The Communist Manifesto

KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS
1818–1883 and 1820–1895

The Communist Manifesto

Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei

Translated from the German with AI (Claude) and edited



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The Communist Manifesto · Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1818–1883 and 1820–1895)

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INTRODUCTION

"A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of communism." Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* for a small society of German workers in London, the Communist League, and it was printed there in February 1848, weeks before revolution broke out across Europe.

Its argument is that all history is the history of class struggles. The bourgeoisie has swept away the feudal world, created astonishing productive forces and bound the globe into one market — and in doing so has made its own gravediggers, the proletariat. The communists, the Manifesto says, aim at the abolition of bourgeois private property, and it ends with its famous call: "Workers of all countries, unite!"

This is the German text of that first edition. The right-hand column is a new English translation.

Preamble

A spectre is haunting Europe: the communists declare their views.

P.1 A specter is haunting Europe—the specter of communism. All the powers of old Europe have joined in a holy hunt against this specter: the Pope and the Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police.[1]

P.2 Where is the opposition party that has not been decried as communist by its opponents in power? Where is the opposition party that has not hurled back the branding charge of communism, at the more advanced members of the opposition as well as at its reactionary adversaries?

P.3 Two things follow from this fact.

P.4 Communism is already acknowledged by all the European powers to be itself a power.

P.5 It is high time that the Communists openly set out their views, their aims and their tendencies before the whole world, and met this fairy tale of the specter of communism with a manifesto of the party itself.

P.6 To this end Communists of the most varied nationalities have gathered in London and drafted the following manifesto, which is being published in English, French, German, Italian, Flemish and Danish.

1 Klemens von Metternich, the Austrian chancellor, and François Guizot, chief minister of France's King Louis-Philippe, stood for the conservative order; both fell in the revolutions of 1848.

I. Bourgeois and Proletarians

The history of class struggles, the revolutionary rise of the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat it creates.

BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIANS

All history is class struggle; the bourgeoisie rises from feudal society and transforms the whole world.

1.1 The history of all society so far is the history of class struggles.[1]

1.2 Free man and slave, patrician and plebeian, baron and serf, guild master and journeyman—in a word, oppressor and oppressed—stood in constant opposition to one another and carried on an uninterrupted fight, now hidden, now open: a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary transformation of the whole of society or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

1.3 In the earlier epochs of history we find almost everywhere a complete division of society into various estates, a manifold gradation of social ranks. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages feudal lords, vassals, guild masters, journeymen, serfs—and, on top of that, further particular gradations within almost every one of these classes.

1.4 Modern bourgeois society, which has sprung from the ruins of feudal society, has not done away with class antagonisms. It

1 In the English edition of 1888 Engels added that this means all *written* history, since the communal societies of prehistory had not yet been discovered in 1847.

has only put new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

1.5 Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, is distinguished, however, by having simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is splitting more and more into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other—bourgeoisie and proletariat.

1.6 From the serfs of the Middle Ages came the outburghers of the earliest towns; from these outburghers the first elements of the bourgeoisie developed.[2]

1.7 The discovery of America and the voyage around Africa opened up new ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East Indian and Chinese markets, the colonization of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally gave commerce, shipping and industry an impetus never known before—and with it gave the revolutionary element in the crumbling feudal society a rapid development.

1.8 The feudal or guild organization of industry that had prevailed until then no longer sufficed for the demand that grew with the new markets. Manufacture took its place. The guild masters were pushed aside by the industrial middle class; the division of labor between the different corporations vanished before the division of labor within each individual workshop.[3]

1.9 But the markets kept growing, demand kept rising. Even manufacture no longer sufficed. Then steam and machinery revolutionized industrial production. Modern large-scale industry took the place of manufacture; the industrial millionaires, the commanders of whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeois, took the place of the industrial middle class.

1.10 Large-scale industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America prepared the way. The world

2 Pfahlbürger ("outburghers"): people who held the rights of a town's citizens while living outside or at the edge of its walls. In Section III the word appears in its later sense, a byword for small-town narrowness.

3 "Manufacture" here means the stage of workshop production by hand, with a division of labor but before machinery.

market has given commerce, shipping and communication by land an immense development. This in turn has reacted on the expansion of industry; and in the same measure as industry, commerce, shipping and railways expanded, the bourgeoisie developed, multiplied its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages.

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

1.12 Each of these stages in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance. An oppressed estate under the rule of the feudal lords; armed and self-governing associations in the commune; here an independent urban republic, there the taxable third estate of the monarchy; then, in the period of manufacture, a counterweight to the nobility in the monarchy of estates or the absolute monarchy, and indeed the chief foundation of the great monarchies generally—the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of large-scale industry and the world market, conquered for itself exclusive political rule in the modern representative state. The power of the modern state is only a committee that manages the common affairs of the whole bourgeois class.

1.13 The bourgeoisie has played a highly revolutionary role in history.

1.14 Wherever it has come to power, the bourgeoisie has destroyed all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn apart the motley feudal ties that bound people to their natural superiors, and has left no other bond between one human being and another than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment." It has drowned the holy raptures of pious fervor, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentality in the ice-cold water of egotistical calculation. It has dissolved personal dignity into exchange value, and in place of the countless chartered and duly earned freedoms it has set up that one unscrupulous freedom—free trade. In a word, for exploitation

veiled by religious and political illusions it has substituted open, shameless, direct, stark exploitation.[4]

1.15 The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and regarded with pious awe. It has turned the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science into its paid wage laborers.

1.16 The bourgeoisie has torn away the touchingly sentimental veil from the family relationship and reduced it to a pure money relationship.

1.17 The bourgeoisie has revealed how the brutal display of force that reactionaries so admire in the Middle Ages found its fitting complement in the most sluggish idleness. It was the first to show what human activity can accomplish. It has achieved wonders of quite another kind than Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts and Gothic cathedrals; it has carried out expeditions of quite another kind than the great migrations of peoples and the Crusades.

1.18 The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and thereby all social relations. Keeping the old mode of production unchanged was, by contrast, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant upheaval of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and movement distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, rusted-in relations, with their train of time-honored notions and views, are dissolved; all newly formed ones grow obsolete before they can harden. Everything fixed in rank and everything that stands still evaporates, everything holy is profaned, and people are at last compelled to look at their position in life and their relations with one another with sober eyes.[5]

1.19 The need for a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire globe. It must

4 "Cash payment" echoes Thomas Carlyle, who complained that cash payment had become the sole bond between people.

nestle in everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.

1.20 Through its exploitation of the world market the bourgeoisie has given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of reactionaries, it has pulled the national ground out from under the feet of industry. Age-old national industries have been destroyed and are still being destroyed daily. They are displaced by new industries, whose introduction becomes a matter of life and death for all civilized nations—by industries that no longer work up native raw materials, but raw materials drawn from the remotest zones, and whose products are consumed not only at home but in every part of the world at once. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the produce of the country, come new wants, which require the products of the most distant lands and climates for their satisfaction. In place of the old local and national self-sufficiency and seclusion come intercourse in every direction and the universal interdependence of nations. And as in material production, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrowness become more and more impossible, and out of the many national and local literatures a world literature takes shape.[6]

1.21 Through the rapid improvement of all instruments of production and the immensely eased means of communication, the bourgeoisie drags all nations, even the least developed, into civilization. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters all Chinese walls to the ground, with which it forces the most stubborn hatred of foreigners among non-Western peoples to capitulate. It compels all nations, if they do not want to perish, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce so-called civilization

5 "All that is solid melts into air" is Samuel Moore's famous free rendering of this sentence in the English translation of 1888; Marx's German pictures everything bound to the old estates (das Ständische) and everything static evaporating.
6 "World literature" (Weltliteratur) was Goethe's term, coined in the 1820s.

among themselves, that is, to become bourgeois. In a word, it creates a world after its own image.[7]

1.22 The bourgeoisie has subjected the countryside to the rule of the town. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country dependent on the town, so it has made the undeveloped and partly developed countries dependent on the civilized ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West.[8]

1.23 The bourgeoisie is doing away more and more with the scattered state of the means of production, of property and of population. It has agglomerated population, centralized the means of production and concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political centralization. Independent provinces, or provinces only loosely allied, with separate interests, laws, governments and tariffs, were pressed together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class interest, one customs frontier.

1.24 In its class rule of barely a hundred years the bourgeoisie has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than all past generations together. Subjugation of the forces of nature, machinery, the application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, the clearing of whole continents for cultivation, the making of rivers navigable, whole populations conjured out of the ground —what earlier century had any inkling that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labor?

1.25 But we have seen: the means of production and exchange on whose foundation the bourgeoisie built itself up were generated in feudal society. At a certain stage in the development of these means of production and exchange, the relations under

7 Here and in 1.22 the original uses nineteenth-century terms that rank peoples as more or less civilized; this edition renders them neutrally.

8 Idiotismus keeps the older sense of Greek idiōtēs, a private person cut off from public life: the isolation and narrowness of rural existence rather than stupidity.

which feudal society produced and exchanged—the feudal organization of agriculture and manufacture, in a word, feudal property relations—no longer corresponded to the productive forces already developed. They hindered production instead of furthering it. They turned into so many fetters. They had to be burst apart; they were burst apart.

1.26 Into their place stepped free competition, with the social and political constitution suited to it, and with the economic and political rule of the bourgeois class.

1.27 A similar movement is going on before our eyes. Bourgeois relations of production and exchange, bourgeois property relations—modern bourgeois society, which has conjured up such mighty means of production and exchange—is like the sorcerer who can no longer control the powers of the underworld that he has called up. For decades now the history of industry and commerce has been nothing but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern relations of production, against the property relations that are the conditions of life of the bourgeoisie and its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that, returning periodically, put the existence of the whole of bourgeois society in question, each time more threateningly. In these commercial crises a large part not only of the goods produced but even of the productive forces already created is regularly destroyed. In crises a social epidemic breaks out that would have seemed an absurdity to all earlier epochs—the epidemic of overproduction. Society suddenly finds itself thrown back into a state of momentary barbarism; a famine, a universal war of devastation, seem to have cut off all its means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem destroyed. And why? Because it has too much civilization, too many means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at its disposal no longer serve to advance bourgeois civilization and bourgeois property relations; on the contrary, they have grown too powerful for these relations and are held back by them, and as soon as they overcome this obstacle they throw the whole of bourgeois society into disorder and

endanger the existence of bourgeois property. Bourgeois relations have become too narrow to contain the wealth they have produced.—And how does the bourgeoisie get over its crises? On the one hand, by the enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets and the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. How, then? By paving the way for more extensive and more violent crises, and by diminishing the means of preventing them.

THE BOURGEOISIE'S GRAVEDIGGERS

Industry creates the proletariat, which grows, organizes as a class and must overthrow the bourgeoisie.

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

1.29 But the bourgeoisie has not only forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also begotten the men who will wield those weapons—the modern workers, the *proletarians*.

1.30 In the same measure as the bourgeoisie—that is, capital—develops, the proletariat develops too: the class of modern workers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital. These workers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity like every other article of commerce, and are therefore equally exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

1.31 Through the spread of machinery and the division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all independent character, and with it all appeal for the worker. He becomes a mere appendage of the machine, of whom only the simplest, most monotonous, most easily learned operation is required. The cost of the worker is therefore restricted almost entirely to the means of subsistence he needs for his upkeep and for the propagation of his kind. But the price of a commodity, and so also of labor, is equal to its cost of production. In the same measure, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the

wage decreases. What is more, in the same measure as machinery and the division of labor increase, the amount of labor also increases, whether by lengthening the working hours, by increasing the work demanded in a given time, by speeding up the machines, and so on.

1.32 Modern industry has turned the little workroom of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalist. Masses of workers, crowded into the factory, are organized like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under the supervision of a complete hierarchy of sergeants and officers. They are not only the bondsmen of the bourgeois class, of the bourgeois state; they are held in bondage every day and every hour by the machine, by the overseer, and above all by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself. The more openly this despotism proclaims gain to be its final aim, the more petty, the more hateful and the more embittering it is.

1.33 The less skill and exertion of strength manual labor requires—that is, the more modern industry develops—the more the labor of men is displaced by that of women and children. Differences of sex and age no longer have any social validity for the working class. There are only instruments of labor, which cost more or less according to their age and sex.

1.34 No sooner has the manufacturer finished exploiting the worker, so far that he receives his wages in cash, than the other sections of the bourgeoisie set upon him—the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker and so on.

1.35 The small middle strata of the past—the small industrialists, merchants and rentiers, the artisans and peasants—all these classes sink down into the proletariat: partly because their small capital does not suffice for the scale on which large-scale industry is carried on, and is swamped in competition with the bigger capitalists; partly because their skill is devalued by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.

1.36 The proletariat goes through various stages of development. Its struggle against the bourgeoisie begins with its existence.

1.37 At first individual workers fight, then the workers of one factory, then the workers of one trade in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attacks not only against the bourgeois relations of production; they direct them against the instruments of production themselves. They destroy competing foreign goods, they smash machines, they set factories on fire, they try to win back the vanished status of the medieval worker.

1.38 At this stage the workers form a mass scattered over the whole country and split up by competition. When workers hold together in masses, this is not yet the result of their own union but of the union of the bourgeoisie, which, to attain its own political ends, must set the whole proletariat in motion—and for the time being is still able to do so. At this stage, therefore, the proletarians fight not their enemies but the enemies of their enemies: the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois, the petty bourgeois. The whole historical movement is thus concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie; every victory won in this way is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

1.39 But with the development of industry the proletariat does not merely increase in number; it is crowded together in larger masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The interests and living conditions within the proletariat are more and more equalized, as machinery increasingly obliterates the differences between kinds of labor and nearly everywhere forces wages down to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the commercial crises that result from it, make the workers' wages ever more unstable; the unceasing improvement of machinery, developing ever faster, makes their whole position in life more and more insecure; more and more, the collisions between individual worker and individual bourgeois take on the character of collisions between

two classes. The workers begin by forming combinations against the bourgeois; they join together to defend their wages. They even found permanent associations in order to lay in provisions for these occasional revolts. Here and there the struggle breaks out in riots.

1.40 Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles is not the immediate success but the ever-widening union of the workers. It is helped along by the growing means of communication that large-scale industry creates and that put the workers of different localities in contact with one another. And contact is all that is needed to centralize the many local struggles, everywhere of the same character, into one national struggle, a class struggle. But every class struggle is a political struggle. And the union that the burghers of the Middle Ages, with their country lanes, needed centuries to achieve, the modern proletarians achieve in a few years with the railways.

1.41 This organization of the proletarians into a class, and with it into a political party, is continually being broken up again by competition among the workers themselves. But it rises again and again, stronger, firmer, mightier. It forces legal recognition of particular interests of the workers by taking advantage of divisions within the bourgeoisie. Thus the Ten Hours' Bill in England.[9]

1.42 The collisions within the old society in general further the development of the proletariat in many ways. The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant struggle: at first against the aristocracy; later against those sections of the bourgeoisie itself whose interests come into conflict with the progress of industry; and at all times against the bourgeoisie of every foreign country. In all these struggles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and so to drag it into the political movement. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the prolet-

9 The Ten Hours Act of 1847 limited the working day of women and young people in British textile mills to ten hours.

ariat with its own elements of education—that is, with weapons against itself.

1.43 Further, as we have seen, the advance of industry hurls whole sections of the ruling class down into the proletariat, or at least threatens their conditions of life. They too supply the proletariat with a mass of elements of education.

1.44 Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution within the ruling class—within the whole of the old society—takes on so violent, so glaring a character that a small part of the ruling class breaks away from it and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, earlier, a part of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a part of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat—in particular a part of the bourgeois ideologists, who have worked their way up to a theoretical understanding of the historical movement as a whole.

1.45 Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and perish with the rise of large-scale industry; the proletariat is its very own product.

1.46 The middle strata—the small manufacturer, the small merchant, the artisan, the peasant—all fight against the bourgeoisie to save their existence as middle strata from ruin. They are therefore not revolutionary but conservative. More than that, they are reactionary, for they try to turn back the wheel of history. If they are revolutionary, they are so in view of their impending passage into the proletariat; they then defend not their present but their future interests, and abandon their own standpoint to take up that of the proletariat.

1.47 The lumpenproletariat, that passive decay of the lowest layers of the old society, is here and there swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its whole situation in life,

however, will make it more willing to be bought for reactionary intrigues.[10]

1.48 The conditions of life of the old society are already annihilated in the conditions of life of the proletariat. The proletarian is without property; his relation to his wife and children has nothing in common any longer with bourgeois family relations; modern industrial labor, modern subjection to capital—the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany—has stripped him of every trace of national character. Law, morality and religion are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which just as many bourgeois interests lie hidden.

1.49 All earlier classes that won power sought to secure the position in life they had already acquired by subjecting the whole of society to the conditions of their own acquisition. The proletarians can win control of the productive forces of society only by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and with it every previous mode of appropriation. The proletarians have nothing of their own to secure; they have to destroy all previous private security and private insurance.

1.50 All previous movements were movements of minorities or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the independent movement of the immense majority in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of present society, cannot rise, cannot stand upright, without the whole superstructure of strata that make up official society being blown into the air.

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

1.52 In sketching the most general phases of the proletariat's development, we traced the more or less hidden civil war within existing society up to the point where it breaks out into open

10 Lumpenproletariat (from Lumpen, "rags"): the déclassé poor outside regular work, such as vagrants and petty criminals, whom Marx and Engels distinguished from the working class.

revolution and where the proletariat establishes its rule through the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

1.53 All society so far, as we have seen, has rested on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can at least eke out its servile existence. The serf, within serfdom, worked his way up to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of feudal absolutism, worked his way up to being a bourgeois. The modern worker, by contrast, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks ever deeper below the conditions of his own class. The worker becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops even faster than population and wealth. Here it becomes plain that the bourgeoisie is no longer fit to remain the ruling class of society and to impose the conditions of life of its class on society as an overriding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incapable of assuring its slave an existence even within his slavery, because it is compelled to let him sink into a state in which it has to feed him instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under it; that is, its life is no longer compatible with society.

1.54 The essential condition for the existence and rule of the bourgeois class is the accumulation of wealth in private hands, the formation and increase of capital. The condition of capital is wage labor. Wage labor rests exclusively on competition among the workers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary and unresisting agent is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the workers through competition with their revolutionary union through association. The development of large-scale industry therefore cuts from under the feet of the bourgeoisie the very foundation on which it produces and appropriates products. What it produces above all is its own gravediggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

II. Proletarians and Communists

What the communists want, their answers to bourgeois objections, and ten immediate measures.

PROLETARIANS AND COMMUNISTS

The Communists state their relation to the workers and their aim: abolishing bourgeois private property.

2.1 Proletarians and Communists

2.2 What is the relation of the Communists to the proletarians as a whole?

2.3 The Communists are not a separate party opposed to the other workers' parties.

2.4 They have no interests separate from the interests of the proletariat as a whole.

2.5 They set up no special principles of their own by which to shape the proletarian movement.

2.6 The Communists are distinguished from the other proletarian parties only by this: on the one hand, in the various national struggles of the proletarians they point out and bring to the fore the common interests of the entire proletariat, independent of nationality; on the other hand, in the various stages of development through which the struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie passes, they always represent the interest of the movement as a whole.

2.7 The Communists are therefore, in practice, the most resolute section of the workers' parties of every country, the section that always pushes further forward; in theory, they have the advantage over the rest of the mass of the proletariat of an

insight into the conditions, the course and the general results of the proletarian movement.

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

2.9 The theoretical propositions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles invented or discovered by this or that would-be reformer of the world.

2.10 They are merely general expressions of the actual relations of an existing class struggle, of a historical movement going on before our eyes. The abolition of existing property relations is not something peculiar to communism.

2.11 All property relations have been subject to constant historical replacement, to constant historical change.

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

2.13 What distinguishes communism is not the abolition of property in general but the abolition of bourgeois property.

2.14 But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the producing and appropriating of products that rests on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of some by others.

2.15 In this sense the Communists can sum up their theory in a single phrase: abolition of private property.[1]

2.16 We Communists have been reproached with wanting to abolish property personally acquired, earned by one's own labor—the property that is supposed to form the foundation of all personal freedom, activity and independence.

2.17 Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property! Do you mean the property of the petty bourgeois and the small peasant, which preceded bourgeois property? There is no need for us to

1 "Abolition" here renders Aufhebung, a word that can also mean "cancelling while preserving" in Hegel's sense; the Manifesto uses it alongside the plainer Abschaffung.

abolish that; the development of industry has abolished it and is abolishing it daily.

2.18 Or do you mean modern bourgeois private property?

2.19 But does wage labor, the labor of the proletarian, create property for him? Not at all. It creates capital—that is, the property that exploits wage labor and that can increase only on condition of begetting new wage labor to exploit afresh. Property in its present form moves within the antagonism between capital and wage labor. Let us look at both sides of this antagonism. To be a capitalist is to hold not merely a purely personal but a social position in production.

2.20 Capital is a collective product, and it can be set in motion only by the joint activity of many members of society—indeed, in the last resort, only by the joint activity of all its members.

2.21 Capital is therefore not a personal power; it is a social power.

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

2.23 Let us turn to wage labor.

2.24 The average price of wage labor is the minimum wage—that is, the sum of the means of subsistence necessary to keep the worker alive as a worker. What the wage laborer appropriates by his activity, therefore, merely suffices to reproduce his bare life. We by no means intend to abolish this personal appropriation of the products of labor for the reproduction of immediate life, an appropriation that leaves no net surplus that could give power over the labor of others. All we want to do away with is the miserable character of this appropriation, under which the worker lives only to increase capital, and lives only so far as the interest of the ruling class requires.

2.25 In bourgeois society living labor is only a means of increasing accumulated labor. In communist society accumulated labor is only a means of widening, enriching and furthering the life of the workers.

2.26 In bourgeois society, therefore, the past rules over the present; in communist society the present rules over the past. In bourgeois society capital is independent and has personality, while the active individual is dependent and has none.

2.27 And the abolition of this state of affairs the bourgeoisie calls the abolition of personality and freedom! And rightly so. What is at stake is indeed the abolition of bourgeois personality, independence and freedom.

2.28 Under the present bourgeois relations of production, freedom means free trade, free buying and selling.

2.29 But if haggling disappears, free haggling disappears too. All the talk of free haggling, like all the other brave words of our bourgeois about freedom, has meaning only in contrast with restricted haggling, with the enslaved burgher of the Middle Ages—not in contrast with the communist abolition of haggling, of bourgeois relations of production, and of the bourgeoisie itself.

2.30 You are horrified that we mean to abolish private property. But in your existing society private property is already abolished for nine-tenths of its members; it exists precisely because it does not exist for those nine-tenths. You reproach us, then, with meaning to abolish a form of property whose necessary precondition is that the immense majority of society has no property at all.

2.31 In a word, you reproach us with meaning to abolish your property. Quite so: that is just what we mean to do.

2.32 From the moment when labor can no longer be converted into capital, money or ground rent—in short, into a social power that can be monopolized—that is, from the moment when personal property can no longer turn into bourgeois property, from that moment, you declare, the person is abolished.

2.33 You admit, then, that by the person you mean no one other than the bourgeois, the bourgeois owner of property. And this person must indeed be abolished.

2.34 Communism deprives no one of the power to appropriate the products of society; it deprives them only of the power to subjugate the labor of others by means of that appropriation.

2.35 It has been objected that with the abolition of private property all activity will cease and universal laziness will set in.

2.36 By that reckoning, bourgeois society ought long ago to have perished of sloth; for those of its members who work acquire nothing, and those who acquire do not work. The whole objection comes down to the tautology that there will be no more wage labor once there is no more capital.

2.37 All the objections raised against the communist mode of appropriating and producing material products have been extended in just the same way to the appropriation and production of intellectual products. Just as, for the bourgeois, the end of class property means the end of production itself, so for him the end of class culture is identical with the end of culture altogether.

2.38 The culture whose loss he laments is, for the enormous majority, a training to act as a machine.

2.39 But do not quarrel with us so long as you measure the abolition of bourgeois property by your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law and so on. Your very ideas are products of bourgeois relations of production and property, just as your law is only the will of your class raised into statute—a will whose content is given by the material conditions of life of your class.

2.40 The self-interested notion that leads you to turn your relations of production and property from historical relations, transient in the course of production, into eternal laws of nature and reason—this you share with every ruling class that has perished. What you grasp in the case of ancient property, what you grasp in the case of feudal property, you may no longer grasp in the case of bourgeois property.

FAMILY, NATION AND IDEAS

The Manifesto answers charges that communism abolishes the family, the nation, religion and eternal truths.

2.41 Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous design of the Communists.

2.42 On what does the present family, the bourgeois family, rest? On capital, on private gain. In its fully developed form it exists only for the bourgeoisie; but it finds its complement in the enforced absence of family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution.

2.43 The bourgeois family naturally falls away when this complement of it falls away, and both vanish with the vanishing of capital.

2.44 Do you reproach us with wanting to abolish the exploitation of children by their parents? To this crime we plead guilty. But, you say, we abolish the most intimate of relations when we replace education at home with social education.

2.45 And is your education not determined by society too? By the social conditions within which you educate, by the more or less direct intervention of society, through schools and so on? The Communists do not invent the influence of society on education; they only change its character, and rescue education from the influence of a ruling class.

2.46 The bourgeois talk about family and education, about the intimate relation of parent and child, grows all the more disgusting the more, as a result of large-scale industry, all family ties among the proletarians are torn apart and their children turned into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labor.

2.47 But you Communists want to introduce the community of women, the whole bourgeoisie shouts at us in chorus.

2.48 The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and naturally can think of nothing else

than that the lot of being held in common will likewise fall to women.

2.49 He has no inkling that the real point is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production.

2.50 For the rest, nothing is more ridiculous than the high-minded moral horror of our bourgeois at the official community of women supposedly planned by the Communists. The Communists have no need to introduce the community of women; it has existed almost always.

2.51 Our bourgeois, not content with having the wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of official prostitution, take their chief pleasure in seducing one another's wives.

2.52 Bourgeois marriage is in reality a community of wives. At most the Communists could be reproached with wanting to introduce an official, openly avowed community of women in place of a hypocritically concealed one. For the rest, it goes without saying that with the abolition of the present relations of production the community of women that springs from them—that is, official and unofficial prostitution—will also disappear.

2.53 The Communists have further been reproached with wanting to abolish the fatherland, nationality.

2.54 The workers have no fatherland. No one can take from them what they do not have. Since the proletariat must first win political power, raise itself to be the national class, constitute itself as the nation, it is so far itself national, though by no means in the bourgeois sense.

2.55 The national separations and antagonisms between peoples are already vanishing more and more with the development of the bourgeoisie, with free trade, the world market, the uniformity of industrial production and the conditions of life that correspond to it.

2.56 The rule of the proletariat will make them vanish still more. United action, at least of the civilized countries, is one of the first conditions for its emancipation.

2.57 In the measure that the exploitation of one individual by another is abolished, the exploitation of one nation by another is abolished too.

2.58 As the antagonism between classes within the nation falls away, so does the hostility of nations toward one another.

2.59 The charges brought against communism from a religious, philosophical and, in general, ideological standpoint deserve no fuller discussion.

2.60 Does it take deep insight to grasp that with people's conditions of life, with their social relations, with their social existence, their notions, views and concepts—in a word, their consciousness—change too?

2.61 What else does the history of ideas prove than that intellectual production changes its shape as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of an age have only ever been the ideas of its ruling class.

2.62 People speak of ideas that revolutionize a whole society; in saying so they merely express the fact that within the old society the elements of a new one have taken shape, and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps pace with the dissolution of the old conditions of life.

2.63 When the ancient world was going under, the ancient religions were overcome by the Christian religion. When Christian ideas succumbed in the eighteenth century to the ideas of the Enlightenment, feudal society was fighting its death struggle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisie. The ideas of freedom of conscience and freedom of religion merely expressed the rule of free competition in the domain of conscience.

2.64 "But," it will be said, "religious, moral, philosophical, political, legal ideas and so on have of course been modified in the course of historical development. Yet religion, morality, philosophy, politics and law have always survived these changes."

2.65 "There are, moreover, eternal truths, such as freedom, justice and so on, that are common to all states of society. But communism abolishes eternal truths; it abolishes religion and

morality instead of giving them a new form; it therefore contradicts all historical development so far."

2.66 What does this accusation come down to? The history of all society so far has moved in class antagonisms, which took different forms in different epochs.

2.67 Whatever form it may have taken, the exploitation of one part of society by another is a fact common to all past centuries. No wonder, then, that the social consciousness of every century, for all its multiplicity and variety, moves within certain common forms—forms, forms of consciousness, that will dissolve completely only when class antagonism disappears altogether.

2.68 The communist revolution is the most radical break with traditional property relations; no wonder that its course of development involves the most radical break with traditional ideas.

2.69 But let us leave aside the bourgeoisie's objections to communism.

TEN MEASURES

The proletariat wins political power, takes over production step by step, and classes disappear.

2.70 We saw above that the first step in the workers' revolution is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class—to win the battle for democracy.

2.71 The proletariat will use its political rule to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie; to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state, that is, of the proletariat organized as the ruling class; and to increase the total mass of productive forces as rapidly as possible.

2.72 At first, of course, this can be done only by means of despotic inroads on the right of property and on bourgeois relations of production—that is, by measures that appear economically inadequate and untenable, but that in the course of the movement drive beyond themselves and are unavoidable as a means of revolutionizing the entire mode of production.

2.73 These measures will of course differ from country to country.

2.74 In the most advanced countries, however, the following could be applied fairly generally:

2.75 1) Expropriation of landed property, and use of ground rent for state expenditure.

2.76 2) A heavily progressive tax.

2.77 3) Abolition of the right of inheritance.

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

2.79 5) Centralization of credit in the hands of the state, through a national bank with state capital and an exclusive monopoly.

2.80 6) Centralization of all means of transport in the hands of the state.

2.81 7) Expansion of national factories and instruments of production; bringing wasteland under cultivation and improving the soil according to a common plan.

2.82 8) Equal obligation of all to work; establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.

2.83 9) Combination of agriculture and industry; working toward the gradual elimination of the antagonism between town and country.

2.84 10) Public and free education of all children. Abolition of children's factory labor in its present form. Combination of education with material production, etc., etc.

2.85 When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared and all production has been concentrated in the hands of associated individuals, public power loses its political character. Political power, properly so called, is the organized power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat, in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, necessarily unites as a class; if by means of a revolution it makes itself the ruling class, and as the ruling class sweeps away the old relations of production by force—then, along with these relations of production, it sweeps away the conditions for the existence of class ant-

agonism, of classes in general, and thereby its own rule as a class.

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

III. Socialist and Communist Literature

A critique of rival socialisms: feudal, petty-bourgeois, "true" German, conservative and utopian.

SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST LITERATURE

The Manifesto surveys and criticizes the rival socialist doctrines of its day.

3.1 Socialist and communist literature

REACTIONARY SOCIALISM: FEUDAL SOCIALISM

Aristocrats and clergy attack the bourgeoisie in the workers' name while defending feudal interests.

3.2 By their historical position, the French and English aristocracies were called upon to write pamphlets against modern bourgeois society. In the French July Revolution of 1830 and in the English reform movement, they had once again gone down before the hated upstart. A serious political struggle was now out of the question. Only a literary struggle remained to them. But even in the field of literature, the old phrases of the Restoration period had become impossible. To arouse sympathy, the aristocracy had to appear to lose sight of its own interests and to draw up its indictment of the bourgeoisie solely in the interest of the exploited working class. In this way it prepared for itself the satisfaction of being allowed to sing lampoons about its new

master and whisper more or less ominous prophecies in his ear.[1]

3.3 Thus arose feudal socialism: half lament, half lampoon; half echo of the past, half menace of the future; at times striking the bourgeoisie to the heart with its bitter, witty, cutting judgment, but always comic in its total inability to grasp the march of modern history.

3.4 They waved the proletarian beggar's sack in their hands as a banner, to rally the people behind them. But whenever the people followed them, it saw the old feudal coats of arms on their backsides and dispersed with loud and irreverent laughter.

3.5 A section of the French Legitimists and Young England put on this spectacle.[2]

3.6 When the feudalists prove that their mode of exploitation was different from bourgeois exploitation, they merely forget that they exploited under entirely different circumstances and conditions, which are now outlived. When they show that under their rule the modern proletariat never existed, they merely forget that the modern bourgeoisie was precisely a necessary offspring of their own social order.

3.7 For that matter, they conceal the reactionary character of their criticism so little that their chief accusation against the bourgeoisie is precisely this: that under its regime a class is developing that will blow the whole old social order sky-high.

3.8 What they reproach the bourgeoisie with is not so much that it creates a proletariat at all, as that it creates a revolutionary proletariat.

3.9 In political practice, therefore, they join in every coercive measure against the working class; and in everyday life, despite all their high-flown phrases, they stoop to pick up the golden

1 The July Revolution of 1830 overthrew the restored Bourbon monarchy in France; the English reform movement won the Reform Act of 1832, which gave the vote to much of the industrial middle class.

2 Legitimists: supporters of the Bourbon dynasty deposed in 1830. Young England: a group of Tory aristocrats of the 1840s, among them Benjamin Disraeli, who idealized a paternalist feudal past.

apples and to barter loyalty, love and honor for the traffic in wool, sugar beets and schnapps.[3]

3.10 As the priest has always gone hand in hand with the feudal lord, so has clerical socialism with feudal socialism.

3.11 Nothing is easier than to give Christian asceticism a socialist veneer. Did not Christianity, too, rail against private property, against marriage, against the state? Did it not preach in their place charity and begging, celibacy and mortification of the flesh, the monastic cell and the Church? Holy socialism is merely the holy water with which the priest blesses the aristocrat's resentment.

PETTY-BOURGEOIS SOCIALISM

Sismondi's school exposes capitalism's ills but wants to bring back guilds and small property.

3.12 The feudal aristocracy is not the only class that was overthrown by the bourgeoisie, not the only class whose conditions of life withered and died in modern bourgeois society. The medieval burghers and the small peasantry were the forerunners of the modern bourgeoisie. In countries less developed industrially and commercially, this class still vegetates alongside the rising bourgeoisie.

3.13 In countries where modern civilization has developed, a new petty bourgeoisie has formed. It hovers between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and keeps re-forming as a supplementary part of bourgeois society, but its members are constantly being hurled down into the proletariat by competition. Indeed, with the development of large-scale industry, they even see the approach of a moment when they will vanish entirely as an independent section of modern society, to be replaced in commerce, manufacture and agriculture by overseers and hired servants.

3.14 In countries like France, where the peasants make up far more than half the population, it was natural that writers who

took the side of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie should apply the yardstick of the petty bourgeois and the small peasant to their criticism of the bourgeois regime, and should take up the workers' cause from the standpoint of the petty bourgeoisie. Thus arose petty-bourgeois socialism. Sismondi is the head of this literature, not only in France but in England too.[4]

3.15 This socialism dissected with great acuteness the contradictions in modern relations of production. It laid bare the hypocritical apologetics of the economists. It proved irrefutably the destructive effects of machinery and the division of labor; the concentration of capital and landed property; overproduction; crises; the inevitable ruin of small burghers and peasants; the misery of the proletariat; the anarchy in production; the glaring inequalities in the distribution of wealth; the industrial war of extermination between nations; the dissolution of old morals, of old family relations, of old nationalities.

3.16 In its positive content, however, this socialism aims either to restore the old means of production and exchange, and with them the old property relations and the old society; or else to cram the modern means of production and exchange back by force into the framework of the old property relations—a framework they have burst apart, and were bound to burst apart. In either case it is at once reactionary and utopian.

3.17 Guilds in manufacture and patriarchal farming on the land: these are its last words.

3.18 In its further development this tendency has petered out in a cowardly hangover.

3 The Prussian landed nobility ran their estates as businesses, producing wool, beet sugar and potato spirits.

4 Jean-Charles-Léonard Simonde de Sismondi (1773–1842), Swiss economist and historian, an early critic of industrial capitalism and its crises.

GERMAN OR "TRUE" SOCIALISM

German writers turn French socialism into philosophical phrases that serve the governments and petty bourgeoisie.

3.19 The socialist and communist literature of France, which arose under the pressure of a ruling bourgeoisie and is the literary expression of the struggle against that rule, was imported into Germany at a time when the bourgeoisie there had only just begun its struggle against feudal absolutism.

3.20 German philosophers, half-philosophers and aesthetes greedily seized on this literature, forgetting only that when these writings immigrated from France, French social conditions had not immigrated to Germany along with them. Confronted with German conditions, the French literature lost all immediate practical significance and took on a purely literary look. It could only appear as idle speculation about true society, about the realization of the human essence. In the same way, for the German philosophers of the eighteenth century the demands of the first French Revolution meant no more than demands of "practical reason" in general, and the expressed will of the revolutionary French bourgeoisie signified in their eyes the laws of pure will, of will as it ought to be, of truly human will.[5]

3.21 The sole work of the German literati consisted in bringing the new French ideas into harmony with their old philosophical conscience—or rather, in appropriating the French ideas from their own philosophical standpoint.

3.22 This appropriation took place in the same way one appropriates any foreign language: by translation.

3.23 It is well known how monks wrote insipid lives of Catholic saints over manuscripts on which the classical works of ancient pagan times had been recorded. The German literati did the reverse with profane French literature. They wrote their philo-

5 "Practical reason" and the "pure will" are Kant's terms; the jibe is that German philosophy turned a political revolution into moral theory.

sophical nonsense beneath the French original. Beneath the French critique of money relations, for instance, they wrote "alienation of the human essence"; beneath the French critique of the bourgeois state they wrote "abolition of the rule of the abstract universal," and so on.[6]

3.24 This slipping of their philosophical phrases beneath the French arguments they christened "philosophy of action," "true socialism," "German science of socialism," "philosophical foundation of socialism," and so on.[7]

3.25 French socialist and communist literature was thus downright emasculated. And since, in German hands, it ceased to express the struggle of one class against another, the German felt conscious of having overcome French one-sidedness; of having represented not true needs but the need for truth, not the interests of the proletarian but the interests of the human essence, of man in general—man who belongs to no class, who belongs to no reality at all, but only to the misty heaven of philosophical fantasy.

3.26 Meanwhile this German socialism—which took its clumsy schoolboy exercises so seriously and solemnly, and trumpeted them abroad like a fairground barker—gradually lost its pedantic innocence.

3.27 The struggle of the German, and especially the Prussian, bourgeoisie against the feudal lords and the absolute monarchy—in a word, the liberal movement—grew more serious.

3.28 True socialism was thus offered the longed-for opportunity to confront the political movement with socialist demands:

3.29 to hurl the traditional anathemas against liberalism, against representative government, against bourgeois competition, bourgeois freedom of the press, bourgeois law, bourgeois liberty and equality, and to preach to the masses that they had nothing to gain from this bourgeois movement and, on the con-

6 Medieval scribes often scraped and reused old parchment; such palimpsests sometimes preserve classical texts beneath the later writing.

7 "True socialism" was a current among German writers of the mid-1840s, such as Karl Grün and Moses Hess; "philosophy of action" was Hess's phrase.

trary, everything to lose. German socialism forgot, just in time, that the French criticism whose witless echo it was presupposed modern bourgeois society, with its corresponding material conditions of life and an appropriate political constitution—the very things that had yet to be fought for in Germany.

3.30 It served the absolute governments of Germany, with their retinue of priests, schoolmasters, boorish country squires and bureaucrats, as a welcome scarecrow against the menacingly rising bourgeoisie.

3.31 It was the sugary complement to the bitter floggings and musket balls with which these same governments dealt with German workers' uprisings.[8]

3.32 If true socialism thus became a weapon in the hands of the governments against the German bourgeoisie, it also directly represented a reactionary interest: the interest of the German small-town burghers. In Germany the petty bourgeoisie—handed down from the sixteenth century, and ever since then cropping up again here in various forms—is the real social basis of the existing state of affairs.

3.33 To preserve it is to preserve the existing state of affairs in Germany. From the industrial and political rule of the bourgeoisie it fears certain ruin: on the one hand from the concentration of capital, on the other from the rise of a revolutionary proletariat. True socialism seemed to it to kill both these flies with one swat. It spread like an epidemic.

3.34 The robe woven of speculative cobwebs, embroidered with the flowers of fine rhetoric, steeped in the dew of lovesick sentiment—this extravagant robe, in which the German socialists wrapped their few bony eternal truths, only increased the sale of their wares among this public.

3.35 For its part, German socialism recognized more and more clearly its own vocation as the grandiloquent representative of these small-town burghers.

3.36 It proclaimed the German nation to be the model nation, and the German philistine to be the model human being. To

8 Chiefly the Silesian weavers' revolt of 1844, put down by Prussian troops.

every vileness of this philistine it gave a hidden, higher, socialist meaning, in which it signified its opposite. It drew the final conclusion by coming out directly against the crudely destructive tendency of communism and proclaiming its own impartial elevation above all class struggles. With very few exceptions, everything that circulates in Germany as supposedly socialist and communist writing belongs to the domain of this filthy, enervating literature.

CONSERVATIVE OR BOURGEOIS SOCIALISM

Reformers want to remedy social ills while keeping bourgeois society and its property relations intact.

3.37 A section of the bourgeoisie wishes to remedy *social grievances* in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society.

3.38 To this category belong economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working classes, organizers of charity, abolishers of cruelty to animals, founders of temperance societies, small-time reformers of every motley sort. And this bourgeois socialism has even been worked out into complete systems.

3.39 As an example we cite Proudhon's *Philosophie de la misère* [The Philosophy of Poverty].[9]

3.40 The socialist bourgeois want the conditions of life of modern society without the struggles and dangers that necessarily arise from them. They want the existing society minus the elements that revolutionize and dissolve it. They want the bourgeoisie without the proletariat. The bourgeoisie naturally imagines the world in which it rules to be the best of worlds. Bourgeois socialism works up this comforting notion into a half-system or a whole one. When it calls on the proletariat to put its systems into practice and so enter the New Jerusalem, all it

9 Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865), French socialist; Marx attacked this 1846 book in *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847).

really demands is that the proletariat stay within present-day society, but cast off its hateful ideas about it.

3.41 A second, less systematic and more practical form of socialism sought to sour the working class on every revolutionary movement by showing that what could benefit it was not this or that political change, but only a change in the material conditions of life, in economic relations. By a change in the material conditions of life, however, this socialism by no means understands the abolition of bourgeois relations of production, which is possible only by revolutionary means, but administrative improvements carried out on the basis of these relations of production—improvements, then, that change nothing in the relation between capital and wage labor, but at best lower the cost of the bourgeoisie's rule and simplify its state budget.

3.42 Bourgeois socialism attains its fitting expression only when it becomes a mere figure of speech.

3.43 Free trade! in the interest of the working class. Protective tariffs! in the interest of the working class. Solitary-confinement prisons! in the interest of the working class. That is the last word of bourgeois socialism, and the only one it seriously means.

3.44 Its socialism consists precisely in the assertion that the bourgeois are bourgeois—in the interest of the working class.

CRITICAL-UTOPIAN SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM

Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen criticize society well but offer invented plans instead of class struggle.

3.45 We are not speaking here of the literature that, in every great modern revolution, gave voice to the demands of the proletariat. (Writings of Babeuf, etc.)[10]

3.46 The first attempts of the proletariat to assert its own class interest directly—in a time of general upheaval, in the period when feudal society was being overthrown—necessarily failed, owing both to the undeveloped state of the proletariat itself and

10 François-Noël "Gracchus" Babeuf (1760–1797) led the Conspiracy of the Equals against the French Directory and was executed.

to the absence of the material conditions for its liberation, conditions that are only produced by the bourgeois epoch. The revolutionary literature that accompanied these first movements of the proletariat is necessarily reactionary in content. It teaches a universal asceticism and a crude leveling.

3.47 The socialist and communist systems properly so called, the systems of Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, etc., spring up in the early, undeveloped period of the struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie that we described above. (See "Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.")[11]

3.48 The inventors of these systems do see the antagonism of classes, as well as the action of the dissolving elements within the prevailing society itself. But on the side of the proletariat they see no historical initiative, no political movement of its own.

3.49 Since the development of class antagonism keeps pace with the development of industry, they find just as little in the way of material conditions for the liberation of the proletariat, and they search for a social science, for social laws, that will create these conditions.

3.50 In place of social activity must come their own personal inventiveness; in place of the historical conditions of liberation, fantastic ones; in place of the gradual organization of the proletariat into a class, an organization of society specially cooked up by themselves. For them, the future history of the world resolves itself into the propaganda and practical execution of their social plans.

3.51 They are indeed aware that in their plans they chiefly represent the interest of the working class as the most suffering class. Only from this point of view—as the most suffering class—does the proletariat exist for them.

3.52 But the undeveloped form of the class struggle, as well as their own situation in life, leads them to believe themselves far

11 Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825) and Charles Fourier (1772–1837), French social theorists; Robert Owen (1771–1858), Welsh manufacturer and founder of cooperative communities.

above that class antagonism. They want to improve the conditions of life of every member of society, even the best-off. They therefore appeal constantly to society at large, without distinction—indeed, by preference to the ruling class. After all, one need only understand their system to recognize it as the best possible plan for the best possible society.

3.53 They therefore reject all political, and especially all revolutionary, action; they want to reach their goal by peaceful means, and they try, through small experiments that naturally fail, through the power of example, to clear a path for the new social gospel.

3.54 At a time when the proletariat is still highly undeveloped, and so still conceives its own position in a fantastic way, this fantastic picture of future society corresponds to the proletariat's first dim, instinctive yearning for a general transformation of society.

3.55 But these socialist and communist writings also contain critical elements. They attack every foundation of existing society. They have therefore supplied highly valuable material for enlightening the workers. Their positive propositions about the society of the future—for example, the abolition of the antagonism between town and country, of the family, of private gain, of wage labor; the proclamation of social harmony; the transformation of the state into a mere administration of production—all these propositions merely express the disappearance of class antagonism, an antagonism that is only just beginning to develop and that they know only in its first shapeless vagueness. These propositions themselves, therefore, still have a purely utopian meaning.

3.56 The significance of critical-utopian socialism and communism stands in inverse proportion to historical development. In the same measure as the class struggle develops and takes shape, this fantastic elevation above it, this fantastic combat against it, loses all practical value and all theoretical justification. So although the originators of these systems were in many respects revolutionary, their disciples in every case form reac-

tionary sects. They cling to the old views of their masters in the face of the proletariat's further historical development. They therefore consistently try to blunt the class struggle once more and to reconcile the antagonisms. They still dream of realizing their social utopias by experiment—founding isolated phalanstères, establishing home colonies, setting up a little Icaria, a pocket edition of the New Jerusalem—and to build all these castles in Spain they are forced to appeal to the philanthropy of bourgeois hearts and moneybags. Gradually they sink into the category of the reactionary or conservative socialists described above, and differ from them only by a more systematic pedantry and by their fanatical, superstitious faith in the miraculous effects of their social science.[12]

3.57 They therefore bitterly oppose all political movement on the part of the workers, which could only spring from blind unbelief in the new gospel.

3.58 The Owenites in England and the Fourierists in France react against, respectively, the Chartists and the Reformists.[13]

12 Phalanstères were Fourier's planned communal buildings; "home colonies" were Owen's cooperative settlements; Icaria was Étienne Cabet's imagined utopia, which his followers tried to found in America.

13 The Chartists were the British working-class movement for universal male suffrage; the French Reformists were the democratic republicans around the newspaper *La Réforme*.

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

The communists' alliances in each country, and the closing call to the workers of all countries.

POSITION OF THE COMMUNISTS TOWARD THE OPPOSITION PARTIES

The Communists' alliances in each country, and the closing call to the workers of all countries.

4.1 After Section II, the relation of the Communists to the working-class parties already constituted is self-evident—that is, their relation to the Chartists in England and the agrarian reformers in North America.[1]

4.2 The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims and interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present they also represent the future of the movement. In France the Communists ally themselves with the socialist-democratic party against the conservative and radical bourgeoisie, without thereby giving up the right to take a critical stance toward the phrases and illusions handed down from the revolutionary tradition.

4.3 In Switzerland they support the Radicals, without losing sight of the fact that this party consists of contradictory elements: partly of democratic socialists in the French sense, partly of radical bourgeois.

4.4 Among the Poles the Communists support the party that makes an agrarian revolution the condition of national libera-

tion—the same party that launched the Kraków insurrection of 1846.[2]

4.5 In Germany the Communist Party fights together with the bourgeoisie, as soon as the bourgeoisie acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy, feudal landed property and the petty bourgeoisie.

4.6 But it never ceases for a single moment to instill in the workers the clearest possible consciousness of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, so that the German workers may at once turn the social and political conditions that the bourgeoisie must bring in along with its rule into so many weapons against the bourgeoisie—so that, after the fall of the reactionary classes in Germany, the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may begin immediately.

4.7 The Communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because Germany is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution, and because it will carry out this upheaval under more advanced conditions of European civilization in general, and with a far more developed proletariat, than England had in the seventeenth century and France in the eighteenth; so the German bourgeois revolution can only be the immediate prelude to a proletarian revolution.

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

4.9 In all these movements they bring to the fore the property question, whatever degree of development it may have reached, as the fundamental question of the movement.

4.10 Finally, the Communists labor everywhere for the union and mutual understanding of the democratic parties of all countries.

4.11 The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the

1 The American agrarian reformers of the 1840s, organized in the National Reform Association, demanded free land for settlers.

forcible overthrow of all existing social order. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose in it but their chains. They have a world to win.

4.12 Workers of all countries, unite![3]

2 A short-lived uprising in the Free City of Kraków in 1846 for Polish independence, with a program of freeing the peasants.

3 Literally "Proletarians of all countries, unite!"—the Manifesto's closing slogan, rendered here in its familiar English form.