-62, 131, 210, 274
Death taxes-57
Democracy-28, 410
 -military-442
 -military democracy in Ancient Rome-419
 -primitive-448
Democratic republic-410, 453
Demotes-93, 408
Denmark-300, 337, 472, 511
Despotism, Asiatic-29, 70, 75, 87, 239, 240, 363
Differential rent-214, 218
Distribution of products-254
 -its relation with the mode of production and technique-539-40
Division of labour-37-45, 57, 242, 246, 263, 400, 403-04, 440, 442, 444, 448, 454-56, 493-96, 514, 525-27, 530, 539-40
 -first great social division of labour-437, 444
 -second great social division of labour-37, 240, 400, 403, 441, 444
 -between the two sexes under gentile order-436, 439-40
 -in the community-239-40
 -and guilds-493, 514
 -and manufacture-493, 514
 -within the family-143, 240, 440
 -division of material and mental labour-41, 44, 241-42, 263
 -separation of industry and commerce-41
 -and slavery-241
 -separation of town and country-see *Town and country*
 -and development of productive forces-37
 -and different forms of property-37-41
 -and division into classes-41-42, 263, 448
 -and international relations-493
Domain-365
Domestic industry-40-51, 90, 194, 199, 204, 205, 221, 233
 -domestic handicrafts-439

E

East, Orient
 -and peculiarities of its political and economic history-504-05
 See also *Asia*
East India-72
East India Company
 -Dutch-70-71
 -British-70
Economic and politico-economic categories as abstract expressions of the real, transitory historic social relations-83, 492-502
Economic development-83, 493-502
Economic formation-480
 See also *Social-economic formation*
Economic history-542
Economic necessity-530, 540
Economic relations-101-02, 492, 495, 529-31, 539-40

See also *Basis and super-structure*

Economics and politics-243, 364-65, 463, 522-24, 526-28, 531-32, 539-42

Egypt-72, 187, 504

Emigration (forced) in Ancient Greece and Rome-67-68

"*Emperor's Law*" (*Kaiserrecht*) of the 13th and 14th centuries-276

English bourgeois revolution of the 17th century-492

Enlightenment-510

Equality-234-38

-in primitive community-234, 238-39

-among the Greeks and Romans-234

-ideas of equality in feudal society-235-36

-in Christianity-235

-ideas of equality in bourgeois society-236-37

Estates-38, 50-51, 55-58, 64-66, 501, 502

Estrangement-28, 136, 162, 214

Ethiopia-142

Europe-52, 68, 72-73, 79, 82, 235-36, 241, 298-300, 301, 309, 434, 451, 465, 469-71, 473, 530

-Western-235, 300, 463, 475-78, 480-81

-Southern-305

Exchange-42, 110, 112, 114, 128, 243, 246, 249-50, 255, 260, 311-12, 364, 402, 437, 442, 444-45, 454-56, 461, 477, 490, 526, 539
See also *Trade*

Expropriation of immediate producers-145, 147-54, 161, 192, 209, 227, 248, 272, 273, 289-50

F

Family-38, 85, 443, 529, 533

-in primitive society-521

-division of labour in primitive family-240, 436-37, 439-40

-in slave-owning society-521, 525

-and production in the Middle Ages-247, 250

-among Germans-95

-machinery and labourer's family-253

See also *Monogamy; Punaluan family*

Far East-463

Farmer's rent-232

Farmers-150-53, 211, 228, 520

Farm-labourers-151-52

Father right-401, 411, 413, 440, 443, 521

Fellaheen-505

Feudalism-28, 40-45, 51, 52-65, 78-79, 82, 84, 104, 117, 119, 129, 140-41, 147-54, 156, 163-66, 185, 192, 198, 200-07, 208-20, 231, 235-37, 244-46, 249-51, 284-89, 433, 452, 460-71, 472-73, 492-93, 499-501, 508, 510, 517, 520, 543, 545

See also *Middle Ages; Serfdom*;

Feudal tenure-148, 372-75, 380

Finland-307

Flanders-71, 352, 461, 469

Force-232, 239, 240, 242, 263, 327, 532

-its role in history-144, 532

See also *Conquest and its role in history; Expropriation of immediate producers*

France-54, 65, 77-79, 104, 134, 174, 179, 208, 220, 274, 279, 284, 299, 301, 343, 346, 429,

431, 434, 452-53, 460, 469, 471,
472, 473, 529, 531, 538, 544
Frankish kingdom-276, 354, 364-
88, 430-34, 464-65
Free peasants-147, 209-10, 214,
216, 220, 245, 285, 287, 290,
292, 364-65, 384, 386-88, 428,
430, 432, 433, 460-61, 468, 469
Friesland-352

G

- Gaul*-45, 79, 301-04, 312, 314,
317, 326, 328, 364, 365, 367,
369, 383, 386, 388, 422, 424,
428
"General pfennig"-59
*Genesis of capitalist production
relations*
-dissolution of pre-capitalist
relationship of worker to the
objective conditions of la-
bour-112-19
-separation of labour from the
objective conditions of la-
bour-118-36, 162
Gens-50, 435-38
-gentile order and the state-
450-52
-dissolution of gentile order-
435-41, 443, 446-48
-Greek-398-99, 400-01, 403-
04, 406-09, 446-47, 518
-Greek gentile constitution
and the state-398-401
-dissolution of Greek gentile
constitution-398-404, 406-07,
435
-Roman-97, 410-19, 518
Roman gentile constitution and
the state-419-22, 435, 445-
46
-among Germans-274-76, 362,
429, 434, 446, 511, 512-13
-among American Indians-
435-37, 518
- See also *Gentile order*
Gentile order, gentile society-
398-404, 406-09, 410-13, 429,
434, 435-51, 457-58
See also *Father right; Gens;*
Mother right
German Empire-452-53
Germanic tribes-95, 274-75, 302-
10, 312, 314-18, 321-27, 329-
31, 339-40, 344-49, 361-62, 422-
24
-Pliny's classification of tribes
-312-13, 350-59
-principal dialects-359-60
Germans, ancient-235, 274, 301-
60, 422-24, 428-29, 433-35, 446,
512-13
-migration-see *Migration of
the peoples*
-their role in history-433-35
-Franks-361-88
See also *Community; Mark*
Germany-47, 52-66, 79, 220, 274-
93, 299-302, 310, 319, 320-23,
330-36, 340-42, 344-49, 372,
389, 409, 423-24, 427-29, 435,
460, 463-64, 469, 471-73, 503,
506-09, 514, 523, 526, 531, 538-
39, 540-42, 544-45
Gold and silver-142, 439, 442,
463, 525
Great French Revolution-405,
510
-and peasantry-290-91
Great geographical discoveries-
236, 251
Greece, Ancient-29, 39, 67, 91, 93,
109-10, 240-42, 269, 301, 332,
391, 396-97, 398-410, 446, 512,
517
See also *Athens, Ancient;*
Attica
Ground-rent-35, 83, 161, 179,
187, 188-91, 193, 195-96, 201,
206, 214, 215-20, 222-26, 232

- its pre-capitalist forms-164, 187-88, 189-90, 195-220, 225, 232
- See also *Absolute rent*; *Capitalist ground-rent*; *Differential rent*; *Labour-rent*; *Metayer rent*; *Money-rent*; *Ryot rents*
- Guild-system of medieval towns, guilds*-40, 43, 52, 60-63, 93, 113, 116, 123-24, 127, 135, 212-13, 244-45, 247-49, 251, 283, 461, 491, 493, 514, 545
- guild-master-15, 50, 51, 113-14, 124
- journeyman-40-41, 43, 50, 51, 62-63, 114, 124

H

- Hanseatic League*-52-53, 461
- Heroic Age*-441-42
- in Ancient Greece-396-97, 398-99, 419
- Hetaerism*-446, 533
- Hindustan*-69-70, 71, 73, 75-76, 504
- Hinduism*-70
- Historical materialism*-137-39, 265, 524, 527, 534
- Historism*-491-501
- History*
- objective character of historical development-490-92, 522-24, 540-42
- as a natural process-523
- as a successive change of historical stages-491
- inconsistency of the idealist conception of-489-93, 499-500
- role of the masses and of the individual in-523-24, 541-42
- role of force in-531-32
- role of chance in-541-42
- See also *Ancient history*;

- Materialist conception of history*
- Holland*-70, 462, 471, 472, 546
- Holy Roman Empire*-427, 538
- Horsemen*-51, 163, 421
- Hungary*-48, 539

I

- Idealism*-138
- Ideology*-132, 529-30, 534-36, 540-42
- See also *Art*; *Law*; *Philosophy*; *Politics as superstructure*; *Religion*
- India*-50, 52-53, 69-76, 199, 236, 238-39, 299
- Indian community-50, 73-76, 87-88, 104, 194, 199, 238, 241, 438, 477-79, 504, 519, 526
- British rule in India-69-76, 207, 239, 504
- Indians, American*-67, 104, 393, 394, 396
- Iroquois-401, 413, 422
- Pueblo Indians-395, 396
- gentile order of-435-37
- Industrial reserve army*-253, 256-57
- Industry*-35, 36, 39, 52-54, 56, 84, 109, 113, 131, 210, 364, 398, 407, 410, 420, 432, 525-26
- See also *Craft industry*; *Domestic industry*; *Large-scale industry*; *Manufacture*
- Inquisition*-81
- Interest*-161, 164-66, 180-83, 445, 456
- Ireland*-50, 264, 301
- Iron, its role in history*-440-41
- Islam*-483
- Italy*-45, 53, 69, 71, 212, 236, 279, 302, 304, 305, 314, 326, 332, 336, 337, 422, 424, 426, 469, 471, 473, 484, 543

J

- Japan*-148
Java-519
Joint-stock companies-257-59
Junkers, Prussian-452
Jurists-57-58, 467, 529

K

- Kingdom of Jerusalem*-543
Knights in Germany of the 14th-16th centuries-54-57

L

- Labour*-41, 85, 86, 123-26, 133, 135-36, 140, 141, 142, 233, 236, 241-42, 269, 456-57
 -dissolution of the pre-capitalist relations of worker to the objective conditions of labour-112-19
 -separation of labour from the objective conditions of labour-118-36, 162
 -alienation of labour-135
 -division of-see *Division of labour*
 -wage-labour-84, 102, 103, 121, 132, 136, 242, 246-49, 260-61, 456, 520
 -surplus labour-84, 141-42, 176, 190-95, 198-212, 215, 217, 219, 223, 230, 520
 See also *Labour-market*
Labour-market-125-27, 149
 -necessary conditions for creation of-125-26, 144-47, 217-72
Labour-power, conditions for its sale-118-19, 126-29, 145, 236, 240, 256, 456
Labour-rent-198-204, 206, 209, 215, 232
Landed property-30-36, 40, 42, 45, 83-84, 85, 96-98, 102-08, 110-11, 114-15, 154, 184-88, 190-91, 209-10, 215-23, 224-29, 232, 274, 284, 292, 363-70, 399, 446, 452, 459, 505, 511
 -Asiatic form of-see *Asia*
 -ancient form of-88-91, 92, 95-96, 110-11, 112-13
 -Germanic form of property; its distinction from oriental and ancient forms of property-91-97, 110-13
 -communal-See *Community*
 -in Ancient Rome-45, 422, 426, 505-06
 -in Ancient Athens-398, 402-03, 405-07, 446
 -feudal-28, 30-31, 33, 34-35, 39-40, 185-86, 220, 284-85, 364-88, 495, 504, 513-14
 -small-scale-33, 85, 185, 199, 209-29, 274, 292-93, 426, 505
 See also *Ager publicus*; *Allodium*; *Capitalist ground-rent*; *Community*; *Ground-rent*; *Latifundia in Ancient Rome*; *Mark*; *Nobility*; *Peasantry*; *Property*; *Proprietorship of land parcels*; *Quiritary property*
Landlord-377-79, 386
Large-scale industry-131, 221, 229, 242, 244-46, 251-55, 292, 440
 -world trade as its necessary prerequisite-498
 -and manufacture-493
 -and division of labour-493
Latifundia in Ancient Rome-194, 336, 426, 432
Law-241-42
 -as superstructure-137-38, 522-23, 528-29, 531, 534-36, 540-41

- Roman-235, 279, 288, 321-22, 369, 411-12, 424, 457, 467
 - old mark law-282-83, 286
 - English-529
 - Athenian popular law-399
 - French-529
 - See also *Code Napoléon*;
"Emperor's Law" of the 13th and 14th centuries; *Law of the Twelve Tables*; *Lex Alamannorum*; *Riparian law*; *Sachsenspiegel*; *Tribal laws of the 5-9th cent.*
 - Law of the Twelve Tables*-411-12
 - of history-523
 - Laws*
 - laws of commodity production-251, 255, 455-56, 525
 - social-265
 - Leap of humanity from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom*-265
 - Leges Barbarorum*-225, 510
 - See also *Lex Alamannorum*;
Tribal laws
 - Levant*-53, 236, 461
 - Lex Alamannorum*-544
 - Licinian agrarian law*-39
 - Lithuania*-471
 - Livonia*-337
 - Lorraine*-464
 - Lumpenproletariat*-46, 62
- M**
- Machine, machinery*
 - its significance-244-46, 252-54, 458, 498
 - and division of labour-493-94
 - Man*-111-12
 - rise of man from the animal world-238, 241, 265
 - under communism-264
 - Manufacture*-48, 123, 130-31, 194, 236-37, 244-47, 251, 410, 493, 514
 - transformation of handicrafts into manufacture-251
 - transformation of manufacture into modern industry-244
 - Maritime commerce*-see *Trade*
 - Mark*-186, 238-39, 251, 274-93, 361-62, 429-30, 432, 434, 477, 511, 513, 544
 - its establishment-275-76, 283-84
 - partition of the land-279-82
 - legislation, administration and jurisdiction-282-83
 - seizure of land by feudal lords-284-85
 - rights of lords and peasants-286-87
 - peasants' dispossession and enslavement by the lords-285-86
 - constitution of-449
 - disintegration of-361, 363-64
 - Market*-246-51, 253-54
 - world-market-130-31, 133, 142, 191-92, 210, 251, 493, 498, 546
 - See also *Exchange*; *Trade*
 - Marriage*
 - in Roman gens-411-12, 414-17
 - transition from the pairing family to monogamy-440, 442
 - See also *Monogamy*
 - Masses*
 - their role in history-500, 541
 - and the individual-541
 - Materialism*
 - English materialism of the 17th century-530
 - French materialism of the 18th century-530-31

- dialectical-138, 202-03, 496-98
 - historical-See *Historical materialism*
 - See also *Materialist conception of history*
 - Materialist conception of history*-137-39, 200-01, 243-45, 268, 390, 479-80, 489-503, 522-24, 534-36, 539-42
 - Means of production*-144, 245-49, 256-65
 - Mercantilism*-192, 536
 - Merchants*-41, 123, 127, 128, 129, 444, 445, 455, 457
 - Mesopotamia*-71, 512
 - Metal*
 - processing of metal by ancient Germans-342-43, 423-24
 - processing of metal at the highest stage of barbarism-397, 439
 - Metaphysics, its opposition to dialectics*-532
 - Metayer rent*-133, 232
 - Mexico*-82, 88
 - Middle Ages*-28, 39, 42-44, 48, 51, 65, 79, 84, 92, 94, 140-41, 168, 180, 181, 183, 194, 195, 206, 212, 245, 246, 247, 250, 283, 284, 294, 295, 361, 435, 444, 456, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 474, 483, 514, 516
 - Migration of the peoples, Völkerwanderung*-48, 68, 89, 283, 284, 301-05, 309, 313, 314, 317, 332, 337, 343, 345-46, 362, 472
 - Military system*
 - in Ancient Greece-404, 406, 408
 - in the period of the decline of feudalism-468-72
 - among the Franks-375-88, 431
 - See also *Retinue, retainers*
 - Mode of production*-109, 110, 124, 138, 155, 157, 195, 199, 203, 243-60, 269, 402, 492, 493, 499
 - pre-capitalist-109-10, 124, 138, 141, 155, 157, 163, 195, 269, 273
 - Asiatic (oriental)-71, 72, 73, 74, 109, 138-39, 163
 - capitalist-see *Capitalist mode of production*
 - Monarchy*-28, 41, 78
 - absolute-78-82, 452, 472, 530
 - based on the social estates-472
 - Monetary system*-191
 - Money, monetary wealth*-84, 120, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 131, 134, 158, 159, 163, 164, 165, 166, 176, 196, 255, 311, 335, 401, 403, 438, 442, 445, 446, 455, 456, 462, 463, 526-27
 - Money-rent*-165, 207-15
 - Monogamy*-401, 411, 434, 440, 442, 446, 457, 459, 521, 533
 - Monopoly*
 - and competition-32, 497
 - of landed property-32, 33, 34, 184, 185, 187, 190
 - in industry-36
 - of the means of production-141-42, 175
 - Monts-de-piété*-168
 - Morals*-531
 - Mortgage*-217-18, 401, 446, 456
 - Mother right, matriarchy*-434, 440, 521, 533
- N
- Nation*-37, 38, 41, 483
 - formation of nations-464-66, 484

- formation of national states-
234, 465, 467-68, 470, 471,
473, 537-38
- Natural economy*-140, 156, 158,
194, 195, 205-06, 462, 485
- Naucraries*-404, 407
- Necessity and accident*
-their role in history-522-23,
541-42
- Netherlands*-53, 328, 545
- New Mexico*-395, 396
- Nobility*-31, 40, 41, 54, 55, 56,
57, 58, 59, 60, 64, 65, 66, 79,
80, 81, 284, 288-91, 452, 459-64,
467, 468, 470, 471, 506-08
- Non-economic pressure*-200
- Norway*-339, 358
- Normandy*-543
- O**
- Opposition of town and country*
-see *Town and Country*
- P**
- Palestine*-543
- Palmyra*-72, 504
- Pan-Slavism*-270
- Pastoral tribes*-83-85, 104, 105
106, 107, 395, 438, 444
See also *Animal husbandry*
- Patricians*
-in Germany-59-61, 64, 65
-in Ancient Rome-50, 51, 93,
108, 118, 160, 165, 418, 419,
422
- Pauperism*-150, 153, 154
- Peasantry*
-in ancient world-39, 160,
220, 272, 401, 422, 426, 427,
431, 474
-in the Middle Ages-28, 31,
40, 42, 48-51, 54, 55, 57, 58,
64-65, 140, 147, 149, 151,
154, 159, 165-66, 199, 210,
216, 230, 237, 245-46, 285,
286, 287, 289-90, 364-68, 369,
371, 372, 373, 374, 376-80,
384, 385, 386, 387, 430-31,
432, 433, 434, 460-62, 467,
474, 507-08
-in the new era-35, 66, 131,
210, 213, 219, 229, 275, 289,
291-93
-expropriation of peasants in
the period of primitive ac-
cumulation of capital-146-
54
See also *Expropriation of
immediate producers*
- Peasant War in Germany*-60, 62,
63, 65, 286-88, 472, 484, 506-09,
545
- Persia*-72, 239, 483, 504, 512
- Peru*-82, 88, 104
- Petra*-72, 504
- Petty bourgeoisie*
-in Germany (early 16th cent.)
-63, 66
-its position in capitalist so-
ciety-501-02
-its double nature-501-02
- Philosophy*-529, 531
-as superstructure-137, 243,
522, 529-31, 535-36, 540
-English philosophy of the
17th and 18th centuries-
530-31
-German philosophy of the
18th and 19th centuries-
530-31
-French philosophy of the
18th century-530-31
See also *Idealism; Materia-
lism*
- Phratry*-411, 418, 419, 436,
443, 447
-among Greeks-398-99, 401,
403, 404, 407

- See also *Curia*
- Phyle*-93
- Physiocrats*-191-94, 232, 520, 536
- Plebeians*-41, 43, 483
- in Ancient Rome-46, 50, 51, 92, 117, 118, 160, 165, 273, 420, 422, 449
- in Germany (14th-beginning of the 16th cent.)-58-59, 63, 65, 507-09
- plebeian opposition in German towns (14th-beginning of the 16th cent.)-62-63
- Poland*-48, 183, 216, 471
- Police*-41, 409
- police, gendarmerie in Ancient Greece-409, 450
- Polis (ancient)*-484
- Politics as superstructure*-28
29, 137, 163, 200, 490-92, 522-23, 531, 534-36, 540-42
- Poor-law* (in England)-153
- Popular assembly*-442
- in Ancient Athens-398, 406, 408
- in Ancient Rome-see *Comitia*
- in Frankish kingdom-430
- Population*-108
- surplus population among the barbarians-66-67
- limitation of population size in the ancient states-67
- and emigration-67
- See also *Emigration (forced) in Ancient Greece and Rome; Migration of the peoples*
- Populus Romanus*-420
- Portugal*-77, 471
- Pre-capitalist relations*-158-61
- See also *Capitalist ground-rent*
- Precaria*-370, 374
- Pre-proletariat*-545
- Price of land*-214, 218, 219, 222, 224, 225, 227
- Primitive accumulation of capital*-126, 143-46, 152, 185-86, 271
- eviction of the peasants from the land-146-54, 125-26, 289
- See also *Expropriation of immediate producers*
- Primitive social formation*-509-10
- Primitive history*-274, 518
- See also *Ancient history*
- Primitive communal economy*-155
- Primitive society*-518
- See also *Communism, consanguineous; Community; Gentile order; Primitive communal economy; Primitive social formation; Primitive times; Tribal organisation*
- Primitive times*-297
- Princes*-41, 54-57, 58, 59, 64, 65, 288, 289, 290
- Production*-37, 83-84, 102-08, 110-11, 128-29, 155, 243-45, 259-65, 268, 402, 432, 454-56, 461, 491, 498, 522, 525-28
- original conditions of production-102-08
- and exchange-128-29, 243, 247, 251, 255, 454-56, 525-27
- and appropriation-see *Appropriation*
- See also *Capitalist mode of production; Commodity-production; Industry; Means of production; Mode of production*
- Production relations*-37-39, 137, 138, 150, 199, 200, 203, 231, 243
- their restricted nature in the community-96-99
- in ancient world-141
- under feudalism-131, 140-41, 145, 199-207

- socialised product under communism-263-64
- historical process of the origin of capitalist production relations-see *Genesis of capitalist production relations*
- under capitalism-137, 145-46
- their correspondence to a definite stage of development of the material productive forces-137, 200
- conflict between material productive forces and production relations-137
- reproduction of production relations-203
See also *Productive forces*
- Productive forces*-37-40, 46, 109, 110, 112, 120, 137, 138, 139, 141, 238, 241, 242, 244-45, 255-60, 263-64, 490-92
- dialectics of development of productive forces and relations of production-138-39, 490-92, 496-98, 500
- and social relations-490-92, 500
- and mode of production-244-45, 255-56, 259, 491-92
- underdeveloped productive forces in Ancient Greece and Rome-67
- and surplus population among barbarians-67-68
- under capitalism-139, 244-45, 255, 256, 263
- under communism-259-60, 264
See also *Production relations*
- Product of labour*-246-50
- in the Middle Ages-194, 246-47
- under capitalism-246-48, 260-61
- surplus-product-See *Surplus-product*
- Profit*-161, 197, 199, 209, 211, 212, 217, 223, 232
- average-189, 207, 211, 213, 219
- surplus-217-19
- Proletariat, proletarian*-35, 39, 49, 66, 146, 149, 152, 154, 249, 252, 259, 261, 272, 434, 452-53, 478, 480
- Roman-39, 50, 272, 420, 421
- historical mission of the proletariat-253, 261, 266
See also *Workers*
- Property*-39, 105-06, 110-11
- prerequisites for its origin-103-07
- working individuals' ownership of the natural conditions of their labour-84-86
- primitive forms of property-85-86
- dissolution of pre-capitalist relations of worker to the objective conditions of production-112-19
- tribal-38, 87, 106, 107
- communal-see *Community; Mark*
- ancient form of-58, 89-96, 162
- Asiatic form of-86, 88, 92, 95-96, 107, 111, 113, 188, 200, 503
- Germanic form of-92-96, 111, 113
- feudal-28, 40, 148, 162, 405
- corporative-40
- state-258-62
- bourgeois-405, 495
- social-261, 262, 264, 272
- private-28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 38, 39, 42, 49, 89-92, 95, 98, 175, 177, 185, 227, 245, 247, 272, 398, 402, 405, 406, 467

See also *Landed property*
Proprietorship of land parcels, small-scale peasant agriculture
 -41, 89, 112, 217-21, 224-26, 228, 269, 278, 292, 426, 449
Prospects for development of pre-capitalist countries-480-81
Prostitution-446
Protection money-57
Protestantism-535
Proudhonism-177, 489-90
Prussia-291, 523, 537, 538
 -East Prussia-303
Punaluan family-521

Q

Quiritary property-91, 92

R

Race-540
Reasoning, thinking-535-36
Reformation-152-54, 289, 472, 473, 506, 523, 545-46
Religion-58, 141, 488, 503-05, 544-45
 -as superstructure-137, 523, 529, 531, 534-36
 See also *Anabaptists; Catholicism; Christianity; Church; Clergy; Hinduism; Islam; Protestantism; Reformation;*
Renaissance-79, 473
Rent-see *Ground-rent*
Rent in kind-196, 204-10, 214, 215, 216, 232
Rent-payment, tribute-148, 164, 199, 210, 212, 214, 215, 285, 286, 288, 289, 290, 370, 431
Republic, democratic-see *Democratic republic*
Retinue, retainers-40, 149
 -among Franks-377-79, 430
 See also *Antrustions*

Revolts, rebellions, uprisings
 -of peasants and urban plebeians in the Middle Ages-62-63, 65, 387, 483, 507-09
 -religious uprisings in the Muslim world-483
 -popular uprisings of the Christian West-483
 -in Spain in the 15th and 17th centuries-see *Spain*
 -rising of the Stellinga in Saxony-387
 -Pannonian revolt-328
 See also *Peasant War in Germany.*

Revolution-259-61, 266

Revolutions of 1640 and 1688 in England-492

Revolutions (1789-94, 1830 and 1848) in France and liberation of German peasantry-291-92

Rex-419, 420, 422, 442

Right of inheritance-529

See also *Law*

Riparian law-279

Roman Empire-39, 46, 165, 237, 241, 333-34, 336, 387, 424, 425, 427, 431, 433, 434, 449

-Byzantine Empire-see *Byzantine Empire*

-Western Roman Empire-see *Western Roman Empire*

-and Christianity-482-83, 485

Roman law-see *Law*

Roman Republic-158, 422, 425, 431

Rome, Ancient-39, 45, 51, 67, 91, 93, 96, 97, 99, 110, 118, 124, 133, 158-60, 163, 165, 194, 195, 208, 234, 241, 269, 273, 324-29, 334-37, 391, 410-22, 424, 425, 426, 427, 431, 433, 435, 445, 446, 448, 449, 450, 452, 457, 482, 505

-and ancient Germans-278-79,

- 304, 306, 307, 309, 314, 326-37, 339, 340, 341, 424, 433
- Rumania*-216
- Runic script*-341, 344
- Russia*-48, 50, 241, 270, 271, 272, 301, 471, 473, 475-77, 479, 480-81, 519, 544
- prospects for revolution in-480-81
- Russian peasant communism*-477
- See also *Agrarian communism*
- Ryot rents*-232
- S**
- Sachsenspiegel*-516
- Savagery*-298-301, 392-93, 398-435, 480
- Scandinavia*-274, 301, 312, 336, 339, 341, 344, 359, 429, 511
- Northern-307, 310
- Science*-241-42, 458
- and technique-540
- Scotland*-154, 472
- Second social formation*-297
- See also *Social-economic formation*
- Secularisation of church lands*-372
- Seehandlung*-258
- Serfdom*-33, 103, 105, 107, 111, 116, 117, 119, 131, 140, 143, 145, 146, 156, 188, 200, 232, 261, 297, 386, 434, 456, 468, 517
- serfs-28, 31, 40, 42, 48, 49, 50, 51, 55, 57, 58, 64, 103, 114, 119, 140, 146, 147, 166, 199, 202, 232, 245, 286, 288, 289, 290, 386, 387, 388, 430, 431, 433, 434, 460, 461, 469, 515
- See also *Second social formation*
- Sharecroppers*-215
- Sicily*-300, 332, 484
- Slave economy*-159, 161, 200, 216, 223
- Slavery, slave*-38, 40, 45-46, 48, 49, 50, 103, 105, 107, 108, 111, 114, 116, 117, 142, 163, 188, 232, 233, 234, 240-42, 261, 269, 439, 442, 443, 445, 456, 474, 484, 497
- in Ancient Rome-38, 39, 51, 108, 235, 240, 242, 269, 336, 421, 426, 427, 432, 434-35, 474, 484, 505
- in Ancient Greece-38, 240, 242, 269, 401, 404, 405, 407, 409, 410, 474
- old Germanic-516
- among Franks-386, 387
- Oriental domestic slavery-269, 435
- slave trade-see *Slave trade*
- in the USA-474, 484, 498
- See also *Ancient society; Athens, Ancient; Greece, Ancient; Rome, Ancient; Second social formation; Slave economy*
- Slave trade*-336-37, 427, 498
- Social-economic formation*-138, 139, 141, 142-43, 297
- See also *Economic formation; Primitive social formation; Second social formation*
- Socialism*-243, 244, 265
- scientific socialism as the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement-268
- proletarian-482
- spurious-258
- utopian-501
- Socialist society*
- Social relations*-490-92
- and productive forces-490-92, 496-500
- and community

- Social system*
 -and economic relations-490-92
- Society*-239
 -as product of men's reciprocal action-139, 490
 -decisive role of economic relations for-243, 261-62, 390, 490-92
 -division into classes-see *Classes; Class Struggle*
 -primitive-see *Primitive social formation*
 -ancient-see *Ancient society*
 -feudal-see *Feudalism*
 -bourgeois-see *Bourgeois society*
 -communist-see *Communism (a social-economic formation)*
- Solon's reform* (594 B.C.)-405
- Spain*-52, 77-82, 279, 301, 304, 424, 469, 470, 473, 483
 -uprisings in Spain in the 15th, 17th and 19th centuries
- State*-28-29, 41, 259-63, 398, 449-55, 457
 -its origin-239, 390, 398, 449, 450, 454, 527
 -distinguishing features-450-52
 -its role in class society-257-63, 450-52, 457
 -as superstructure-137, 490, 527-28, 535, 540
 -state power is also economic power-532, 540
 -its dying out-261-62
 -and gentile constitution-398-400, 403-09
 -in Asian countries-29, 241, 504; see also *Asia*
 -Athenian-398-410, 449-52
 -Roman-413, 418-22, 429, 449-52
 -among the Germans-429-31, 449
 -feudal-28, 262, 452, 538
 -bourgeois-29, 262, 452-53
 -free-262
 -and universal suffrage-453
 See also *Democratic republic; Monarchy*
- Struggle for existence in society*-252, 262-63, 265
- Superstructure*-see *Basis and superstructure*
- Surinam*-498
- Surplus-product*-87, 163, 188, 194, 207, 208, 216-17, 261, 264-65
 -excess surplus-product-218
- Surplus-value*-143, 161, 188, 190-95, 198, 201, 204, 206, 209, 211, 212, 214, 217, 218, 223, 224, 230, 520
- Sweden*-220, 275, 314, 334, 337, 340, 344, 358, 472
- Switzerland*-299, 409, 453, 469, 472
- Syria*-504

T

- Taborites*-484, 545
- Tartary*-71, 504
- Taxes*-41, 55, 59, 64, 165, 192, 200, 221, 230, 451, 485
- Tenants*-31, 34, 35, 49, 119, 122, 125, 128, 131, 147, 153, 197, 209-13, 215, 222-23, 369, 426, 463, 469, 515
 See also *Yeomen, yeomanry*
- Thrace*-304, 310
- Tithe-paying peasants (Zinsbauern)*-55, 57, 64, 365, 370
- Tithes*-64
 -church-58, 140, 153, 195-97

- Town*-41-45, 128, 441
 -ancient-38, 39, 88, 90, 94, 96, 130-31, 484-85
 -in the Middle Ages-40, 42-45, 48, 52-54, 55, 59-63, 79-82, 84, 93, 113, 287-88, 460-64, 467, 472-73, 506-07, 545
 -in Asia-87, 94, 109
Town and country-37-39, 40-45, 62-63, 109, 123-24, 130-31, 212-13, 403-04, 432, 444, 447
 -separation of town and country-37, 38, 40-42, 75, 493
 -opposition of town and country-38-42, 94, 444, 447, 457
 -abolition of contradiction between town and country-42
Trade, commerce-28, 39, 52-54, 57, 73, 92, 93, 124, 128, 130-31, 155, 156, 169, 210, 332-40, 346, 399, 400, 404, 407, 409, 420, 423-25, 442, 446, 460, 461, 491, 504, 525-28, 536
 -world commerce-54, 130, 236, 461, 498
 See also *Capital; Exchange; Money; World-market*
Tribal laws of the 5-9th cent.
 -278, 343, 362, 378
Tribal organisation-41, 87-89, 107
 See also *Tribe*
Tribe-38, 50, 87-89, 93-95, 98-99, 104, 105, 106, 110-11, 428, 436-39, 441-42, 446, 448, 484
 -Grecian-398-99, 401, 404, 405, 407, 408, 484; see also *Phyle*
 -Roman-410-12, 418, 419, 420, 421, 484
 -Germanic-see *Germanic Tribes*
 -American Indian-104, 436, 437
 -Celtic-301
 -territorial-93, 407, 408, 421
 -kinship-93, 407
Turkey-81, 517
- U**
- Usurer's capital*-158-83
 -its role in development of production-159, 161-63
 -struggle against usurer's capital-163, 167-75
 -and Asiatic mode of production-163
Usury, usurers-122, 123, 128, 160, 162, 164, 165, 167, 171, 179, 181, 400, 401, 403, 425, 445, 446, 462, 485
- V**
- Value*-125, 189, 237
 -use-value-84, 119, 127, 132, 142, 157, 179, 198
 -exchange-value-119, 127-32, 135, 142, 157, 197-98
 -surplus-value-see *Surplus-value*
Vassals-54, 55-57, 231, 283, 380
 See also *Feudal tenure*
Vulgar political economy-190-93
- W**
- Wage-workers*-see *Labour; Workers*
Wallachia-344
Wars-45-47, 105, 108, 240, 251, 304, 309-10, 442-43, 537
 -of Germans against Romans-340-41
 -second Punic War-413
 -Roman campaigns against Germans-314-23
 -conquest of Roman Empire by barbarians-45-46
 -wars of Charlemagne-285

- during Protestant Reformation-289
 - Thirty Years' War-289, 516, 537
 - of the Roses in England-471, 473
 - of the Holy League in Spain-78-80
 - Hundred Years' War in France-473
 - of independence in Spain-78
 - in Oriental countries-71, 504
 - revolutionary and Napoleonic-540-41
 - and gentile order-436, 439, 442-43
 - and feudalism-46-47, 462-64, 469, 470, 471, 473
 - See also *Commercial wars of the 17th and 18th centuries; Crusades; Force; Peasant War in Germany*
 - Wealth**-100, 458
 - in ancient world-100
 - in bourgeois society-100-01
 - under communism-101
 - in the form of money-see *Money*
 - Western Frankish Kingdom**-285, 543
 - Western Roman Empire**-340, 482
 - Will**-529
 - in Ancient Athens-457
 - in Ancient Rome-457
 - among Germans-457
 - See also *Right of inheritance*
 - Woman**
 - in primitive society-436, 440
 - among Romans-414-17
 - among Germans-434
 - conditions for her emancipation-440
 - Workers**-102, 112, 114, 121, 123, 145, 162, 233, 252-59, 293
 - free workers-114, 119-21, 123, 125, 144-45
 - wage-workers-120, 130, 132, 145, 147, 161, 249, 259, 272
 - agricultural labourers-35, 118, 147, 152, 210-11, 213
 - as natural allies of peasants-293
 - See also *Labour-power; Proletariat; Working-class*
 - Working-class**-32, 179, 245, 252
 - in the Roman Empire-482
 - working-class party-453
 - World-market**-130-31, 191-92
- Y**
- Yemen**-72, 504
 - Yeomen, yeomanry**-19, 150, 220, 469
- Z**
- Zealand**-338, 352

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ДОКАПИТАЛИСТИЧЕСКИЕ
СОЦИАЛЬНО-ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКИЕ
ФОРМАЦИИ

На английском языке