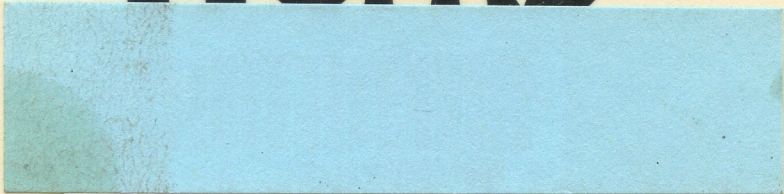


# KARL MARX FREDERICK ENGELS

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## Collected Works



Volume 5  
Marx and Engels  
1845 -1847



# KARL MARX FREDERICK ENGELS

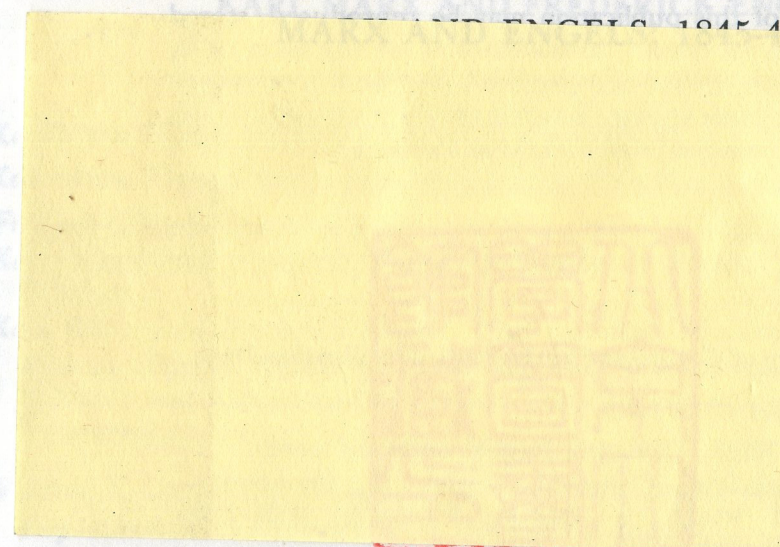
## COLLECTED WORKS



INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS  
NEW YORK

# KARL MARX FREDERICK ENGELS

## Volume 5



INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS  
NEW YORK



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TRANSLATORS:

CLEMENS DUTT: *The German Ideology* (Volume I, "The Leipzig Council") and "The True Socialists"

W. LOUGH: *The German Ideology* (Volume I, Chapter I, "Feuerbach")

C. P. MAGILL: *The German Ideology* (Volume II)



Karl Marx  
[THESES ON FEUERBACH<sup>a</sup>]

1) *ad* FEUERBACH<sup>1</sup>

1

The chief defect of all previous materialism (that of Feuerbach included) is that things [*Gegenstand*], reality, sensuousness are conceived only in the form of the *object*, or of *contemplation*, but not as *sensuous human activity, practice*, not subjectively. Hence, in contradistinction to materialism, the *active* side was set forth abstractly by idealism—which, of course, does not know real, sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinct from conceptual objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as *objective* activity. In *Das Wesen des Christenthums*, he therefore regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, while practice is conceived and defined only in its dirty-Jewish form of appearance.<sup>2</sup> Hence he does not grasp the significance of “revolutionary”, of “practical-critical”, activity.

2

The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a *practical* question. Man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality and power, the this-worldliness of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from practice is a purely *scholastic* question.

---

<sup>a</sup> Original version.—Ed.



3

The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and upbringing forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that the educator must himself be educated. This doctrine must, therefore, divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society.

The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-change can be conceived and rationally understood only as *revolutionary practice*.

4

Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-estrangement, of the duplication of the world into a religious world and a secular one. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis. But that the secular basis lifts off from itself and establishes itself as an independent realm in the clouds can only be explained by the inner strife and intrinsic contradictoriness of this secular basis. The latter must, therefore, itself be both understood in its contradiction and revolutionised in practice. Thus, for instance, once the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the holy family, the former must then itself be destroyed in theory and in practice.

5

Feuerbach, not satisfied with *abstract thinking*, wants [*sensuous contemplation*]; but he does not conceive sensuousness as *practical*, human-sensuous activity.

6

Feuerbach resolves the essence of religion into the essence of *man*. But the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations.

Feuerbach, who does not enter upon a criticism of this real essence, is hence obliged:

1. To abstract from the historical process and to define the religious sentiment [*Gemüt*] by itself, and to presuppose an abstract—*isolated*—human individual.

2. Essence, therefore, can be regarded only as “species”, as an inner, mute, general character which unites the many individuals in a *natural way*.

7

Feuerbach, consequently, does not see that the “religious sentiment” is itself a social product, and that the abstract individual which he analyses belongs to a particular form of society.

8

All social life is essentially *practical*. All mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.

9

The highest point reached by contemplative materialism, that is, materialism which does not comprehend sensuousness as practical activity, is the contemplation of single individuals and of civil society.

10

The standpoint of the old materialism is civil society; the standpoint of the new is human society, or social humanity.

11

The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is to *change* it.

Written in the spring of 1845

Printed according to the manuscript

This version was first published in 1924—in German and in Russian—by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. in *Marx-Engels Archives*, Book I, Moscow



## Karl Marx

[THESES ON FEUERBACH<sup>a</sup>]

## MARX ON FEUERBACH

(Written in Brussels in the spring of 1845)

1

The chief defect of all previous materialism—that of Feuerbach included—is that things [*Gegenstand*], reality, sensuousness are conceived only in the form of the *object*, or of *contemplation*, but not as *human sensuous activity, practice*, not subjectively. Hence it happened that the *active* side, in contradistinction to materialism, was set forth by idealism—but only abstractly, since, of course, idealism does not know real, sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinct from conceptual objects, but he does not conceive human activity itself as *objective* activity. In *Das Wesen des Christentums*, he therefore regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, while practice is conceived and defined only in its dirty-Jewish form of appearance. Hence he does not grasp the significance of “revolutionary”, of practical-critical, activity.

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The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question. Man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality and power, the this-worldliness of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which isolates itself from practice is a purely scholastic question.

<sup>a</sup> Edited by Engels.—Ed.

3

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that the educator must himself be educated. Hence, this doctrine is bound to divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society (in Robert Owen, for example).

The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionising practice.

4

Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-estrangement, of the duplication of the world into a religious, imaginary world and a real one. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis. He overlooks the fact that after completing this work, the chief thing still remains to be done. For the fact that the secular basis lifts off from itself and establishes itself in the clouds as an independent realm can only be explained by the inner strife and intrinsic contradictoriness of this secular basis. The latter must itself, therefore, first be understood in its contradiction and then, by the removal of the contradiction, revolutionised in practice. Thus, for instance, once the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the holy family, the former must then itself be criticised in theory and transformed in practice.

5

Feuerbach, not satisfied with *abstract thinking*, appeals to *sensuous contemplation*; but he does not conceive sensuousness as practical, human-sensuous activity.

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Feuerbach resolves the essence of religion into the essence of man. But the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations.

Feuerbach, who does not enter upon a criticism of this real essence, is hence obliged:

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8

Social life is essentially *practical*. All mysteries which mislead theory into mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.

9

The highest point attained by *contemplative* materialism, that is, materialism which does not comprehend sensuousness as practical activity, is the contemplation of single individuals in “civil society”.

10

The standpoint of the old materialism is “*civil*” society; the standpoint of the new is *human* society, or associated humanity.

11

The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it.

Written in the spring of 1845

Printed according to the book

First published by Engels  
in the Appendix to the separate  
edition of his *Ludwig Feuerbach  
und der Ausgang der klassischen  
deutschen Philosophie*, Stuttgart, 1888

11  
2. Die Philosophen haben die Welt nur verschieden interpretiert,  
es kommt drauf an sie zu verändern.  
so in der Praxis.

11

Die Philosophen haben die Welt nur verschieden *interpretiert*,  
es kommt drauf an sie zu *verändern*.

Facsimile of Thesis 11 on Feuerbach. From Marx's notebook



## Frederick Engels

FEUERBACH<sup>3</sup>

a) The entire philosophy of Feuerbach amounts to 1. philosophy of nature—passive adoration of nature and enraptured kneeling down before its splendour and omnipotence. 2. Anthropology, namely α) physiology, where nothing new is added to what the materialists have already said about the unity of body and soul, but it is said less mechanically and with rather more exuberance, β) psychology, which amounts to dithyrambs glorifying love, analogous to the cult of nature, apart from that nothing new. 3. Morality, the demand to live up to the concept of “man”,<sup>a</sup> *impuissance mise en action*.<sup>b</sup> Compare §54, p. 81: “The ethical and rational attitude of man to his stomach consists in treating it not as something bestial but as something human.”—§61: “Man ... as a moral being” and all the talk about morality in *Das Wesen des Christenthums*.

b) The fact that at the present stage of development men can satisfy their needs only within society, that in general from the very start, as soon as they came into existence, men needed one another and could only develop their needs and abilities, etc., by entering into intercourse<sup>c</sup> with other men, this fact is expressed by Feuerbach in the following way:

<sup>a</sup> Cf. Ludwig Feuerbach, *Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft*, § 52.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Powerlessness set in motion. Charles Fourier, *Théorie des quatre mouvements, et des destinées générales*, deuxième partie. Epilogue.—Ed.

<sup>c</sup> See Note 11.—Ed.

"Isolated man by himself has not the essence of man in himself"; "the essence of man is contained only in the community, in the unity of man and man, a unity, however, which depends only on the reality of the difference between I and you.—Man by himself is man (in the ordinary sense), man and man, the unity of I and you, is God" (i.e., man in the supraordinary sense) (§§ 61, 62, p. 83).

Philosophy has reached a point when the trivial fact of the necessity of intercourse between human beings—a fact without a knowledge of which the second generation that ever existed would never have been produced, a fact already involved in the sexual difference—is presented by philosophy at the end of its entire development as the greatest result. And presented, moreover, in the mysterious form of "the unity of I and you". This phrase would have been quite impossible had Feuerbach not κατ' ἐξοχήν<sup>a</sup> thought of the sexual act, the conjugal act, the community of I and you.\* And insofar as his community becomes real it is moreover limited to the sexual act and to arriving at an understanding about philosophical ideas and problems, to "true dialectics" (§ 64), to dialogue, to "the procreation of man, both spiritual and physical man" (p. 67). What this "procreated" man does afterwards, apart from again "spiritually" and "physically" "procreating men", is not mentioned. Feuerbach only knows intercourse between two beings,

"the truth that no being on its own is a true, perfect, absolute being, that truth and perfection is only the association, the unity of two beings that are essentially alike" (pp. 83, 84).

c) The beginning of the *Philosophie der Zukunft* immediately shows the difference between us and him:

§ 1: "The task of modern times was the realisation and humanisation of God, the transformation and dissolution of theology into anthropology." Cf. "The negation of theology is the essence of modern times" (*Philosophie der Zukunft*, p. 23).

\* For, since the human being = brain + heart, and two are necessary to represent the human being, one of them personifies the brain in their intercourse, the other the heart—man and woman. Otherwise it would be impossible to understand why two persons are more human than one.<sup>b</sup> Saint-Simonist individual.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Mainly.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Cf. Ludwig Feuerbach, *Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft*, § 58.—Ed.

d) The distinction that Feuerbach makes between Catholicism and Protestantism in § 2—Catholicism: "theology" "is concerned with what God is in himself", it has a "tendency towards speculation and contemplation"; Protestantism is merely Christology, it leaves God to himself and speculation and contemplation to philosophy—this distinction is nothing but a division of labour arisen from a need appropriate to immature science. Feuerbach explains Protestantism merely from this need within theology, whereupon an independent history of philosophy naturally follows.

e) "Being is not a general concept which can be separated from things. It is identical with the things that exist.... Being is posited by essence. What my essence is, is my being. The fish is in the water, but its essence cannot be separated from this being. Even language identifies being and essence. It is only in human life that being is divorced from essence—but only in exceptional, unfortunate cases—only there is it possible that a person's essence is not in the place where he is, but it is precisely because of this division that his spirit is not truly in the place where his body actually is. Only where your heart is, there you are. But all things—apart from abnormal cases—like to be in the place where they are, and like to be what they are" (p. 47).

A fine panegyric upon the existing state of things! Apart from abnormal cases, a few exceptional cases, you like to work from your seventh year as a door-keeper in a coal-mine, remaining alone in the dark for fourteen hours a day, and because it is your being therefore it is also your essence. The same applies to a piecer<sup>a</sup> at a self-actor.<sup>a</sup> It is your "essence" to be subservient to a branch of labour. Cf. *Das Wesen des Glaubens*, p. 11, "unsatisfied hunger" [...]<sup>b</sup>

f) § 48, p. 73. "Time is the only means that makes it possible without contradiction to combine opposite or contradictory determinations in a single being. This applies at all events to living beings. Only thus does here—for example in man—the contradiction make its appearance that now this determination, this resolution, dominates and occupies me, and then a quite different and diametrically opposed determination."

Feuerbach describes this as 1) a contradiction, 2) a combination of contradictions, and 3) alleges that time brings this about. Indeed time

<sup>a</sup> This word is in English in the manuscript.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Engels did not finish this sentence. A similar idea is expressed in Chapter I of *The German Ideology* (cf. p. 58 of this volume).—Ed.



"filled" with events, but still time, and not that which takes place during this time.<sup>a</sup> The proposition amounts to the statement: it is only in time that change is possible.

Written probably in the autumn of 1845

Printed according to the manuscript

First published in German in 1932 in Marx/Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Erste Abteilung, Bd. 5

## Karl Marx and Frederick Engels [A REPLY TO BRUNO BAUER'S ANTI-CRITIQUE<sup>5</sup>]

Brussels, November 20. In Wigand's *Vierteljahrsschrift*, Vol. III, p. 138 ff., Bruno Bauer stammers out a few words in answer to *Die heilige Familie, oder Kritik der kritischen Kritik*, 1845, by Engels and Marx.<sup>a</sup> At the outset Bruno Bauer declares that Engels and Marx have misunderstood him; with unaffected naïveté he repeats his old pretentious phrases, which have long since been reduced to nothing, and regrets that these writers do not know his catchwords about "the constant struggle and victory, the destruction and creation of criticism", which is the "only historical force", his assertions that "the critic and only the critic has *smashed* religion in its entirety and the state in its various manifestations", that "the critic has worked and still works", and similar high-sounding protestations and lofty effusions. In his reply Bauer immediately provides new and striking proof of "how the critic has worked and still works". For the "hard-working" critic considers that it serves his *purpose* better not to make the book by Engels and Marx the object of his exclamations and quotations, but a mediocre and confused *review of this book* published in the *Westphälische Dampfboot* (May issue, p. 206 ff.)<sup>6</sup>—a *conjuring trick*, which, with critical prudence, he conceals from the reader.

While Bauer is *copying* from the *Dampfboot*, he interrupts his "arduous work" only with laconic, but highly ambiguous shrugging of his shoulders. Critical criticism has limited itself to shrugging its shoulders since it has no more to say. It finds salvation in the *shoulder-blades* despite its hatred of the *sensuous world*, which it can

<sup>a</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach, *Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft*, § 12.—Ed.

<sup>a</sup> See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 3-211.—Ed.

only conceive in the shape of a "stick" (see Wigand's *Vierteljahrsschrift*, p. 130), an instrument for chastising its theological bareness.

In his superficial haste the Westphalian reviewer gives a ridiculous summary which is utterly at variance with the book he is reviewing. The "hard-working" critic copies the fabrications of the reviewer, attributes them to Engels and Marx and triumphantly shouts to the uncritical mass—which he annihilates with one eye, while with the other he flirtatiously invites it to come nearer—see, these are my opponents!

Let us now place side by side the words of these documents.

The reviewer writes in the *Westphälische Dampfboot*:

"In order to kill the Jews he" (Bruno Bauer) "transforms them into theologians, and the problem of political emancipation into that of human emancipation; to annihilate Hegel he transforms him into Herr Hinrichs; to get rid of the French Revolution, communism and Feuerbach he shouts 'mass, mass, mass!' and again 'mass, mass, mass!' and crucifies it to the glory of the spirit, which is criticism, the true incarnation of the absolute idea in Bruno of Charlottenburg" (*Das Westphälische Dampfboot*, I. c., p. 212).

The "hard-working" critic writes:

"The critic of critical criticism" becomes "in the end childish", "plays the Harlequin on the *theatro mundi*" and "would have us believe", "asserting in all seriousness, that Bruno Bauer in order to kill the Jews", etc., etc.—there follows *verbatim* the whole passage from the *Westphälische Dampfboot*, which is nowhere to be found in *Die heilige Familie* (Wigand's *Vierteljahrsschrift*, p. 142).

Compare this with the attitude of critical criticism to the Jewish question and to political emancipation in *Die heilige Familie*, *inter alia*, pp. 163-85; regarding its attitude to the French Revolution cf. pp. 185-95; and its attitude to socialism and communism, pp. 22-74, p. 211 ff., pp. 243-44 and the whole chapter on critical criticism in the person of Rudolph, Prince of Geroldstein, pp. 258-333.<sup>a</sup> Regarding the attitude of critical criticism to Hegel see the mystery of "speculative construction" and the following explanation on p. 79 ff., also pp. 121 and 122, 126-28, 136-37, 208-09, 215-27 and 304-08; on the attitude of critical criticism to Feuerbach see pp. 138-41, and finally on the result and the trend of the critical fight against the French Revolution, materialism and socialism see pp. 214-15.<sup>b</sup>

One can see from these quotations that the Westphalian reviewer has given a completely distorted and only imaginary summary

<sup>a</sup> See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 106-18, 118-24, 23-72, 134 ff., 151-53, 162-209.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid., pp. 57 ff., 82 and 83, 85-87, 91-92, 131-32, 136-43, 191-93, 92-94, 135-36.—Ed.

showing that he has absurdly misunderstood the arguments. It is this summary which with "creative and devastating" agility the "pure" and "hard-working" critic substitutes for the original.

Furthermore.

The reviewer writes in the *Westphälische Dampfboot*:

"To his" (that is, Bruno Bauer's) "silly self-apotheosis, in which he seeks to prove that wherever he was formerly in thrall to the prejudices of the mass, this enthrallment was merely a necessary guise of criticism, Marx replies by offering to provide the following little scholastic treatise: 'Why the conception of the Virgin Mary had to be proved by no other than Herr Bruno Bauer' etc., etc. (*Dampfboot*, p. 213).

The "hard-working" critic:

"He" (the critic of critical criticism) "wants to make us believe, and in the end himself believes his humbug, that wherever Bauer was formerly in thrall to the prejudices of the mass he wants to present this enthrallment merely as a necessary guise of criticism and not on the contrary as the result of the necessary development of criticism; in reply to this 'silly self-apotheosis' he therefore offers the following little scholastic treatise: 'Why the conception of the Virgin Mary' etc., etc. (*Wigand's Vierteljahrsschrift*, pp. 142-43).

The reader will find in *Die heilige Familie*, pp. 150-63,<sup>a</sup> a special section on Bruno Bauer's self-apology, but unfortunately nothing is written there about the little scholastic treatise, which is therefore by no means offered in reply to Bruno Bauer's self-apology, as the Westphalian reviewer writes; and the obliging Bruno Bauer copies this—even enclosing some words in inverted commas—assuming it to be a quotation from *Die heilige Familie*. The little treatise is mentioned in a different section and in a different context (see *Die heilige Familie*, pp. 164 and 165<sup>b</sup>). What it signifies there the reader may find out for himself and again admire the "pure" cunning of the "hard-working critic".

In the end the "hard-working" critic exclaims:

"This" (namely the quotations which Bruno Bauer has borrowed from the *Westphälische Dampfboot* and attributed to the authors of *Die heilige Familie*) "has of course reduced Bruno Bauer to silence and brought criticism to its senses. On the contrary, Marx has presented us with a spectacle by finally himself appearing in the role of the amusing comedian" (*Wigand's Vierteljahrsschrift*, p. 143).

To understand this "on the contrary" one has to know that the Westphalian reviewer, for whom Bruno Bauer works as a copyist, dictates the following to his critical and hard-working scribe:

"The world-historic drama" (that is, the fight of Bauer's criticism against the mass) "quite simply disintegrates into the most amusing comedy" (*Das Westphälische Dampfboot*, p. 213).

<sup>a</sup> See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 99-106.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid., pp. 106-08.—Ed.



Here the hapless copyist jumps to his feet: to transcribe his own condemnation is beyond his power. "*On the contrary*," he cries interrupting the dictation of the Westphalian reviewer, "*on the contrary ... Marx ... is the most amusing comedian!*" and he wipes the cold sweat from his brow.

By resorting to incompetent *jugglery*, to the most deplorable conjuring trick, *Bruno Bauer* has in the final analysis confirmed the death sentence passed upon him by *Engels* and *Marx* in *Die heilige Familie*.

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Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

## THE GERMAN IDEOLOGY

CRITIQUE OF MODERN GERMAN PHILOSOPHY  
ACCORDING TO ITS REPRESENTATIVES  
FEUERBACH, B. BAUER AND STIRNER,  
AND OF GERMAN SOCIALISM  
ACCORDING TO ITS VARIOUS PROPHETS<sup>7</sup>

Volume I

CRITIQUE

OF MODERN GERMAN PHILOSOPHY  
ACCORDING TO ITS REPRESENTATIVES  
FEUERBACH, B. BAUER AND STIRNER

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script



## Preface

Hitherto men have always formed wrong ideas about themselves, about what they are and what they ought to be. They have arranged their relations according to their ideas of God, of normal man, etc. The products of their brains have got out of their hands. They, the creators, have bowed down before their creations. Let us liberate them from the chimeras, the ideas, dogmas, imaginary beings under the yoke of which they are pining away. Let us revolt against this rule of concepts. Let us teach men, says one,<sup>a</sup> how to exchange these imaginations for thoughts which correspond to the essence of man; says another,<sup>b</sup> how to take up a critical attitude to them; says the third,<sup>c</sup> how to get them out of their heads; and existing reality will collapse.

These innocent and child-like fancies are the kernel of the modern Young-Hegelian philosophy, which not only is received by the German public with horror and awe, but is announced by our *philosophic heroes* with the solemn consciousness of its world-shattering danger and criminal ruthlessness. The first volume of the present publication has the aim of uncloaking these sheep, who take themselves and are taken for wolves; of showing that their bleating merely imitates in a philosophic form the conceptions of the German middle class; that the boasting of these philosophic commentators only mirrors the wretchedness of the real conditions in Germany. It is its aim to ridicule and discredit the philosophic struggle with the

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<sup>a</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach.— *Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> Bruno Bauer.— *Ed.*

<sup>c</sup> Max Stirner.— *Ed.*



I

FEUERBACH

OPPOSITION OF THE MATERIALIST  
AND IDEALIST OUTLOOKS<sup>8</sup>

[I]

[sh.1] According to German ideologists, Germany has in the last few years gone through an unparalleled revolution. The decomposition of the Hegelian system, which began with Strauss,<sup>9</sup> has developed into a universal ferment into which all the "powers of the past" are swept. In the general chaos mighty empires have arisen only to meet with immediate doom, heroes have emerged momentarily to be again hurled into obscurity by bolder and stronger rivals. It was a revolution beside which the French Revolution was child's play, a world struggle beside which the struggles of the Diadochi<sup>10</sup> appear insignificant. Principles ousted one another, intellectual heroes overthrew each other with unheard-of rapidity, and in the three years 1842-45 more was cleared away in Germany than at other times in three centuries.

All this is supposed to have taken place in the realm of pure thought.

Certainly it is an interesting event we are dealing with: the putrescence of the absolute spirit. When the last spark of its life had failed, the various components of this *caput mortuum*<sup>a</sup> began to decompose, entered into new combinations and formed new substances. The industrialists of philosophy, who till then had lived on the exploitation of the absolute spirit, now seized upon the new combinations. Each with all possible zeal set about retailing his apportioned share. This was bound to give rise to competition, which, to start with, was carried on in moderately civil and staid

<sup>a</sup> Literally: dead head; a term used in chemistry for the residuum left after distillation; here: remainder, residue.— *Ed.*



fashion. Later, when the German market was glutted, and the commodity in spite of all efforts was not favourably received in the world market, the business was spoiled in the usual German manner by cheap and spurious production, deterioration in quality, adulteration of the raw materials, falsification of labels, fictitious purchases, bill-jobbing and a credit system devoid of any real basis. The competition turned into a bitter struggle, which is now being extolled and interpreted to us as an upheaval of world significance, the begetter of the most prodigious results and achievements.

If we wish to rate at its true value this philosophic charlatanry, which awakens even in the breast of the righteous German citizen a glow of patriotic feeling, if we wish to bring out clearly the pettiness, the parochial narrowness of this whole Young-Hegelian movement and in particular the tragicomic contrast between the illusions of these heroes about their achievements and the actual achievements themselves, we must look at the whole spectacle from a standpoint beyond the frontiers of Germany.\*

[1.] IDEOLOGY IN GENERAL, GERMAN IDEOLOGY  
IN PARTICULAR

[sh.2] German criticism has, right up to its latest efforts, never left the realm of philosophy. It by no means examines its general philosophic premises, but in fact all its problems originate in a definite philosophical system, that of Hegel. Not only in its answers, even in its questions there was a mystification. This dependence on Hegel is the reason why not one of these modern critics has even

\* [In the first version of the clean copy there follows a passage, which is crossed out:] [p. 2]

We preface therefore the specific criticism of individual representatives of this movement with a few general observations, elucidating the ideological premises common to all of them. These remarks will suffice to indicate the standpoint of our criticism insofar as it is required for the understanding and the motivation of the subsequent individual criticisms. We oppose these remarks [p. 3] to *Feuerbach* in particular because he is the only one who has at least made some progress and whose works can be examined *de bonne foi*.

I. Ideology in General, and Especially German Philosophy

A. We know only a single science, the science of history. One can look at history from two sides and divide it into the history of nature and the history of men. The two sides are, however, inseparable; the history of nature and the history of men are dependent on each other so long as men exist. The history of nature, called natural

attempted a comprehensive criticism of the Hegelian system, however much each professes to have advanced beyond Hegel. Their polemics against Hegel and against one another are confined to this—each takes one aspect of the Hegelian system and turns this against the whole system as well as against the aspects chosen by the others. To begin with they took pure, unfalsified Hegelian categories such as “substance” and “self-consciousness”,<sup>a</sup> later they secularised these categories by giving them more profane names such as “species”, “the unique”, “man”,<sup>b</sup> etc.

The entire body of German philosophical criticism from Strauss to Stirner is confined to criticism of *religious* conceptions.\* The critics started from real religion and theology proper. What religious consciousness and religious conception are was subsequently defined in various ways. The advance consisted in including the allegedly dominant metaphysical, political, juridical, moral and other conceptions under the category of religious or theological conceptions; and similarly in declaring that political, juridical, moral consciousness was religious or theological consciousness, and that the political, juridical, moral man—“Man” in the last resort—was religious. The dominance of religion was presupposed. Gradually every dominant relationship was declared to be a religious relationship and transformed into a cult, a cult of law, a cult of the state, etc. It was throughout merely a question of dogmas and belief in dogmas. The world was sanctified to an ever-increasing extent till at last the venerable Saint Max<sup>c</sup> was able to canonise it *en bloc* and thus dispose of it once for all.

The Old Hegelians had *understood* everything as soon as it was

science, does not concern us here; but we will have to examine the history of men, since almost the whole ideology amounts either to a distorted conception of this history or to a complete abstraction from it. Ideology is itself only one of the aspects of this history.

[There follows a passage dealing with the premises of the materialist conception of history. It is not crossed out and in this volume it is reproduced as Section 2; see pp. 31-32.]

\* [The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript:] claiming to be the absolute redeemer of the world from all evil. Religion was continually regarded and treated as the arch-enemy, as the ultimate cause of all relations repugnant to these philosophers.

<sup>a</sup> The basic categories of David Friedrich Strauss and Bruno Bauer.— *Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> The basic categories of Ludwig Feuerbach and Max Stirner.— *Ed.*

<sup>c</sup> Max Stirner.— *Ed.*

reduced to a Hegelian logical category. The Young Hegelians criticised everything by ascribing religious conceptions to it or by declaring that it is a theological matter. The Young Hegelians are in agreement with the Old Hegelians in their belief in the rule of religion, of concepts, of a universal principle in the existing world. Except that the one party attacks this rule as usurpation, while the other extols it as legitimate.

Since the Young Hegelians consider conceptions, thoughts, ideas, in fact all the products of consciousness, to which they attribute an independent existence, as the real chains of men (just as the Old Hegelians declare them the true bonds of human society), it is evident that the Young Hegelians have to fight only against these illusions of consciousness. Since, according to their fantasy, the relations of men, all their doings, their fetters and their limitations are products of their consciousness, the Young Hegelians logically put to men the moral postulate of exchanging their present consciousness for human, critical or egoistic consciousness,<sup>a</sup> and thus of removing their limitations. This demand to change consciousness amounts to a demand to interpret the existing world in a different way, i.e., to recognise it by means of a different interpretation. The Young-Hegelian ideologists, in spite of their allegedly "world-shattering"<sup>b</sup> phrases, are the staunchest conservatives. The most recent of them have found the correct expression for their activity when they declare they are only fighting against "*phrases*". They forget, however, that they themselves are opposing nothing but phrases to these phrases, and that they are in no way combating the real existing world when they are combating solely the phrases of this world. The only results which this philosophic criticism was able to achieve were a few (and at that one-sided) elucidations of Christianity from the point of view of religious history; all the rest of their assertions are only further embellishments of their claim to have furnished, in these unimportant elucidations, discoveries of world-historic importance.

It has not occurred to any one of these philosophers to inquire into the connection of German philosophy with German reality, the connection of their criticism with their own material surroundings.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> A reference to Ludwig Feuerbach, Bruno Bauer and Max Stirner, whose basic categories were, respectively, "man", "criticism" and "ego".—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Cf. "Ueber das Recht des Freigesprochenen ..." published anonymously in *Wigand's Vierteljahrsschrift*, 1845, Bd. IV.—Ed.

<sup>c</sup> The rest of this page of the manuscript is left blank. The text following on the next page of the manuscript is reproduced in this volume as Section 3; see pp. 32-35.—Ed.

[2. PREMISES OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY<sup>a</sup>]

[p. 3] The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions of their life, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be [p. 4] verified in a purely empirical way.

The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals.\* Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organisation of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature. Of course, we cannot here go either into the actual physical nature of man, or into the natural conditions in which man finds himself—geological, oro-hydrographical, climatic and so on.\*\* All historical writing must set out from these natural bases and their modification in the course of history through the action of men.

Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to *produce* their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organisation. By producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their material life.

The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the means of subsistence they actually find in existence and have to reproduce.

[p. 5] This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite *mode of life* on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with *what* they produce and

\* [The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript:] The first *historical* act of these individuals distinguishing them from animals is not that they think, but that they begin to *produce their means of subsistence*.

\*\* [The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript:] These conditions determine not only the original, spontaneous organisation of men, especially racial differences, but also the entire further development, or lack of development, of men up to the present time.

<sup>a</sup> The text of the following section has been taken from the first version of the clean copy.—Ed.

with *how* they produce. Hence what individuals are depends on the material conditions of their production.

This production only makes its appearance with the *increase of population*. In its turn this presupposes the *intercourse* [*Verkehr*]<sup>11</sup> of individuals with one another. The form of this intercourse is again determined by production.

[3. 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 [*Stammeigentum*].<sup>12</sup>

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 measure 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 law proves) and proceeded very rapidly from the time of the civil wars and especially under the emperors<sup>13</sup>; 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



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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

A page of the manuscript of *The German Ideology*.  
From the chapter "Feuerbach"



both was determined by the restricted conditions of production<sup>a</sup>—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.<sup>b</sup>

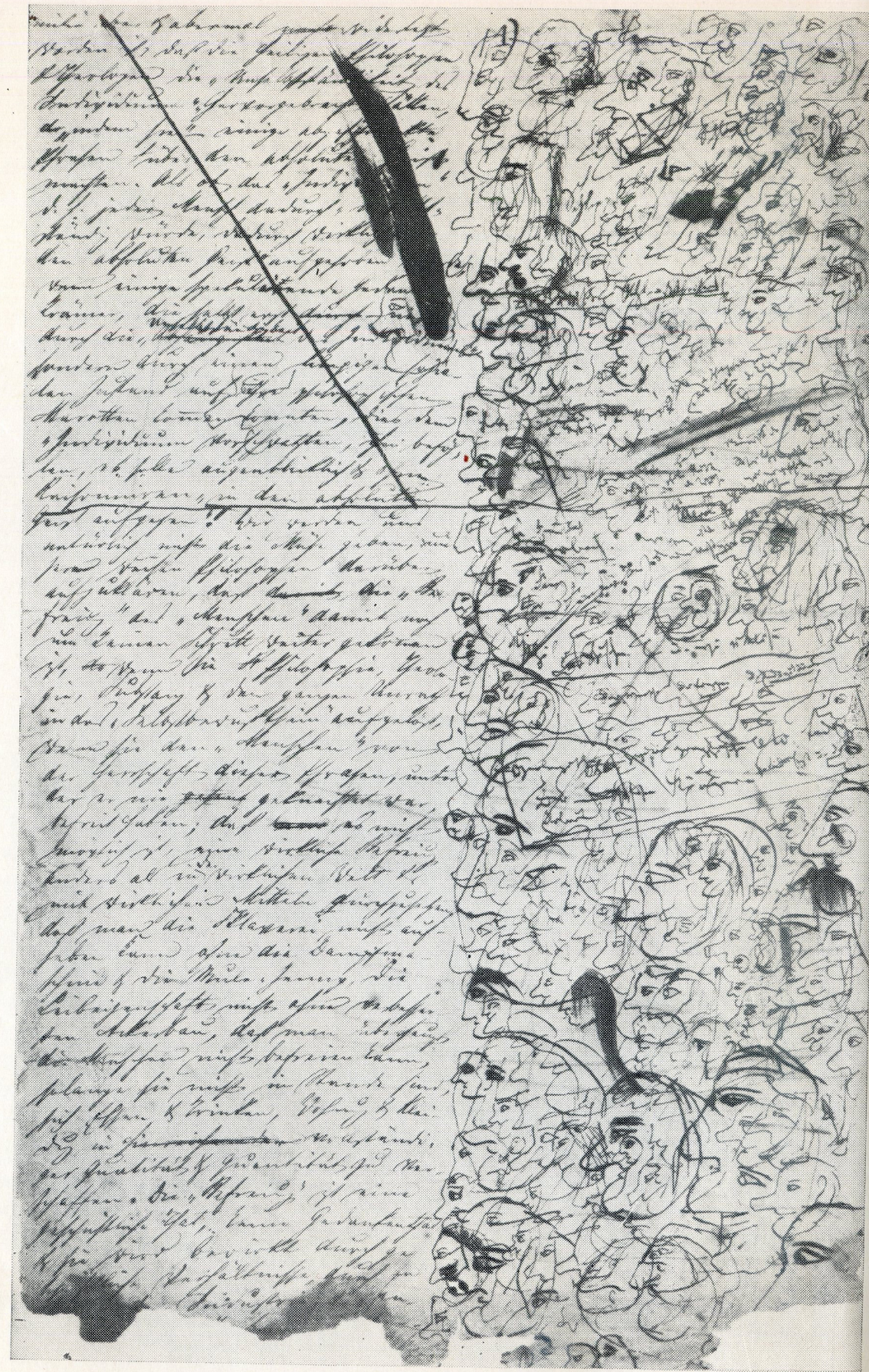
[4. THE ESSENCE OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF  
HISTORY  
SOCIAL BEING AND SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS]

[sh.5] The fact is, therefore, that definite individuals who are productively active in a definite way\* enter into these definite social and political relations. Empirical observation must in each separate instance bring out empirically, and without any mystification and speculation, the connection of the social and political structure with production. The social structure and the state are continually evolving out of the life-process of definite individuals, however, of these individuals, not as they may appear in their own or other people's imagination, but as they *actually* are, i.e., as they act, produce

\* [The manuscript originally had:] definite individuals under definite conditions of production.

<sup>a</sup> In the German original *Produktionsverhältnisse*.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> The rest of this page of the manuscript is left blank. The next page begins with a summary of the materialist conception of history. The main stages of the development of the fourth, the bourgeois, form of property are dealt with in Part IV of this chapter, Sections 2-4; see pp. 64-74.—Ed.



A page of the manuscript of *The German Ideology*.  
From the chapter "Feuerbach"  
(Discovered in the early 1960s)



materially, and hence as they work under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will.\*

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men—the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men at this stage still appear as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of the politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc., of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., that is, real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms.\*\* Consciousness [*das Bewusstsein*] can never be anything else than conscious being [*das bewusste Sein*], and the being of men is their actual life-process. If in all ideology men and their relations appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura*, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process.

In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here it is a matter of ascending from earth to heaven. That is to say, not of setting out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh; but setting out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process demonstrating the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the brains of men are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, and all the rest of ideology as well as the forms of consciousness corresponding to these, thus no longer

\* [The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript:] The ideas which these individuals form are ideas either about their relation to nature or about their mutual relations or about their own nature. It is evident that in all these cases their ideas are the conscious expression—real or illusory—of their real relations and activities, of their production, of their intercourse, of their social and political conduct. The opposite assumption is only possible if in addition to the spirit of the real, materially evolved individuals a separate spirit is presupposed. If the conscious expression of the real relations of these individuals is illusory, if in their imagination they turn reality upside-down, then this in its turn is the result of their limited material mode of activity and their limited social relations arising from it.

\*\* [The manuscript originally had:] Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., and precisely men conditioned by the mode of production of their material life, by their material intercourse and its further development in the social and political structure.

retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their actual world, also their thinking and the products of their thinking. It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness. For the first manner of approach the starting-point is consciousness taken as the living individual; for the second manner of approach, which conforms to real life, it is the real living individuals themselves, and consciousness is considered solely as *their* consciousness.

This manner of approach is not devoid of premises. It starts out from the real premises and does not abandon them for a moment. Its premises are men, not in any fantastic isolation and fixity, but in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions. As soon as this active life-process is described, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts, as it is with the empiricists (themselves still abstract), or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists.

Where speculation ends, where real life starts, there consequently begins real, positive science, the expounding of the practical activity, of the practical process of development of men. Empty phrases about consciousness end, and real knowledge has to take their place. When the reality is described, a self-sufficient philosophy [*die selbständige Philosophie*] loses its medium of existence. At the best its place can only be taken by a summing-up of the most general results, abstractions which are derived from the observation of the historical development of men. These abstractions in themselves, divorced from real history, have no value whatsoever. They can only serve to facilitate the arrangement of historical material, to indicate the sequence of its separate strata. But they by no means afford a recipe or schema, as does philosophy, for neatly trimming the epochs of history. On the contrary, the difficulties begin only when one sets about the examination and arrangement of the material—whether of a past epoch or of the present—and its actual presentation. The removal of these difficulties is governed by premises which certainly cannot be stated here, but which only the study of the actual life-process and the activity of the individuals of each epoch will make evident. We shall select here some of these abstractions, which we use in contradistinction to ideology, and shall illustrate them by historical examples.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The clean copy ends here. The text that follows in this edition are the three parts of the rough copy of the manuscript.—Ed.

## [II]

## [1. PRECONDITIONS OF THE REAL LIBERATION OF MAN]

[1] We shall, of course, not take the trouble to explain to our wise philosophers that the "liberation" of "man" is not advanced a single step by reducing philosophy, theology, substance and all the rubbish to "self-consciousness" and by liberating "man" from the domination of these phrases, which have never held him in thrall.\* Nor shall we explain to them that it is possible to achieve real liberation only in the real world and by real means, that slavery cannot be abolished without the steam-engine and the mule jenny, serfdom cannot be abolished without improved agriculture, and that, in general, people cannot be liberated as long as they are unable to obtain food and drink, housing and clothing in adequate quality and quantity. "Liberation" is a historical and not a mental act, and it is brought about by historical conditions, the [level] of industry, com[merce], [agri]culture, [intercourse...]<sup>a</sup> [2] then subsequently, in accordance with the different stages of their development, [they make up] the nonsense of substance, subject, self-consciousness and pure criticism, as well as religious and theological nonsense, and later they get rid of it again when their development is sufficiently advanced.\*\* In Germany, a country where only a trivial historical development is taking place, these mental developments, these glorified and ineffective trivialities, naturally serve as a substitute for the lack of historical development, and they take root and have to be combated. But this fight is of *local* importance.\*\*\*

## [2. FEUERBACH'S CONTEMPLATIVE AND INCONSISTENT MATERIALISM]

[...] <sup>b</sup> [8] in reality and for the *practical* materialist, i.e., the *communist*, it is a question of revolutionising the existing world, of practically coming to grips with and changing the things found in

\* [Marginal notes by Marx:] Philosophic liberation and real liberation.—*Man*. The *unique*. The *individual*.—Geological, hydrographical, etc., conditions. The human body. Needs and labour.

\*\* [Marginal note by Marx:] Phrases and real movement. The importance of phrases in Germany.

\*\*\* [Marginal note by Marx:] Language is the language of re[ality].

<sup>a</sup> The manuscript is damaged here: the lower part of the sheet is torn off; one line of the text is missing.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> Five pages of the manuscript are missing.—*Ed.*

existence. When occasionally we find such views with Feuerbach, they are never more than isolated surmises and have much too little influence on his general outlook to be considered here as anything but embryos capable of development. Feuerbach's "conception" of the sensuous world is confined on the one hand to mere contemplation of it, and on the other to mere feeling; he posits "Man" instead of "real historical man".<sup>14</sup> "Man" is really "the German". In the first case, the *contemplation* of the sensuous world, he necessarily lights on things which contradict his consciousness and feeling, which disturb the harmony he presupposes, the harmony of all parts of the sensuous world and especially of man and nature.\* To remove this disturbance, he must take refuge in a double perception, a profane one which perceives "only the flatly obvious" and a higher, philosophical, one which perceives the "true essence" of things. He does not see that the sensuous world around him is not a thing given direct from all eternity, remaining ever the same, but the product of industry and of the state of society; and, indeed [a product] in the sense that it is an historical product, the result of the activity of a whole succession of generations, each standing on the shoulders of the preceding one, developing its industry and its intercourse, and modifying its social system according to the changed needs. Even the objects of the simplest "sensuous certainty" are only given him through social development, industry and commercial intercourse. The cherry-tree, like almost all fruit-trees, was, as is well known, only a few centuries ago transplanted by *commerce* into our zone, and therefore only [9] by this action of a definite society in a definite age has it become "sensuous certainty" for Feuerbach.

Incidentally, when things are seen in this way, as they really are and happened, every profound philosophical problem is resolved, as will be seen even more clearly later, quite simply into an empirical fact. For instance, the important question of the relation of man to nature (Bruno goes so far as to speak of "the antitheses in nature and history" (p. 110),<sup>a</sup> as though these were two separate "things" and man did not always have before him an historical nature and a

\* NB. F[eu]erbach's error is not that he subordinates the flatly obvious, the sensuous *appearance* to the sensuous reality established by detailed investigation of the sensuous facts, but that he cannot in the last resort cope with the sensuous world except by looking at it with the "eyes", i.e., through the "spectacles", of the philosopher.

<sup>a</sup> Bruno Bauer, "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs".—*Ed.*

natural history), which gave rise to all the "unfathomably lofty works"<sup>a</sup> on "substance" and "self-consciousness", crumbles of itself when we understand that the celebrated "unity of man with nature" has always existed in industry and has existed in varying forms in every epoch according to the lesser or greater development of industry, and so has the "struggle" of man with nature, right up to the development of his productive forces on a corresponding basis. Industry and commerce, production and the exchange of the necessities of life in their turn determine distribution, the structure of the different social classes and are, in turn, determined by it as to the mode in which they are carried on; and so it happens that in Manchester, for instance, Feuerbach sees only factories and machines, where a hundred years ago only spinning-wheels and weaving-loom were to be seen, or in the Campagna di Roma he finds only pasture lands and swamps, where in the time of Augustus he would have found nothing but the vineyards and villas of Roman capitalists. Feuerbach speaks in particular of the perception of natural science; he mentions secrets which are disclosed only to the eye of the physicist and chemist; but where would natural science be without industry and commerce? Even this "pure" natural science is provided with an aim, as with its material, only through trade and industry, through the sensuous activity of men. So much is this activity, this unceasing sensuous labour and creation, this production, the foundation of the whole sensuous world as it now exists that, were it interrupted only for a year, Feuerbach would not only find an enormous change in the natural world, but would very soon find that the whole world of men and his own perceptive faculty, nay his own existence, were missing. Of course, in all this the priority of external nature remains unassailed, and all this has no [10] application to the original men produced by *generatio aequivoca*<sup>b</sup>; but this differentiation has meaning only insofar as man is considered to be distinct from nature. For that matter, nature, the nature that preceded human history, is not by any means the nature in which Feuerbach lives, it is nature which today no longer exists anywhere (except perhaps on a few Australian coral islands of recent origin) and which, therefore, does not exist for Feuerbach either.

[9] Certainly Feuerbach has [10] a great advantage over the "pure" materialists since he realises that man too is an "object of the

<sup>a</sup> Paraphrase of a line from Goethe's *Faust*, "Prolog im Himmel".—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Spontaneous generation.—Ed.

senses". But apart from the fact that he only conceives him as an "object of the senses", not as "sensuous activity", because he still remains in the realm of theory and conceives of men not in their given social connection, not under their existing conditions of life, which have made them *what* they are, he never arrives at the actually existing, active men, but stops at the abstraction "man", and gets no further than recognising "the actual, individual, corporeal man" emotionally, i.e., he knows no other "human relations" "of man to man" than love and friendship, and even then idealised. He gives no criticism of the present conditions of life. Thus he never manages to conceive the sensuous world as the total living sensuous *activity* of the individuals composing it; therefore when, for example, he sees instead of healthy men a crowd of scrofulous, overworked and consumptive starvelings, he is compelled to take refuge in the "higher perception" and in the ideal "compensation in the species", and thus to relapse into idealism at the very point where the communist materialist sees the necessity, and at the same time the condition, of a transformation both of industry and of the social structure.

As far as Feuerbach is a materialist he does not deal with history, and as far as he considers history he is not a materialist. With him materialism and history diverge completely, a fact which incidentally already follows from what has been said.\*

[3. PRIMARY HISTORICAL RELATIONS,  
OR THE BASIC ASPECTS OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY:  
PRODUCTION OF THE MEANS OF SUBSISTENCE,  
PRODUCTION OF NEW NEEDS, REPRODUCTION OF MEN (THE FAMILY),  
SOCIAL INTERCOURSE, CONSCIOUSNESS]

[11]\*\* Since we are dealing with the Germans, who are devoid of premises, we must begin by stating the first premise of all human existence and, therefore, of all history, the premise, namely, that men must be in a position to live in order to be able to "make history".<sup>a</sup> But life involves before everything else eating and

\* [The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript:] The reason why we nevertheless discuss history here in greater detail is that the words "history" and "historical" usually mean everything possible to the Germans except reality, a brilliant example of this is in particular Saint Bruno with his "pulpit eloquence".

\*\* [Marginal note by Marx:] *History*.

<sup>a</sup> See this volume, pp. 56-57.—Ed.



drinking, housing, clothing and various other things.\* The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself. And indeed this is an historical act, a fundamental condition of all history, which today, as thousands of years ago, must daily and hourly be fulfilled merely in order to sustain human life. Even when the sensuous world is reduced to a minimum, to a stick<sup>a</sup> as with Saint Bruno, it presupposes the action of producing this stick. Therefore in any conception of history one has first of all to observe this fundamental fact in all its significance and all its implications and to accord it its due importance. It is well known that the Germans have never done this, and they have never, therefore, had an *earthly* basis for history and consequently never a historian. The French and the English, even if they have conceived the relation of this fact with so-called history only in an extremely one-sided fashion, especially since they remained in the toils of political ideology, have nevertheless made the first attempts to give the writing of history a materialistic basis by being the first to write histories of civil society, of commerce and industry.<sup>16</sup>

The second point is [12] that the satisfaction of the first need, the action of satisfying and the instrument of satisfaction which has been acquired, leads to new needs; and this creation of new needs is the first historical act. Here we recognise immediately the spiritual ancestry of the great historical wisdom of the Germans who, when they run out of positive material and when they can serve up neither theological nor political nor literary rubbish, assert that this is not history at all, but the "prehistoric age". They do not, however, enlighten us as to how we proceed from this nonsensical "prehistory" to history proper; although, on the other hand, in their historical speculation they seize upon this "prehistory" with especial eagerness because they imagine themselves safe there from interference on the part of "crude facts", and, at the same time, because there they can give full rein to their speculative impulse and set up and knock down hypotheses by the thousand.

The third circumstance which, from the very outset, enters into historical development, is that men, who daily re-create their own life, begin to make other men, to propagate their kind: the relation

\* [Marginal note by Marx:] *Hegel*. Geological, hydrographical, etc., conditions.<sup>15</sup> Human bodies. Needs, labour.

<sup>a</sup> See Bruno Bauer's article "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs". Cf. this volume, pp. 94, 104.—*Ed.*

between man and woman, parents and children, the *family*. The family, which to begin with is the only social relation, becomes later, when increased needs create new social relations and the increased population new needs, a subordinate one (except in Germany), and must then be treated and analysed according to the existing empirical data, not according to "the concept of the family", as is the custom in Germany.

These three aspects of social activity are not of course to be taken as three different stages, but just as three aspects or, to make it clear to the Germans, three "moments", which have existed simultaneously since the dawn of history and the first men, and which still assert themselves in history today.

The production of life, both of one's own in labour and of fresh life in procreation, now appears as a twofold [13] relation: on the one hand as a natural, on the other as a social relation—social in the sense that it denotes the co-operation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner and to what end. It follows from this that a certain mode of production, or industrial stage, is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a "productive force". Further, that the aggregate of productive forces accessible to men determines the condition of society, hence, the "history of humanity" must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange. But it is also clear that in Germany it is impossible to write this sort of history, because the Germans lack not only the necessary power of comprehension and the material but also the "sensuous certainty", for across the Rhine one cannot have any experience of these things since there history has stopped happening. Thus it is quite obvious from the start that there exists a materialist connection of men with one another, which is determined by their needs and their mode of production, and which is as old as men themselves. This connection is ever taking on new forms, and thus presents a "history" irrespective of the existence of any political or religious nonsense which would especially hold men together.

Only now, after having considered four moments, four aspects of primary historical relations, do we find that man also possesses "consciousness".\* But even from the outset this is not "pure" consciousness. The "mind" is from the outset afflicted with [14] the

\* [Marginal note by Marx:] Men have history because they must *produce* their life, and because they must produce it moreover in a *certain* way: this is determined by their physical organisation; their consciousness is determined in just the same way.

curse of being "burdened" with matter, which here makes its appearance in the form of agitated layers of air, sounds, in short, of language. Language is as old as consciousness, language is practical, real consciousness that exists for other men as well, and only therefore does it also exist for me; language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse with other men.\* Where there exists a relationship, it exists for me: the animal does not "relate" itself to anything, it does not "relate" itself at all. For the animal its relation to others does not exist as a relation. Consciousness is, therefore, from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all. Consciousness is at first, of course, merely consciousness concerning the *immediate* sensuous environment and consciousness of the limited connection with other persons and things outside the individual who is growing self-conscious. At the same time it is consciousness of nature, which first confronts men as a completely alien, all-powerful and unassailable force, with which men's relations are purely animal and by which they are overawed like beasts; it is thus a purely animal consciousness of nature (natural religion) precisely because nature is as yet hardly altered by history—on the other hand, it is man's consciousness of the necessity of associating with the individuals around him, the beginning of the consciousness that he is living in society at all. This beginning is as animal as social life itself at this stage. It is mere herd-consciousness, and at this point man is distinguished from sheep only by the fact that with him consciousness takes the place of instinct or that his instinct is a conscious one.\*\* This sheep-like or tribal consciousness receives its further development and extension through increased productivity, the increase of needs, and, what is fundamental to both of these, [15] the increase of population. With these there develops the division of labour, which was originally nothing but the division of labour in the sexual act, then the division of labour which develops spontaneously or "naturally" by virtue of natural predisposition (e.g., physical strength), needs, accidents, etc., etc.\*\*\* Division of labour only becomes truly such from the moment

\* [The following words are crossed out in the manuscript:] My relation to my surroundings is my consciousness.

\*\* [Marginal note by Marx:] We see here immediately: this natural religion or this particular attitude to nature is determined by the form of society and vice versa. Here, as everywhere, the identity of nature and man also appears in such a way that the restricted attitude of men to nature determines their restricted relation to one another, and their restricted attitude to one another determines men's restricted relation to nature.

\*\*\* [Marginal note by Marx, which is crossed out in the manuscript:] Men's consciousness develops in the course of actual historical development.

when a division of material and mental labour appears.\* From this moment onwards consciousness *can* really flatter itself that it is something other than consciousness of existing practice, that it *really* represents something without representing something real; from now on consciousness is in a position to emancipate itself from the world and to proceed to the formation of "pure" theory, theology, philosophy, morality, etc. But even if this theory, theology, philosophy, morality, etc., come into contradiction with the existing relations, this can only occur because existing social relations have come into contradiction with existing productive forces; moreover, in a particular national sphere of relations this can also occur through the contradiction, arising not within the national orbit, but between this national consciousness and the practice of other nations,\*\* i.e., between the national and the general consciousness of a nation (as is happening now in Germany); but since this contradiction appears to exist only as a contradiction within the national consciousness, it seems to this nation that the struggle too is confined to this [16] national muck, precisely because this nation represents this muck as such.

Incidentally, it is quite immaterial what consciousness starts to do on its own: out of all this trash we get only the one inference that these three moments, the productive forces, the state of society and consciousness, can and must come into contradiction with one another, because the *division of labour* implies the possibility, nay the fact, that intellectual and material activity,\*\*\* that enjoyment and labour, production and consumption, devolve on different individuals, and that the only possibility of their not coming into contradiction lies in negating in its turn the division of labour. It is self-evident, moreover, that "spectres", "bonds", "the higher being", "concept", "scruple", are merely idealist, speculative, mental expressions, the concepts apparently of the isolated individual, the mere images of very empirical fetters and limitations, within which move the mode of production of life, and the form of intercourse coupled with it.\*\*\*\*

\* [Marginal note by Marx:] The first form of ideologists, *priests*, is coincident

\*\* [Marginal note by Marx:] *Religions*. The Germans and *ideology* as such.

\*\*\* [Marginal note by Marx, which is crossed out in the manuscript:] activity and thinking, i.e., action without thought and thought without action.

\*\*\*\* [The following sentence is crossed out in the manuscript:] This idealist expression of actually present economic limitations exists not only purely theoretically but also in the practical consciousness, i.e., consciousness which emancipates itself and comes into contradiction with the existing mode of production devises not only religions and philosophies but also states.

[4. SOCIAL DIVISION OF LABOUR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES:  
PRIVATE PROPERTY, THE STATE,  
"ESTRANGEMENT" OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY]

The division of labour in which all these contradictions are implicit, and which in its turn is based on the natural division of labour in the family and the separation of society into individual families opposed to one another, simultaneously implies the *distribution*, and indeed the *unequal* distribution, both quantitative and qualitative, of labour and its products, hence property, [17] the nucleus, the first form of which lies in the family, where wife and children are the slaves of the husband. This latent slavery in the family, though still very crude, is the first form of property, but even at this stage it corresponds perfectly to the definition of modern economists, who call it the power of disposing of the labour-power of others. Division of labour and private property are, after all, identical expressions: in the one the same thing is affirmed with reference to activity as is affirmed in the other with reference to the product of the activity.

Further, the division of labour also implies the contradiction between the interest of the separate individual or the individual family and the common interest of all individuals who have intercourse with one another. And indeed, this common interest does not exist merely in the imagination, as the "general interest", but first of all in reality, as the mutual interdependence of the individuals among whom the labour is divided.<sup>a</sup>

Out of this very contradiction between the particular and the common interests, the common interest assumes an independent form as the *state*, which is divorced from the real individual and collective interests, and at the same time as an illusory community, always based, however, on the real ties existing in every family conglomeration and tribal conglomeration—such as flesh and blood, language, division of labour on a larger scale, and other interests—and especially, as we shall show later, on the classes, already implied by the division of labour, which in every such mass of men separate out, and one of which dominates all the others. It follows from this that all struggles within the state, the struggle between democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy, the struggle for the franchise, etc., etc., are merely the illusory forms—altogether the general

<sup>a</sup> The following two paragraphs are written in the margin: the first by Engels and the second by Marx.—Ed.

interest is the illusory form of common interests—in which the real struggles of the different classes are fought out among one another (of this the German theoreticians have not the faintest inkling, although they have received a sufficient initiation into the subject in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*<sup>17</sup> and *Die heilige Familie*). Further, it follows that every class which is aiming at domination, even when its domination, as is the case with the proletariat, leads to the abolition of the old form of society in its entirety and of domination in general, must first conquer political power in order to represent its interest in turn as the general interest, which in the first moment it is forced to do.

Just because individuals seek *only* their particular interest, which for them does not coincide with their common interest, the latter is asserted as an interest "alien" [*fremd*] to them, and [18] "independent" of them, as in its turn a particular and distinctive "general" interest; or they themselves must remain within this discord, as in democracy. On the other hand, too, the *practical* struggle of these particular interests, which *actually* constantly run counter to the common and illusory common interests, necessitates *practical* intervention and restraint by the illusory "general" interest in the form of the state.

[17] And finally, the division of labour offers us the first example of the fact that, as long as man remains in naturally evolved society, that is, as long as a cleavage exists between the particular and the common interest, as long, therefore, as activity is not voluntarily, but naturally, divided, man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him. For as soon as the division of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; whereas in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic.

[18] This fixation of social activity, this consolidation of what we ourselves produce into a material power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations, is one of the chief factors in historical development up

till now.<sup>a</sup> The social power, i.e., the multiplied productive force, which arises through the co-operation of different individuals as it is caused by the division of labour, appears to these individuals, since their co-operation is not voluntary but has come about naturally, not as their own united power, but as an alien force existing outside them, of the origin and goal of which they are ignorant, which they thus are no longer able to control, which on the contrary passes through a peculiar series of phases and stages independent of the will and the action<sup>18</sup> of man, nay even being the prime governor of these. How otherwise could for instance property have had a history at all, have taken on different forms, and landed property, for example, according to the different premises given, have proceeded in France from parcellation to centralisation in the hands of a few, in England from centralisation in the hands of a few to parcellation, as is actually the case today? Or how does it happen that trade, which after all is nothing more than the exchange of products of various individuals and countries, rules the whole world through the relation of supply and demand—a relation which, as an English economist says, hovers over the earth like the fate of the ancients, and with invisible hand allots fortune and misfortune to men, sets up empires [19] and wrecks empires, causes nations to rise and to disappear—whereas with the abolition of the basis, private property, with the communistic regulation of production (and, implicit in this, the abolition of the alien attitude [*Fremdheit*] of men to their own product), the power of the relation of supply and demand is dissolved into nothing, and men once more gain control of exchange, production and the way they behave to one another?

[5. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRODUCTIVE FORCES  
AS A MATERIAL PREMISE OF COMMUNISM]

[18] This “estrangement” [*Entfremdung*] (to use a term which will be comprehensible to the philosophers) can, of course, only be abolished given two *practical* premises. In order to become an “unendurable” power, i.e., a power against which men make a revolution, it must necessarily have rendered the great mass of humanity “propertyless”, and moreover in contradiction to an existing world of wealth and culture; both these premises presuppose a great increase in productive power, a high degree of its development.

<sup>a</sup> Here Marx added a passage in the margin which is given in this edition as the first two paragraphs of Section 5.—*Ed.*

And, on the other hand, this development of productive forces (which at the same time implies the actual empirical existence of men in their *world-historical*, instead of local, being) is an absolutely necessary practical premise, because without it privation, *want* is merely made general, and with *want* the struggle for necessities would begin again, and all the old filthy business would necessarily be restored; and furthermore, because only with this universal development of productive forces is a *universal* intercourse between men established, which on the one side produces in *all* nations simultaneously the phenomenon of the “propertyless” mass (universal competition), making each nation dependent on the revolutions of the others, and finally puts *world-historical*, empirically universal individuals in place of local ones. Without this, 1) communism could only exist as a local phenomenon; 2) the *forces* of intercourse themselves could not have developed as *universal*, hence unendurable powers: they would have remained home-bred “conditions” surrounded by superstition; and 3) each extension of intercourse would abolish local communism. Empirically, communism is only possible as the act of the dominant peoples “all at once” and simultaneously,<sup>19</sup> which presupposes the universal development of productive forces and the world intercourse bound up with them.\*

[19] Moreover, the mass of workers who are *nothing but workers*—labour-power on a mass scale cut off from capital or from even a limited satisfaction [of their needs] and, hence, as a result of competition their utterly precarious position, the no longer merely temporary loss of work as a secure source of life—presupposes the *world market*. The proletariat can thus only exist *world-historically*, just as communism, its activity, can only have a “world-historical” existence. World-historical existence of individuals, i.e., existence of individuals which is directly linked up with world history.

[18] Communism is for us not a *state of affairs* which is to be established, an *ideal* to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the now existing premise.<sup>a</sup>

\* \* \*

\* [Above the continuation of this passage, which follows on the next page of the manuscript, Marx wrote:] *Communism*.

<sup>a</sup> In the manuscript this paragraph was written down by Marx in a free space above the paragraph starting with the words: This “estrangement”.—*Ed.*



[19] The form of intercourse determined by the existing productive forces at all previous historical stages, and in its turn determining these, is *civil society*. The latter, as is clear from what we have said above, has as its premise and basis the simple family and the multiple, called the tribe, and the more precise definition of this society is given in our remarks above. Already here we see that this civil society is the true focus and theatre of all history, and how absurd is the conception of history held hitherto, which neglects the real relations and confines itself to spectacular historical events.<sup>20</sup>

In the main we have so far considered only one aspect of human activity, the *reshaping of nature* by men. The other aspect, the *reshaping of men by men*....\*

Origin of the state and the relation of the state to civil society.<sup>a</sup>

[6. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION  
OF HISTORY: HISTORY AS A CONTINUOUS PROCESS,  
HISTORY AS BECOMING WORLD HISTORY,  
THE NECESSITY OF COMMUNIST REVOLUTION]

[20] History is nothing but the succession of the separate generations, each of which uses the materials, the capital funds, the productive forces handed down to it by all preceding generations, and thus, on the one hand, continues the traditional activity in completely changed circumstances and, on the other, modifies the old circumstances with a completely changed activity. This can be speculatively distorted so that later history is made the goal of earlier history, e.g., the goal ascribed to the discovery of America is to further the eruption of the French Revolution. Thereby history receives its own special goals and becomes "a person ranking with other persons" (to wit: "self-consciousness, criticism, the unique", etc.), while what is designated with the words "destiny", "goal", "germ", or "idea" of earlier history is nothing more than an abstraction from later history, from the active influence which earlier history exercises on later history.

The further the separate spheres, which act on one another, extend in the course of this development and the more the original isolation of the separate nationalities is destroyed by the advanced

\* [Marginal note by Marx:] Intercourse and productive power.

<sup>a</sup> The end of this page of the manuscript is left blank. The next page begins with an exposition of the conclusions from the materialist conception of history.—Ed.

mode of production, by intercourse and by the natural division of labour between various nations arising as a result, the more history becomes world history. Thus, for instance, if in England a machine is invented which deprives countless workers of bread in India and China, and overturns the whole form of existence of these empires, this invention becomes a world-historical fact. Or again, take the case of sugar and coffee, which have proved their world-historical importance in the nineteenth century by the fact that the lack of these products, occasioned by the Napoleonic Continental System,<sup>21</sup> caused the Germans [21] to rise against Napoleon, and thus became the real basis of the glorious Wars of Liberation of 1813. From this it follows that this transformation of history into world history is by no means a mere abstract act on the part of "self-consciousness", the world spirit, or of any other metaphysical spectre, but a quite material, empirically verifiable act, an act the proof of which every individual furnishes as he comes and goes, eats, drinks and clothes himself.

In history up to the present it is certainly likewise an empirical fact that separate individuals have, with the broadening of their activity into world-historical activity, become more and more enslaved under a power alien to them (a pressure which they have conceived of as a dirty trick on the part of the so-called world spirit, etc.), a power which has become more and more enormous and, in the last instance, turns out to be the *world market*. But it is just as empirically established that, by the overthrow of the existing state of society by the communist revolution (of which more below) and the abolition of private property which is identical with it, this power, which so baffles the German theoreticians, will be dissolved; and that then the liberation of each single individual will be accomplished in the measure in which history becomes wholly transformed into world history.\* From the above it is clear that the real intellectual wealth of the individual depends entirely on the wealth of his real connections. Only this will liberate the separate individuals from the various national and local barriers, bring them into practical connection with the production (including intellectual production) of the whole world and make it possible for them to acquire the capacity to enjoy this all-sided production of the whole earth (the creations of man). *All-round dependence*, this primary natural form of the *world-historical co-operation* of individuals, will be transformed by [22] this communist revolution into the control and conscious mastery of these powers, which, born of the action of men on one another, have

\* [Marginal note by Marx:] *On the production of consciousness.*

till now overawed and ruled men as powers completely alien to them. Now this view can be expressed again in a speculative-idealistic, i.e., fantastic, way as "self-generation of the species" ("society as the subject"), and thereby the consecutive series of interrelated individuals can be regarded as a single individual, which accomplishes the mystery of generating itself. In this context it is evident that individuals undoubtedly make *one another*, physically and mentally, but do not make themselves, either in the nonsense of Saint Bruno, or in the sense of the "unique", of the "made" man.

Finally, from the conception of history set forth by us we obtain these further conclusions: 1) In the development of productive forces there comes a stage when productive forces and means of intercourse are brought into being which, under the existing relations, only cause mischief, and are no longer productive but destructive forces (machinery and money); and connected with this a class is called forth which has to bear all the burdens of society without enjoying its advantages, which is ousted from society and [23] forced into the sharpest contradiction to all other classes; a class which forms the majority of all members of society, and from which emanates the consciousness of the necessity of a fundamental revolution, the communist consciousness, which may, of course, arise among the other classes too through the contemplation of the situation of this class. 2) The conditions under which definite productive forces can be applied are the conditions of the rule of a definite class of society, whose social power, deriving from its property, has its *practical-idealistic* expression in each case in the form of the state and, therefore, every revolutionary struggle is directed against a class which till then has been in power.\* 3) In all previous revolutions the mode of activity always remained unchanged and it was only a question of a different distribution of this activity, a new distribution of labour to other persons, whilst the communist revolution is directed against the hitherto existing *mode* of activity, does away with *labour*,\*\* and abolishes the rule of all classes with the classes themselves, because it is carried through by the class which no longer counts as a class in society, which is not recognised as a class, and is in itself the expression of the dissolution of all classes, nationalities, etc., within present society; and 4) Both for the production on a mass scale of this communist consciousness,

\* [Marginal note by Marx:] These men are interested in maintaining the present state of production.

\*\* [The following words are crossed out in the manuscript:] the modern form of activity under the rule of [...].

and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a *revolution*; the revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the *ruling* class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class *overthrowing* it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew.\*

[7. SUMMARY OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION  
OF HISTORY]

[24] This conception of history thus relies on expounding the real process of production—starting from the material production of life itself—and comprehending the form of intercourse connected with and created by this mode of production, i.e., civil society in its various stages, as the basis of all history; describing it in its action as the state, and also explaining how all the different theoretical products and forms of consciousness, religion, philosophy, morality, etc., etc., arise from it, and tracing the process of their formation from that basis; thus the whole thing can, of course, be depicted in its totality (and therefore, too, the reciprocal action of these various sides on one another). It has not, like the idealist view of history, to look for a category in every period, but remains constantly on the real *ground* of

\* [The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript:] Whereas all communists in France as well as in England and Germany have long since agreed on the necessity of the revolution, Saint Bruno quietly continues to dream, opining that "real humanism", i. e., communism, is to take "the place of spiritualism" (which has no place) only in order that it may gain respect. Then, he continues in his dream, "salvation" would indeed "be attained, the earth becoming heaven, and heaven earth". (The theologian is still unable to forget heaven.) "Then joy and bliss will resound in celestial harmonies to all eternity" (p. 140).<sup>a</sup> The holy father of the church will be greatly surprised when judgment day overtakes him, the day when all this is to come to pass—a day when the reflection in the sky of burning cities will mark the dawn, when together with the "celestial harmonies" the tunes of the *Marseillaise* and *Carmagnole* will echo in his ears accompanied by the requisite roar of cannon, with the guillotine beating time; when the infamous "masses" will shout *ça ira, ça ira* and suspend "self-consciousness" by means of the lamp-post.<sup>22</sup> Saint Bruno has no reason at all to draw an edifying picture "of joy and bliss to all eternity". We forego the pleasure of *a priori* forecasting Saint Bruno's conduct on judgment day. Moreover, it is really difficult to decide whether the *prolétaires en révolution* have to be conceived as "substance", as "mass", desiring to overthrow criticism, or as an "emanation" of the spirit which is, however, still lacking the consistency necessary to digest Bauer's ideas.

<sup>a</sup> Bruno Bauer, "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs".—Ed.

history; it does not explain practice from the idea but explains the formation of ideas from material practice, and accordingly it comes to the conclusion that all forms and products of consciousness cannot be dissolved by mental criticism, by resolution into "self-consciousness" or transformation into "apparitions", "spectres", "whimsies",<sup>a</sup> etc., but only by the practical overthrow of the actual social relations which gave rise to this idealistic humbug; that not criticism but revolution is the driving force of history, also of religion, of philosophy and all other kinds of theory. It shows that history does not end by being resolved into "self-consciousness" as "spirit of the spirit",<sup>b</sup> but that each stage contains a material result, a sum of productive forces, a historically created relation to nature and of individuals to one another, which is handed down to each generation from its predecessor; a mass of productive forces, capital funds and circumstances, which on the one hand is indeed modified by the new generation, but on the other also prescribes for it its conditions of life and gives it a definite development, a special character. It shows that circumstances make [25] men just as much as men make circumstances.

This sum of productive forces, capital funds and social forms of intercourse, which every individual and every generation finds in existence as something given, is the real basis of what the philosophers have conceived as "substance" and "essence of man", and what they have deified and attacked: a real basis which is not in the least disturbed, in its effect and influence on the development of men, by the fact that these philosophers revolt against it as "self-consciousness" and the "unique". These conditions of life, which different generations find in existence, determine also whether or not the revolutionary convulsion periodically recurring in history will be strong enough to overthrow the basis of everything that exists. And if these material elements of a complete revolution are not present—namely, on the one hand the existing productive forces, on the other the formation of a revolutionary mass, which revolts not only against separate conditions of the existing society, but against the existing "production of life" itself, the "total activity" on which it was based—then it is absolutely immaterial for practical development whether the *idea* of this revolution has been expressed a hundred times already, as the history of communism proves.

<sup>a</sup> These terms are used by Max Stirner in *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*. Cf. pp. 157-63 of this volume.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> The terms are used by Bruno Bauer in "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs".—Ed.

[8. THE INCONSISTENCY OF THE IDEALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY IN GENERAL AND OF GERMAN POST-HEGELIAN PHILOSOPHY IN PARTICULAR]

In the whole conception of history up to the present this real basis of history has either been totally disregarded or else considered as a minor matter quite irrelevant to the course of history. History must, therefore, always be written according to an extraneous standard; the real production of life appears as non-historical, while the historical appears as something separated from ordinary life, something extra-superterrestrial. With this the relation of man to nature is excluded from history and hence the antithesis of nature and history is created. The exponents of this conception of history have consequently only been able to see in history the spectacular political events and religious and other theoretical struggles, and in particular with regard to each historical epoch they were compelled to *share the illusion of that epoch*. For instance, if an epoch imagines itself to be actuated by purely "political" or "religious" motives, although "religion" and "politics" are only forms of its true motives, the historian accepts this opinion. The "fancy", the "conception" of the people in question about their real practice is transformed into the sole determining and effective force, which dominates and determines their practice. When the crude form of the division of labour which is to be found among the Indians and Egyptians calls forth the caste-system in their state and religion, the historian believes that the caste-system [26] is the power which has produced this crude social form.

While the French and the English at least stick to the political illusion, which is after all closer to reality, the Germans move in the realm of the "pure spirit", and make religious illusion the driving force of history. The Hegelian philosophy of history is the last consequence, reduced to its "clearest expression", of all this German historiography for which it is not a question of real, nor even of political, interests, but of pure thoughts, which must therefore appear to Saint Bruno as a series of "thoughts" that devour one another and are finally swallowed up in "self-consciousness";\* and even more consistently the course of history must appear to Saint Max Stirner, who knows not a thing about real history, as a mere "tale of knights, robbers and ghosts",<sup>24</sup> from whose visions he can, of course, only save himself by "unholiness". This conception is truly religious: it postulates religious man as the primitive man, the starting-point of

\* [Marginal note by Marx:] So-called *objective* historiography<sup>23</sup> consisted precisely in treating the historical relations separately from activity. Reactionary character.

history, and in its imagination puts the religious production of fancies in the place of the real production of the means of subsistence and of life itself.

This whole conception of history, together with its dissolution and the scruples and qualms resulting from it, is a purely *national* affair of the Germans and has merely *local* interest for Germany, as for instance the important question which has been under discussion in recent times: how exactly one "passes from the realm of God to the realm of Man"<sup>a</sup>—as if this "realm of God" had ever existed anywhere save in the imagination, and the learned gentlemen, without being aware of it, were not constantly living in the "realm of Man" to which they are now seeking the way; and as if the learned pastime (for it is nothing more) of explaining the mystery of this theoretical bubble-blowing did not on the contrary lie in demonstrating its origin in actual earthly relations. For these Germans, it is altogether simply a matter of resolving the ready-made nonsense they find into [27] some other freak, i.e., of presupposing that all this nonsense has a special *sense* which can be discovered; while really it is only a question of explaining these theoretical phrases from the actual existing relations. The real, practical dissolution of these phrases, the removal of these notions from the consciousness of men, will, as we have already said, be effected by altered circumstances, not by theoretical deductions. For the mass of men, i.e., the proletariat, these theoretical notions do not exist and hence do not require to be dissolved, and if this mass ever had any theoretical notions, e.g., religion, these have now long been dissolved by circumstances.

The purely national character of these questions and solutions is moreover shown by the fact that these theorists believe in all seriousness that chimeras like "the God-Man", "Man", etc., have presided over individual epochs of history (Saint Bruno even goes so far as to assert that only "criticism and critics have made history",<sup>b</sup> and when they themselves construct historical systems, they skip over all earlier periods in the greatest haste and pass immediately from "Mongolism"<sup>c</sup> to history "with meaningful content", that is to say, to the history of the *Hallische* and *Deutsche Jahrbücher* and the dissolution of the Hegelian school into a general squabble. They forget all other nations, all real events, and the *theatrum mundi* is

<sup>a</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach, "Ueber das 'Wesen des Christenthums'..."—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Bruno Bauer, "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs"—Ed.

<sup>c</sup> Max Stirner, *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*. Cf. this volume, pp. 130-36. and pp. 163-70.—Ed.

confined to the Leipzig book fair and the mutual quarrels of "criticism", "man", and "the unique".<sup>a</sup> If for once these theorists treat really historical subjects, as for instance the eighteenth century, they merely give a history of ideas, separated from the facts and the practical development underlying them; and even that merely in order to represent that period as an imperfect preliminary stage, the as yet limited predecessor of the truly historical age, i.e., the period of the German philosophic struggle from 1840 to 1844. As might be expected when the history of an earlier period is written with the aim of accentuating the brilliance of an unhistoric person and his fantasies, all the really historic events, even the really historic interventions of politics in history, receive no mention. Instead we get a narrative based not on research but on arbitrary constructions and literary gossip, such as Saint Bruno provided in his now forgotten history of the eighteenth century.<sup>b</sup> These pompous and arrogant hucksters of ideas, who imagine themselves infinitely exalted above all national prejudices, are thus in practice far more national than the beer-swilling philistines who dream of a united Germany. They do not recognise the deeds of other nations as historical; they live in Germany, within Germany [28] and for Germany; they turn the Rhine-song<sup>25</sup> into a religious hymn and conquer Alsace and Lorraine by robbing French philosophy instead of the French state, by Germanising French ideas instead of French provinces. Herr Venedey is a cosmopolitan compared with the Saints Bruno and Max, who, in the universal dominance of theory, proclaim the universal dominance of Germany.

[9. IDEALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY  
AND FEUERBACH'S QUASI-COMMUNISM]

It is also clear from these arguments how grossly Feuerbach is deceiving himself when (*Wigand's Vierteljahrsschrift*, 1845, Band 2) by virtue of the qualification "common man" he declares himself a communist,<sup>26</sup> transforms the latter into a predicate of "Man", and thinks that it is thus possible to change the word "communist", which in the real world means the follower of a definite revolutionary party, into a mere category. Feuerbach's whole deduction with regard to the relation of men to one another is only aimed at proving that men need and *always have needed* each other. He wants to

<sup>a</sup> I. e., Bruno Bauer, Ludwig Feuerbach and Max Stirner.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Bruno Bauer, *Geschichte der Politik, Cultur und Aufklärung des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*.—Ed.



establish consciousness of this fact, that is to say, like the other theorists, he merely wants to produce a correct consciousness about an *existing* fact; whereas for the real Communist it is a question of overthrowing the existing state of things. We fully appreciate, however, that Feuerbach, in endeavouring to produce consciousness of just *this* fact, is going as far as a theorist possibly can, without ceasing to be a theorist and philosopher. It is characteristic, however, that Saint Bruno and Saint Max immediately put in place of the real communist Feuerbach's conception of the communist; they do this partly in order to be able to combat communism too as "spirit of the spirit", as a philosophical category, as an equal opponent and, in the case of Saint Bruno, also for pragmatic reasons.

As an example of Feuerbach's acceptance and at the same time misunderstanding of existing reality, which he still shares with our opponents, we recall the passage in the *Philosophie der Zukunft* where he develops the view that the being of a thing or a man is at the same time its or his essence,<sup>a</sup> that the determinate conditions of existence, the mode of life and activity of an animal or human individual are those in which its "essence" feels itself satisfied. Here every exception is expressly conceived as an unhappy chance, as an abnormality which cannot be altered. Thus if millions of proletarians feel by no means contented with their living conditions, if their "being" [29] does not in the least correspond to their "essence", then, according to the passage quoted, this is an unavoidable misfortune, which must be borne quietly. These millions of proletarians or communists, however, think quite differently and will prove this in time, when they bring their "being" into harmony with their "essence" in a practical way, by means of a revolution. Feuerbach, therefore, never speaks of the world of man in such cases, but always takes refuge in external nature, and moreover in *nature* which has not yet been subdued by men. But every new invention, every advance made by industry, detaches another piece from this domain, so that the ground which produces examples illustrating such Feuerbachian propositions is steadily shrinking. The "essence" of the fish is its "being", water—to go no further than this one proposition. The "essence" of the freshwater fish is the water of a river. But the latter ceases to be the "essence" of the fish and is no longer a suitable medium of existence as soon as the river is made to serve industry, as soon as it is polluted by dyes and other waste products and navigated by steamboats, or as soon as its water is diverted into canals where simple drainage can deprive the

<sup>a</sup> Cf. this volume, p. 13.—Ed.

fish of its medium of existence. The explanation that all such contradictions are inevitable abnormalities does not essentially differ from the consolation which Saint Max Stirner offers to the discontented, saying that this contradiction is their own contradiction and this predicament their own predicament, whereupon they should either set their minds at ease, keep their disgust to themselves, or revolt against it in some fantastic way. It differs just as little from Saint Bruno's allegation that these unfortunate circumstances are due to the fact that those concerned are stuck in the muck of "substance", have not advanced to "absolute self-consciousness", and do not realise that these adverse conditions are spirit of their spirit.<sup>a</sup>

### [III]

#### [I. THE RULING CLASS AND THE RULING IDEAS. HOW THE HEGELIAN CONCEPTION OF THE DOMINATION OF THE SPIRIT IN HISTORY AROSE]

[50] The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling *material* force of society is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations, the dominant material relations grasped as ideas; hence of the relations which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. Insofar, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an historical epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch. For instance, in an age and in a country where royal power, aristocracy and bourgeoisie are contending for domination and where, therefore, domination is shared, the doctrine of the separation of powers proves to be the dominant idea and is expressed as an "eternal law".

The division of labour, which we already saw above (pp. [15-18])<sup>b</sup> as one of the chief forces of history up till now, manifests itself also in

<sup>a</sup> Bruno Bauer, "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs".—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> See this volume, pp. 44-48.—Ed.

the ruling class as the division of mental and [31] material labour, so that inside this class one part appears as the thinkers of the class (its active, conceptive ideologists, who make the formation of the illusions of the class about itself their chief source of livelihood), while the others' attitude to these ideas and illusions is more passive and receptive, because they are in reality the active members of this class and have less time to make up illusions and ideas about themselves. Within this class this cleavage can even develop into a certain opposition and hostility between the two parts, but whenever a practical collision occurs in which the class itself is endangered they automatically vanish, in which case there also vanishes the appearance of the ruling ideas being not the ideas of the ruling class and having a power distinct from the power of this class. The existence of revolutionary ideas in a particular period presupposes the existence of a revolutionary class; about the premises of the latter sufficient has already been said above (pp. [18-19, 22-23]).<sup>a</sup>

If now in considering the course of history we detach the ideas of the ruling class from the ruling class itself and attribute to them an independent existence, if we confine ourselves to saying that these or those ideas were dominant at a given time, without bothering ourselves about the conditions of production and the producers of these ideas, if we thus ignore the individuals and world conditions which are the source of the ideas, then we can say, for instance, that during the time the aristocracy was dominant, the concepts honour, loyalty, etc., were dominant, during the dominance of the bourgeoisie the concepts freedom, equality, etc. The ruling class itself on the whole imagines this to be so. This conception of history, which is common to all historians, particularly since the eighteenth century, will necessarily come up against [32] the phenomenon that ever more abstract ideas hold sway, i.e., ideas which increasingly take on the form of universality. For each new class which puts itself in the place of one ruling before it is compelled, merely in order to carry through its aim, to present its interest as the common interest of all the members of society, that is, expressed in ideal form: it has to give its ideas the form of universality, and present them as the only rational, universally valid ones. The class making a revolution comes forward from the very start, if only because it is opposed to a class, not as a class but as the representative of the whole of society, as the whole mass of society confronting the one ruling class.\* It can do this

\* [Marginal note by Marx:] (Universality corresponds to 1) the class versus the estate, 2) the competition, world intercourse, etc., 3) the great numerical strength

<sup>a</sup> See this volume, pp. 48-49 and 52-53.—Ed.

because initially its interest really is as yet mostly connected with the common interest of all other non-ruling classes, because under the pressure of hitherto existing conditions its interest has not yet been able to develop as the particular interest of a particular class. Its victory, therefore, benefits also many individuals of other classes which are not winning a dominant position, but only insofar as it now enables these individuals to raise themselves into the ruling class. When the French bourgeoisie overthrew the rule of the aristocracy, it thereby made it possible for many proletarians to raise themselves above the proletariat, but only insofar as they became bourgeois. Every new class, therefore, achieves domination only on a broader basis than that of the class ruling previously; on the other hand the opposition of the non-ruling class to the new ruling class then develops all the more sharply and profoundly. Both these things determine the fact that the struggle to be waged against this new ruling class, in its turn, has as its aim a more decisive and more radical negation of the previous conditions of society than [33] all previous classes which sought to rule could have.

This whole appearance, that the rule of a certain class is only the rule of certain ideas, comes to a natural end, of course, as soon as class rule in general ceases to be the form in which society is organised, that is to say, as soon as it is no longer necessary to represent a particular interest as general or the "general interest" as ruling.

Once the ruling ideas have been separated from the ruling individuals and, above all, from the relations which result from a given stage of the mode of production, and in this way the conclusion has been reached that history is always under the sway of ideas, it is very easy to abstract from these various ideas "the Idea", the thought, etc., as the dominant force in history, and thus to consider all these separate ideas and concepts as "forms of self-determination" of the Concept developing in history. It follows then naturally, too, that all the relations of men can be derived from the concept of man, man as conceived, the essence of man, Man. This has been done by speculative philosophy. Hegel himself confesses at the end of the *Geschichtsphilosophie*<sup>2</sup> that he "has considered the progress of the concept only" and has represented in history the "true theodicy" (p. 446). Now one can go back again to the producers of "the con-

of the ruling class, 4) the illusion of the common interests, in the beginning this illusion is true, 5) the delusion of the ideologists and the division of labour.)

<sup>2</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*.—Ed.

cept", to the theorists, ideologists and philosophers, and one comes then to the conclusion that the philosophers, the thinkers as such, have at all times been dominant in history: a conclusion, as we see,<sup>27</sup> already expressed by Hegel.

The whole trick of proving the hegemony of the spirit in history (hierarchy Stirner calls it) is thus confined to the following three attempts.

[34] No. 1. One must separate the ideas of those ruling for empirical reasons, under empirical conditions and as corporeal individuals, from these rulers, and thus recognise the rule of ideas or illusions in history.

No. 2. One must bring an order into this rule of ideas, prove a mystical connection among the successive ruling ideas, which is managed by regarding them as "forms of self-determination of the concept" (this is possible because by virtue of their empirical basis these ideas are really connected with one another and because, conceived as *mere* ideas, they become self-distinctions, distinctions made by thought).

No. 3. To remove the mystical appearance of this "self-determining concept" it is changed into a person—"self-consciousness"—or, to appear thoroughly materialistic, into a series of persons, who represent the "concept" in history, into the "thinkers", the "philosophers", the ideologists, who again are understood as the manufacturers of history, as the "council of guardians", as the rulers.\* Thus the whole body of materialistic elements has been eliminated from history and now full rein can be given to the speculative steed.

This historical method which reigned in Germany, and especially the reason why, must be explained from its connection with the illusion of ideologists in general, e.g., the illusions of the jurists, politicians (including the practical statesmen), from the dogmatic dreamings and distortions of these fellows; this is explained perfectly easily from their practical position in life, their job, and the division of labour.

[35] Whilst in ordinary life every shopkeeper<sup>a</sup> is very well able to distinguish between what somebody professes to be and what he really is, our historiography has not yet won this trivial insight. It takes every epoch at its word and believes that everything it says and imagines about itself is true.

\* [Marginal note by Marx:] Man=the "thinking human spirit".

<sup>a</sup> This word is in English in the manuscript.—Ed.

#### [IV]

##### [I. INSTRUMENTS OF PRODUCTION AND FORMS OF PROPERTY]

[...] <sup>a</sup> [40] From the first point, there follows the premise of a highly developed division of labour and an extensive commerce; from the second, the locality. In the first case the individuals must have been brought together, in the second they are instruments of production alongside the given instrument of production.

Here, therefore, emerges the difference between natural instruments of production and those created by civilisation. The *field* (water, etc.) can be regarded as a natural instrument of production. In the first case, that of the natural instrument of production, individuals are subservient to nature; in the second, to a product of labour. In the first case, therefore, property (landed property) appears as direct natural domination, in the second, as domination of labour, particularly of accumulated labour, capital. The first case presupposes that the individuals are united by some bond: family, tribe, the land itself, etc.; the second, that they are independent of one another and are only held together by exchange. In the first case, what is involved is chiefly an exchange between men and nature in which the labour of the former is exchanged for the products of the latter; in the second, it is predominantly an exchange of men among themselves. In the first case, average human common sense is adequate—physical activity and mental activity are not yet separated; in the second, the division between physical and mental labour must already have been effected in practice. In the first case, the domination of the proprietor over the propertyless may be based on personal relations, on a kind of community; in the second, it must have taken on a material shape in a third party—money. In the first case, small-scale industry exists, but determined by the utilisation of the natural instrument of production and therefore without the distribution of labour among various individuals; in the second, industry exists only in and through the division of labour.

[41] Our investigation hitherto started from the instruments of production, and it has already shown that private property was a necessity for certain industrial stages. In *industrie extractive*<sup>28</sup> private property still coincides with labour; in small-scale industry and all agriculture up till now property is the necessary consequence of the existing instruments of production; the contradiction between the instrument of production and private property is only the product of

<sup>a</sup> Four pages of the manuscript are missing.—Ed.