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Notes of a Week's Study on
THE EARLY WRITINGS OF KARL MARX
and summary of discussions on
BRITISH WORKING CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS.
(January 1st, 1938).

Prepared by a Christian Left Group.

BULLETIN 2.

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I.

GENERAL OUTLINE OF MARXISM.

Marxism is not a system of knowledge, but an interpretation of social and historical facts. It is prophetic teaching - the most important since Jesus - a revelation of truth become active in history. It is also a scientific method. Its nature, and the results secured by it, are discussed below.

A.

ANTHROPOLOGY.

The starting point for Marx is anthropology in its fullest sense, i.e. a science of the nature of man. This science is the basis of Marx's method. It deals not with man as an individual, but with mankind, the genus man. Man's nature is the result of the history of human society. Since history is the progressive realisation of freedom, it should be added that it is man as a member of the community, not man as an individual, who becomes free.

Man is not merely a thinking being, but a part of the material world, who cannot be abstracted from it. Man, though he may not be able to live by bread alone, cannot exist without bread. The economic system is the material basis of society.

The form of society depends on the nature of the means of production and on the conditions under which production is carried on -- the property system being the legal aspect of the latter. A society, according to Marx, consists only of the relationships of human beings. A society can only be human if these relationships are human. Unless they are such, the society is unstable, owing to the urge to make them more so. The basic human relationships are economic, since the individual cannot escape from them. These relationships are actually determined by the system of production. Groups of persons holding the same position within that system form a social class. The struggle between classes may ensure the best use being made of the means of production for society as a whole.

B.

ECONOMICS.

Economics are concerned with two different aspects of human existence:

- 1) The relation of man to nature. Man is dependent upon nature whatever the form of human society be. Production is thus simply the interaction of man and nature. (Soil + Labour = Product).
- 2) The relation of man to man. These relations depend upon the actual form of social organisation.

It is important to distinguish between (1) and (2). One is the natural aspect of economics, the other is the social or historical aspect. Examples:

"A negro is a negro. It is only under definite social conditions that he is a slave".

The use of tools and machinery increase the productivity of labour. This holds good under all conditions. Thus if tools and machinery are called capital goods, it can be asserted that capital goods are productive whatever the form of society be. This is quite different from the assertion that it is a natural quality of tools and machinery i.e., capital to produce surplus value. Productivity is a feature of production regarded as a natural process, a process of interaction between man and nature. Surplus value is a feature of production under certain social conditions, viz. under a system of the private ownership of the tools, machines and other means of production. Capital goods are merely capital goods. It is only under certain social conditions that they become Capital (with a C).

Marx attacked capitalist economics because they represented capitalist conditions as "natural", which implied that they could never alter. He insisted that the essential elements of economics, (such as production needs labour-power, tools) re-appeared under different systems but in a form which changed in accordance with the social organisation. Under capitalism economic life becomes objectified. Useful goods are objectified into commodities; tools into Capital; human needs into demand; creative human activity into labour power; the personal relationship of individuals co-operating with one another into the impersonal exchange-value of the goods produced by them (2 pairs of boots = 3 hats).

C.

CAPITALISM.

A) Marx formulated the characteristics of the historic development of Capitalism, such as the accumulation of capital, the concentration of production, the increasing tendency towards monopoly; these are often spoken of as the laws governing the development of capitalism.

B) The working of the capitalist system itself is partly explained by the Labour Theory of Value. According to the basic law of that system, commodities (including labour power) are exchanged at their value. How then does exploitation come about? The solution offered by Marx is founded on the distinction between the value of the labour-power and the value of the commodities produced by the expenditure of labour power. Wages equal the former. Thus by buying labour-power, and selling its product, capitalists are able to appropriate the difference.

D.

RELATIONSHIPS OF INDIVIDUALS UNDER CAPITALISM.

Under a capitalist society individuals are related through the exchange of commodities. The laws governing the exchange relationship of these commodities dominate man. The study of capitalist economics is therefore the study of the capitalist society, for this society is under the sway of economic law in a much stricter sense than other types of society.

The market-price is the unconscious result of the relationship of human individuals, who are unable to control this result. If human freedom is the freedom of a community to shape its own fate consciously capitalist society is essentially unfree. Through the objectification of economic life, human relationships become impersonal and inhuman. Man is estranged from himself.

ii.

MARX'S RELATIONSHIP TO HEGELIANISM.A. THE EARLY WRITINGS.

The early works of Marx were often regarded as a mere preparation for "Capital" and these writings on philosophy were therefore discounted. The idea was current that Marx had a philosophical period before he branched off into economics, an interest which he put behind him as soon as he came to years of discretion. This notion is entirely erroneous. The philosophical presuppositions, without which "Capital" could not have been written, are the actual content of the early writings of Marx.

His works up to 1847 were not "wild oats" of which he afterward repented. During the forties, he laid the general human basis for all his work. Only by understanding this fact is it possible to understand Marx. It is not true that Marx freed himself of all philosophy, and so reached a purely economic level. Marx's materialist conception is dependent upon his philosophical basis. The connecting point between philosophy and economics is "the true reality of man". After the years 1840-3, which he spent in dealing with Hegel's philosophy, his attitude towards it never changed. Hegelian philosophy is a constituent element of Marx; but he was not even then an Hegelian, and never had been one.

B. LETTER TO HIS FATHER (1837).

Marx said he felt he was living at a decisive historical moment, i.e. he was referring to the position of philosophy after Hegel's death. Marx thought Hegel was right when he said that Mind had reached its limit in himself. Philosophy was perfected in Hegel. But Marx, while accepting this, "came" as he said "to look for the idea in reality itself". "This Kemmer's harp of Hegel", he adds, "does not appeal to me". Hegel was to him grotesque -- like a fantastic natural phenomenon breaking forth into music. Hegel was the enemy. Marx was in love with dialectic, but opposed to it in the realm of pure thought. He was already on his way to the discovery of the dialectic in reality.

S. Landshut and J.P. Meyer: Der Historische Materialismus. Die Frühschriften. 2 Volumes. Alfred Kroner Verlag, Leipzig.

C. DOCTORAL THESIS, 1840.

In this thesis, Marx clearly defines the position of human thought as post-Hegelian. Philosophy was perfected in Hegel, but the world itself remains split, disrupted, and unsatisfactory. The world was not adequate to the complete whole, Philosophy. What is to be done? Marx continually stresses the idea that we must get away from Philosophy altogether. He looked upon this as a psychological change; when the intellect completes itself, it turns to will or volition. (This reference to Psychology does not occur again in Marx's work). If Philosophy becomes real, it means the end of it. It negates itself in turning to the practical. "It is a psychological law that the theoretical mind, when it becomes free and reaches the stage of practical energy in the form of will, leaves the realm of shadows and begins to act in reality itself." But the practice of philosophy is itself a theoretical practice. "It is criticism which compares things with their essences, and compares actuality with its idea." Here Marx begins to reject Hegel, but has not yet reached historical materialism.

Hegel had justified the world by defining it in terms of its concept. Marx declared that the world is such that it cannot be so defined. He decided at this point to be critical as well as philosophical: the practice of philosophy is criticism. His contemporaries were denying Hegel altogether; Marx was searching for something else -- he wanted to go on to the practice of philosophy, while still remaining a philosopher. Even Marx's final position remained philosophical.

Hegel had said that all that is is rational and good. Marx maintained that reality does not conform to its essence. Thus he banished idealism from dialectics.

(Let X = the Idea, e.g. what the State ought to be.
 Let Y = actuality, e.g. what the State is.
 Hegel said that X=Y. Marx said that X and Y are "not coincident, and there is that in man which is already the assurance of the perfect thing ... the idea: it is in the nature of man not to accept the bad actuality, which is his own contradiction of himself").

It is man who brings into being what Hegel had abstracted into pure idea. "What was an inner light becomes a burning flame, which consumes the world. When the world turns philosophic, philosophy becomes wordly and achieves its own negation".

Hegel's revelation of the dialectical nature of the human mind was a revelation of the truth about it, and from this truth Marx never departed. It was Hegel's idealism, in not criticising actuality, which Marx rejected.

In 1840, criticism meant to Marx making the essence the measure of existence. (For essence Hegel used the word idea, not in the platonic sense, but in the sense of essential being). Marx did not, as is commonly supposed, drop philosophy and turn to criticism. His problem was still: How can Philosophy be fulfilled? He decided that it must be sufgehoben, which means three things:

- (i) destroyed or removed;
- (ii) put away safely;
- (iii) uplifted, or put up higher.

A fulfilled philosophy would still contain the truth of philosophy; and therefore Marx criticised two other schools of his time:

- (i) Those who wanted to do away with philosophy, without fulfilling it in reality. (Young Berlin intellectuals).
- (ii) Conservatives who wanted to fulfil philosophy without "criticism" without allowing for its critical function.

Marx wanted both to fulfil philosophy, and to preserve it by practice. He was asking: How can we go on to practice by fulfilling Philosophy in it? How can we take a next step, which is practice, without contradicting the content of philosophy?

Marx meant that reason should become phenomenal reality: that the idea should become real, so that the gap between idea and reality should cease. (Landshut). Hegel discovered the unity of thought and practice in idea; Marx wanted to discover it in reality. He had therefore to answer two questions:

- (i) What is the condition adequate to man, which could become the measure of existing conditions?
- (ii) What are the actual conditions? What is essentially lacking in them?

These two questions are interdependent. Marx first tried to solve them in his Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State. (1842).

D. CRITIQUE OF HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF THE STATE.

This book constitutes the next step away from Hegel. Hegel maintained the pre-existence of the State, which manifested itself in finite form in the family and "industrial life". *Marx held that man is the real: the relationships of individuals in family and "industrial life" are the condition of the existence of the state. The state does not exist apart from this. What was the condition in Hegel becomes the conditioned in Marx. For Hegel, the actual fact of the state became the mystical result of the activity of the Idea. He makes the Idea the subject, and the real subjects become the predicates. To Marx, not the Idea but man is subject and the real actor. He remarks that Hegel is dealing not with the logic of the case but with a case of logic. Thus Marx reversed the subject - object relationship in Hegel.

So Marx takes up the "unphilosophical" position: men form the state. But dialectic does not apply to the individual but to, totality. Marx referred it to mankind as a totality.

(NOTE: The positive side of this book is important from the point of view of the development of Marx's socialism. Marx declares that the true idea of the state is true democracy, and he therefore rejects Hegel's corporative state. This democracy derives from Rousseau, and through him from the Greek polis. True democracy becomes later, in 1848, the "classless society".)

* * * * *

Marx's task was now three fold:

- (i) To get a true idea of the nature of man and community.
- (ii) To get a true understanding of the nature of things as they are.
- (iii) To find a way of relating (i) and (ii).

Until 1847, with the exception of The Holy Family, all Marx's work was an analysis of Hegel's position from these points of view. At this stage, however, Marx had not got away from the idea of man; he had not yet reached his final knowledge of the real nature of man.

In dealing with (ii) he went on to study political economy in Paris, and wrote Political Economy and Philosophy in 1844-5. It was not written with a view to publication. He intended to expand it later.

* Cf. p.13.

3.

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND PHILOSOPHY.

Starting from philosophy, Marx went on to man's self-estrangement through capital and labour, and then on to man's self-achievement in the classless society.

The origin and meaning of self-estrangement:

Hegel explored the mind in the process of its self-fulfilment. In Hegel there were three stages in the dialectic of thought:

- (a) Simple consciousness.
- (b) Self-consciousness.
- (c) Reason.

This was presented by Hegel as the process by which knowledge realises itself as absolute knowledge. When Marx re-writes Hegel, Man - not Mind - becomes the subject of this process. Hegel regarded man as the result of the activity of his mind. Marx substitutes all the activities of man for Mind, and uses Hegel's description to present the process of man's development. Labour is then the means by which man estranges himself: man gets separated from part of himself in the product of his labour. "Estranged from", "exterior to" "objectified" -- these terms are used in Hegel of the dialectic of knowledge. If knowledge knows itself, it has itself as object. If mind went on in this process, the known thing, being exterior, when known would return in the original process of thought to itself. If knowledge knows itself as such, it again becomes pure knowledge. For Hegel this is important, because the phases of the mind become parts of the process. Marx said that this did not apply to man because his activities produce actual objects which cannot revert into the actor, when understood (e.g. a table). Hegel had stated that human activity leads to self-estrangement, but he limited activity to thinking.

Marx had now

- (a) reversed the subject-predicate relationship. (Cf. p.7).
- (b) regarded activity as not only thought, but also material.
- (c) showed that it could not be the activity of separate individuals at all, but of the genus man.

Alienation or estrangement is the non-personal -- not in a psychological sense, but in terms of the objective conditions. Marx never deals with the individual problem, but neither does he exclude it. He nearly reaches a clear notion of the personal, which he struggles with for many pages in the effort to express its nature. For instance, in trying to answer the question, what constitutes man, he answers (p.334) "If there is something outside myself, I am different from that object; for this other object, I am his object. A being which is not object for another being implies the non-existence of the first. "Sensuous, real existence means being the sensuous object of another one". "A being is one who wants to communicate its own passion in a passionate way. Passion is therefore man's essence trying forcefully to reach its own object"; i.e. mutuality is the essence of human existence. Thus Marx came very near to defining the personal. He does not quite achieve this definition; it is still complex and tentative compared with Macmurray's present formulation.

F. PASSAGES FROM POLITICAL ECONOMY AND PHILOSOPHY
(Landshut: 298-300).

"The setting up of society as an abstraction over against the individual must be avoided. The expression of individual life is the expression of community life. The life of individual man and of the genus man are not two different things. A man is just as much a totality in himself -- he is the subjective existence of society as it is thought of and experienced by him".

Marx is not a collectivist in the levelling sense, but he sees society as the fulfilment of the individual. He then stresses the idea that man has not yet reached the full stature of his essential nature. At the present stage in his development, the possession of property is opposed to the fulfilment of man's being. As soon as we regard the world in terms of property, we have diluted the richness of existence.

"Man appropriates his own essence, which is the potential fulness of his nature. All man's relationships, by which he is in touch with his total environment -- seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, thinking, contemplating, feeling, willing, acting, loving-in short, all the instruments or organs of his individuality, are ways in which he relates himself to objects in such a way as to achieve human reality.

Private property has made us so dumb, dull, and inactive, that we regard the object as ours only when we possess it: only when it exists for us in the form of capital, or when we own it, eat it, drink it, wear it, live in it, in short when we use it. In place of all physical and intellectual senses there has been substituted the self-alienation of all of them -- the sense of possession. Man's essence had to be reduced to this, its absolute poverty, so that it could be allowed to bring forth its inner wealth. The abolition of private property is therefore necessary to the freeing of all the senses and attributes of man. It is by this liberation, merely by virtue of the fact that now these senses and attributes have become human -- subjectively and objectively -- that the eye now becomes a human eye, human not in a materialistic sense but in a spiritual one. The eye becomes a human eye when that which it sees has become socially human -- an object made by man for man. It is as if the senses themselves had now, in fact, become in their own practice human philosophers; for they contemplate the object for its own sake. But that object has now entered into an objective and human relationship, which involves both the object and the man."

III.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM IN MARX AND ENGELS.A. IN MARX.

The resolution of self-estrangement can only come from changes in the actual world. Philosophy can realise itself only in reality, not in thought. Self-alienation must be resolved in history which does "really happen". Actual material happening, must contain the seed of the resolution, since it was historical conditions out of which self-alienation arose. The real material process of human history is in, and by, its happening the fulfilment of human freedom.

Marx says that Reason always existed, if not always in reasonable form. Therefore knowledge, if it is the knowledge of existing actuality, has the function of criticism. And criticism if it does not remain merely intellectual, begins to change the life-stuff of society. Knowledge of self-alienation does not of itself lead to the resolution of it, because man is not a purely thinking being. * His activities are empirical in the actual material world. Thus in Marxism, criticism is part of reality. Criticism, which is a recognition of the incompleteness of existing actuality, is part of the process of history -- the self-contradictory reality. And therefore criticism need do nothing more than sing the tune of its own actuality. The task of criticism consists in showing clearly, in the practical activities of men, those points which constitute the self-alienation of man, and thereby to point to the resolution. This became Marx's method.

Marx proceeded to study the points of self-alienation in the practical activities of man; that is, he went on to a study of political economy.

"Division of labour, in its complete forms, implies that man does not control that which he needs and makes."

Self-estrangement becomes a tragic fact with the division of labour in a market economy. In a market society there is no immediate relationship between producers, since the goods they produce are exchanged through the medium of a market. The market-barrier, causing the estrangement between men, is what Marx means by the self-estrangement of men.

* Cf. p.8.

Here Marx goes beyond Jesus: Jesus did not view society as the necessary framework within which human freedom and community were to be realised. The historical development of society in his time, was not such that it was necessary to solve the problem of human freedom, within and through the social organisation of industrial society. With the development of a complex, industrial society, Marx recognised that society has to be transcended in the interests of man and society.

Modern industrial society, with its division of labour, does two things: it makes possible a wider interdependence, and reveals a new and tragic form of self-estrangement; but it also contains within itself the seeds of the resolution of this self-estrangement. This does not mean that with the realisation of human society division of labour will be done away with. Socialism transcends self-estrangement while maintaining division of labour. There follows the special role of the proletariat, who, in fact, suffer the results of the self-estrangement, and carry in themselves the seeds of its resolution. Marx never thought that the property solution was a sufficient solution of the human problem, and therefore he could give a deeper meaning to the mission of the working-class.

B.

THESES ON FEUERBACH

(See Handbook, page 228) Date: 1845.

- Thesis 1.** Feuerbach's "objects" are objects of thought. Marx said that human activities ought not to be restricted to thinking, but should include all sensuous activity.
- Thesis 2.** Not an assertion of pragmatism. That a thing works is not the only test of truth. The relation of thought to reality must be tested in practice; but Marx did not test truth by actuality, but rather actuality by truth - "essence".
- Thesis 3.** Directed against the milieu theory and against Owen's educationalism, especially philanthropic educationalism which turns to princes for help. The emancipation of the working-class must be the work of the working-class.
- Thesis 4.** It is not enough to criticise the cleavage between thought and life. The source of the cleavage lies in actual society.

- Thesis 5. Sensuous contemplation should be distinguished from practical activity.
- Thesis 6. Marx objects to "individual man" being considered apart from social relationships. Society is not the sum of individuals. Marx insists on the totality of mankind.
- Thesis 7. Feuerbach does not see the historical character of religious sentiment.
- Thesis 8. All social life has a practical basis.
- Thesis 9. Compare no.6.
- Thesis 10. Bürgerliche Gesellschaft (literally: civil society; Not bourgeois society) may be perhaps translated as "industrial life" and means:

- (i) the whole of material relationships of individuals at a given stage of development of productive forces:
- (ii) especially the whole of commercial life of modern society.

Marx's term Bürgerliche Gesellschaft was first used in the 18th century, when property relationships began to emerge from mediaeval conditions. The unusual term "vergesellschaftete Menschheit" does not mean "socialised humanity", but humanity in terms of society, i.e. the genus man. "Human society" was the nearest Marx got to the personal. Self-alienation and objectification are the opposites of personal. In Hegel, mediate and immediate relationships mean non-personal and personal, respectively.

- Thesis 11. Marx accepted the fact that in philosophy he could add nothing to Hegel.

* * * * *

C.

ENGELS ON DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM.

Dialectical Materialism, as expounded by Engels in Anti-Dühring, has been accepted and used by the Russian communists. This kind of dialectical materialism emphasizes

- (i) Change of quantity into quality as a dialectical process.
- (ii) Interpenetration of opposites: mutually antagonistic forces do not exclude one another.
- (iii) The relation of theory and practice. Theory can only be validated by practice. Theory, if widely accepted, has social effects.

Engels was far from holding a materialist view in the crude sense of the term. He would never have, for instance, said that mind was a secretion of matter. His starting point was that the laws of motion, both of mind and matter, are dialectical. In this he was in agreement with Hegel, who had extended the laws of dialectic to nature. But that Hegel had done this was his weakness, and this had been realized by Marx, who restricted the dialectic to the human sphere - the sphere in which man was the primary agent.

The position of the dialectical materialist on this question rests on Engels' formulation, and is inadequate. We would not accept the three points given above as the dialectic. In modern science, which deals with the description of processes, the question of quality does not arise; only terms of quantity are needed. Therefore to think that the dialectic method applies to science is to subscribe to old-fashioned metaphysics. Science deals not with essences but with descriptions.

The laws of the human mind are dialectical. What we understand with the help of the dialectic is mind-stuff -- the product of a process in which human consciousness was involved -- the human, social, historical world. Now Engels said that "what is happening in nature is the same as the law involved in our consciousness." But we cannot see and understand happenings in nature by means of the dialectic. We would need to have the consciousness of a plant to understand how the dialectic applies, if it applies at all, to its growth. Science offers us an understanding of nature, which is superior to this mystical use of the dialectic. This superior understanding would be thrown away, if we attempted to think of nature dialectically.

The danger of the official dialectical materialism is that it mishandles natural science and misses the real nature of social science. The relevance of dialectic to social sciences lies in the subject-object relation peculiar to the dialectic. In classic philosophy the subject is that which can never be object. In dialectics this is not true. Activity becomes its own object, and can be understood dialectically. Outside human activity dialectics make no sense whatsoever. Marx never thought of including nature; he excluded it. Dialectics refer to the historical and social sphere. If you try and apply dialectical materialism to nature, as the Russians do, you can only do so by dropping the subject-object relationship. Engels in Anti-Dühring in fact, never mentions this relationship.

IV.

WORKING CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS.A. SOCIETY.

- (i) Man, starting from a primitive tribal community, where there is no division of labour, forms a pattern of existence, where relationships are according to the nature of man.
- (ii) Man proceeds to a complex pattern of unconscious, organic relationships, in feudalism. Here the unity of society cannot be understood by reference to the individual: it expresses itself in universalist tendencies, which transcend national society.
- (iii) Only the pattern which emerges later, capitalism, brings about a structure of society in which its essential unity again becomes discernible. In reducing society, in principle, not to traditional orders and dependences, but to a system which presupposes distinct, isolated, equal human beings, society, in a specific sense, is constituted; and it becomes clear that this involves a special human problem: by the destruction of medieval organisms, society is again atomised. When the individual is no longer a member of traditional bodies, which were in charge of his responsibilities and conscience, it becomes clear that a new unity must be achieved.

Under modern capitalism, the problem of society emerges as the problem of reconstituting society as a totality. All the intermediate organisation of social life becomes irrelevant, and history begins on a new world-wide scale. The proletariat comes into being as an international, social factor. This means that regional relationships have broken down, and are no longer of primary importance. Man returns to his nature as "general man", i.e. a member of mankind. There remains, therefore, the possibility of a solution only on a world-wide scale. Fascism accepts the challenge resulting from this situation, that modern life has lost its meaning and that society must be reconstituted as a whole, as a totality. But it proposes to do this by maintaining and perpetuating capitalism; which can only be done on an artificially restricted national basis.

B.

CLASSES.

The Marxist interpretation of classes is based on the relation of the classes to the whole of society. The recognition of the social problem is the condition of the proletariat's understanding of itself. The very existence of the proletariat is the result of the fact that the process of liberal capitalism has gone to its limits. The workers constitute themselves a class by recognising their position in society, thus they take up into their consciousness an understanding of the general meaning of the human problem involved. The consciousness of the proletariat is the consciousness of mankind as a whole.

The recognition by the proletariat of the dehumanised character of society implies the assertion of human values, and leads to the recognition of the necessity of removing the conditions which prevent full human status. The proletariat cannot become conscious of itself as a class, without asserting humanity as the content of its consciousness.

Working-class consciousness is the starting-point of the dialectic of modern history. The working-class in this situation is the object of its own consciousness. The recognition of its position by the working-class is the step which will lead ultimately to the overthrow of capitalism. The consciousness of the subject of itself as object is here the decisive factor. (It is for this reason that in a crisis one person may be of crucial importance. This consciousness may be the determining factor in the situation). The significance of the subject-object relationship is the pivotal fact in the sphere of social existence.

C. THEORY AND PRACTICE.

The unity of theory and practice derives from the subject-object relationship, for a group's understanding of itself decides its practice. The workers are a class in so far as they think of themselves as a group having a definite place in society, and with a function which derives therefrom.

There is a formula which thought true in itself, does not reveal the dialectic of theory and practice, namely, that theory becomes a material factor if it takes hold of the mind of the masses. This is not dialectic; it is merely psychological causation. The essence of dialectic -- what makes it a revolutionary theory -- lies in the way in which theory is related to the action of the masses in a definite situation. Marx said that it is not enough for the idea to press towards realization -- reality itself must press towards the fulfilment of the Idea. Now, everything depends on the concrete situation in which reality is pressing towards fulfilment. If all other conditions are given, the act of consciousness is the final step, which, when supplied, brings about the event.

What is the nature of this decisive step?
 It, firstly, the process of history starts a movement towards ends which have not been set by subjective human will, but are objectively given;
 if, secondly, there is a class of people available, which is objectively in the position to achieve this end, once it is conscious of its position in society as a whole;
then the dialectic of theory and practice is present, i.e. consciousness is not merely reflecting reality, but changing it -- the dialectic, not mystical, not in the realm of ideas, but in the realm of human activity, where alone it can operate, is at work.

The revolutionary character of dialectic lies, in effect, in the theory and practice relationship, which is relevant only if there is a class in society whose understanding of itself is a decisive element in its struggle for the achievement of objectively given ends. In no other sense is the dialectic revolutionary, and it is fantastic to assume that the dialectic is always at work in a revolutionary sense. The dialectic brings the event about only under the above conditions. This is the difference between Marx and Engels;

between real and ideal dialectic.

Ideal Dialect is a process of reflecting reality, i.e. it is an improved form of conceptual thinking, in which concepts are not mutually exclusive, but are in a progressive dynamic relation. Real Dialectic (i.e. revolutionary dialectic) presupposes a subject-object relationship, in which the object changes by the very understanding of itself. This is the dialectical process in reality.

(Cf. on this section G. Lukacs: Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein. Malik Verlag, 1922. It is only fair to add that as far as we know the author would repudiate part at least of the position outlined above).

V.

A. THE BRITISH WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT - INTRODUCTION.

There are two main questions to be considered:

- (1) The nature of British Democracy:
 - a) What it implies.
 - b) How it developed.
 - c) What it stands for.
- (2) The attitude of British Workers to Democracy:
 - a) The character of English Life.
 - b) The lack of urban culture.
 - c) Distrust of legislative action.
 - d) Opposition to Government interference.

There are two aspects of Democracy:

- A. Equalitarian -- the opposite of aristocracy.
- B. Libertarian -- the opposite of dictatorship.

Equalitarian democracy aims at equality, and is characteristic of continental systems; Libertarian democracy provides a method of dealing with the affairs of the community so as to realise the greatest degree of freedom.

English Democracy is mainly concerned with liberty, rather than with equality, although we have two typical institutions of equalitarian democracy: - universal suffrage, and (some measure of) educational equality. These are recent developments within British democracy, and already they are transforming it along continental lines. A substantial degree of equality, however, was achieved at an early stage of English history, but without affecting essentially the English character. English liberty has a history, while English equality has not.

In America the libertarian ideal goes further than in England; at the same time the equalitarian principle is carried further than on the Continent. The price is, at present, a greater ineffectiveness of the central government than either in England or in the Continental Democratic countries.

B.

THE RISE OF ENGLISH DEMOCRACY.

There is a political mechanism, operating throughout our history, tending to produce both liberty and equality; it originates in the struggle between the king and the barons. The king's effort to limit the power of the barons produces political equality; the barons' effort to limit the power of the king produces political liberty.

This conflict is characteristic of the whole of the political history of western and central Europe for about a thousand years. It emerges from the necessity of establishing territorial sovereignty over wider areas, after the breakdown of the organisations of tribal communities.

England had been administratively unified by the Romans, but was later over-run by Germanic and Scandinavian tribes, who had not formed part of the Roman world. These invasions continued from the middle of the fifth century, and the tribal groups failed to achieve unity during the following five centuries, either by federation or by conquest. Tribal kingship developed because the village communities could not exist in isolation. But tribal kingship was not enough, for in early village life the only organising principle is the blood tie, and when territory, which had previously been unified, was invaded by different tribal groups, war and trade developed between the tribes, and the need for territorial sovereignty arose. This need could be satisfied in two ways:-

(i) Village communities organised round a Manor.

Military, economic, judicial and political life is organised on the basis of a hierarchy of protection and fealty. Everyone seeks for the protection of a strong man, nationally these lords form a federation in which the head is merely the first among equals. Territorial sovereignty is indirect.

(ii) Development of direct territorial sovereignty.

The country and people belong to the king, and his army and courts give the people protection. They are personally attached to the king by ties of allegiance. In recompence for this allegiance, he distributes grants of conquered land. When such sovereignty is established, the king's control is based on courts, reeves and other administrators.

These two principles of sovereignty competed with one another during a long period. The manorial, or feudal, system was a system of liberties defined by custom, and secured by personal ties; there was nothing arbitrary about it; in the manorial courts, the freemen of the manor were the judges, and the purpose of the court was to discover the law applicable to the case. The system under territorial sovereignty, on the other hand, was arbitrary and despotic. But in trying to reduce the power of the barons the king became the ally of the common people against the barons. Some measure of equality resulted.

The kings were always eager to extend the jurisdiction of the courts, and, from Henry I to Charles I, they did so by means of Royal and prerogative courts. The people came to favour the king's courts, and looked on them as a protection against the common law. The king's law came to be considered more equitable and creative.

Liberty was progressively achieved by limitation of the central government; it was achieved by the nobles, and for themselves alone, although, when commoners were enabled, they shared in the liberty. Paradoxically, it was the struggle to limit the power of the nobles by the central government, which gave a measure of liberty to the common people.

A feudal system in the continental sense was never established in England. She therefore started with an advantage when William the Conqueror established a central government. The English manorial system approximated to, but was never the same as, the feudal. Before the Norman conquest, there was a manorial system based on personal fealty; afterwards the hierarchy was based exclusively on the tenure of land. But there was never, in this country, a confederation of barons, who ruled the country; as there was in France. From the first, a strong central government was established, and ruthlessly maintained, except for short periods of "feudal anarchy".

The English constitution became a matter of limiting the power of the king, and English liberty became the limitation of the prerogatives of the king and the powers entered. The King finally lost in the struggle against the squires, when they were joined by the rising middle class, the merchants.

How is this concept of constitutional liberty related to democracy as a method?

If democracy is thought of as a method of deliberating and discussing in such a way as to get the greatest common consent with the minimum of coercion, it applies primarily to discussion. In the case of representative bodies, this implies a two-party system in order to safeguard the rights of minority. But permanent minorities cannot be safeguarded by means of the two-party system. They are safeguarded by acceptance of the principle of non-interference of the state in regional, racial, religious and economic affairs. Economic liberalism is thus a corollary of political liberalism. But, in principle, there is no way of safeguarding a minority of wealth; and this is the ultimate reason for the Fascist tendencies under liberal Capitalism.

The democratic system will only work in communities where no questions arise which cannot be settled under the two-party system. When a problem appears to which alternating solutions are impracticable, the two-party system cannot work. Thus when the economic system itself is the issue, democracy reaches a crisis, as in England at the present time.

Before 1688 representative democracy was impossible on account of the cleavage between the crown and the country. In 1688 the crown gave way to squirearchy; discussion and compromise became possible to an extent they had not been before. The lower classes were supposed to be represented by their betters. This assumed community resulted in the introduction of the two-party system.

C.

CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE WORKING CLASS.

There was in England an almost continuous increase in wealth, due to an expanding foreign trade, which was responsible for the maintenance of feudal forms and a rural atmosphere in this country. It is the only country of the "western" type, which retained feudal forms of land tenure to the present time. ("Copyhold" survived down to 1925.) The Trade Union Movement developed a monopoly in upholding: (i) standards of pay, (ii) conditions of labour, (iii) stability within the "profession". English vocational groupings were based on a system of mutually respected corporate privileges. The worker himself, a safeguarded member of a community which promised to protect him economically, morally and politically, was prepared to accept a hierarchic class society in which he had a recognised status. Thus the Trade Union came to mean everything to him, and he would make great sacrifices for it. This largely accounts for the outlook and aims of the British worker, and for approval of a class society. It may lead to catastrophe, for the British working class is not prepared to take charge, and build, if necessary, a new society.

Continental democracy differs from British in its equalitarian emphasis. This emphasis seems to be the result of the stage of industrial and economic development, at which constitutional forms were finally settled. In England, this happened before the Industrial Revolution; the middle class had to fight its own battles, and the workers, if part at all, did so under constraint, as they were not yet a social order. On the continent, the process took place in the reverse order. Constitutional government and representative institutions were more or less preceded by industrial revolution. (France 1789 - Russia 1917) and therefore the workers, being already a class, assisted in the storming of the Bastille, and actually led the storming of the Winter Palace.

In England, democracy did not develop an equalitarian emphasis, owing to the lack of organised working class interest and power. In Russia, a socialistic form of democracy was evolved, because the working class was strong, and won the peasants for its allies, while the middle class took the lead in the liquidation of the feudal system of land tenure and despotic central government. Although the Bolsheviki in 1917 conceived it as essentially a middle class revolution, the workers had to take the lead in order to avert a counter-revolution, which would have swept away all the middle-class reforms. Having once taken the lead, they were left, through developments in the world situation, only the choice between socialism and fascism.

Hence the differences between the working-class consciousness in England and on the continent. On the continent, the working class played a prominent part in the risings and revolutions (1830-48, France, Germany, Italy etc.). The British working class, in the second half of the 19th century became a safeguard to middle-class liberty.

The Industrial Revolution in England was incomparably more harmful than in other countries. Only here were the horrors of licensed child-labour and systematic pauperisation part of working-class history. With the memory of such unspeakable conditions, the British working-class justly feel that they have progressed a long way. When the industrial revolution reached the continent, the factory system was much more developed; and when the industrial working class came into being, conditions were not as bad as they had been in England, and industry was more easily adapted to society. In England, the desperate conditions which the industrial revolution produced almost destroyed society. There was a widespread feeling that such conditions were intolerable. In many quarters, it was thought that the early period of capitalism must also be its end. The horrors of that time still haunt the workers; and this has a distinct bearing on the gradualism which is characteristic of the British working class.

What is the explanation of the swift recovery from the severe breakdowns which occurred in English social life in the course of history? (e.g., 14th century - enclosures and wool trade; end of 18th century - more enclosures and industrial revolution). None of these breakdowns meant a complete break up of society. Though there were terrible periods, they did not lead to catastrophe or revolution, or even to the surrender of feudal forms, owing to the increasing wealth and prosperity of the country as a whole. England could afford the luxury of giving a certain amount of security to the producers. Even today English society expects to be able to do so. Imperialism, with its colonial plunder, alone made it possible to secure enough of the increasing wealth for the workers, to keep them satisfied. (Social insurance, factory legislation, municipal socialism, health services etc. are a heavy charge on society, and England was the only country which could afford them). So the Trade Unions could ask for security and get some measure of it for the more fortunate men. Feudal forms and a feudal atmosphere could be retained because the upper class was able to make concessions and prevent an overpowering demand. What kind of situation will develop when this is no longer possible, it is difficult to foresee.

VI.

CHRONOLOGICAL APPENDIX OF MARX'S LIFE, 1837-47.

(The intellectual climate of Marx's early manhood was liberal and non-religious. He was, in addition, passionately anti-semitic and agnostic. He thought that Jewry was responsible for all that was bad in the materialist practice of bourgeois Christianity. Marx started with an attempt to understand his world in general terms. His first work, which he destroyed, was a treatise on the nature of divinity - Hegelian and Deist.)

- 1837 Marx joins the Doktorklub.
 "At first the chief subject of discussion was religion. To begin with the battle raged round the question of the distortion of true Christianity by mythology and the assimilation of Christianity to the conclusions of contemporary philosophy, but it quickly developed into an attack on religion itself."
- 1838 Government drive against left Hegelianism, drives the Club into political opposition. Rutenberg was the only one who demanded that they should take the plunge into contemporary life. Bauer and Marx thought the intellectual revolution should come first. "The alteration of the world would necessarily follow from the new interpretation put upon it by philosophers." This gave rise to the following lampoon:
- So far our deeds are all words and
 are like to remain so;
 Abstractions we have in our minds are
 bound to come true of themselves.
- 1840-1 Group moves rapidly left.
- 1840 (Summer) Köppen's book on Frederick the Great, dedicated to Marx. His basic idea was that the state was embodied in its purest form in a monarchy ruled over by a king like Frederick. Renewal can come only from the top. But this phase of Liberal constitutional monarchism soon ended.
- 1840-1 (Winter) Club called themselves "Friends of the people" -- extreme left wing of revolutionary republicanism. Rutenberg compares Berlin with Paris on eve of revolution; Köppen writes essays on the Terror. Ideas in The Christian State and Our Times by Bauer probably originated in Marx.
- 1841 Doctoral Thesis for University of Jena, because Berlin had gone reactionary. "The Difference between the natural philosophies of Democritus and the Epicureans" Bauer's Criticism of the Synoptic Gospels.

- 1842 Bauer and Marx collaborate in an ironical work by a "right-thinking Christian" who proved that Hegel was the most dangerous enemy of the Christian state. Bauer dismissed from Bonn, to which University he had been transferred.
 Marx's Remarks on the New Prussian Censorship
 (Hess on Marx about this time "Think of Rousseau, Voltaire, Lessing, Heine and Hegel fused into one")
 Articles on Freedom of Press in Rheinische Zeitung
 October 15th. Fe becomes editor.
 He defends paper from a charge of communism
 "Marx always said that it was going into the question of wood-theft law and the position of the Moselle peasants that turned his attention from pure politics to economic conditions and thus to socialism"
 Lorwegh, the poet, who had quarrelled with the Berlin Hegelians, attacked them in Marx's paper, and Marx, by refusing to print their replies, broke with his old associates, who were losing themselves in abstraction.
 March: Feuerbach's Introd. Theses to the Reform of Philosophy.
- 1843 March. The paper is suppressed, partly to please the Czar.
 Spring: Marx decides that politics were the only ally with the aid of which contemporary philosophy could become a reality.
 End of year: "The weapon of criticism can certainly never be a substitute for the criticism of the weapon. Physical force must be overthrown by physical force; and theory will be a physical force as soon as the masses understand it".
 June. Marx marries. He is offered work by the government, which he declines!
 October. Marx goes to Paris. Starts the Jahrbücher
- 1844 February. Marx published in the Jahrbücher, on the Jewish Question (in reply to Bauer) and Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Law (Banned).
Contributions to Vorwärts.
- 1845 February. Marx, expelled from Paris, goes to Brussels. The Holy Family; or the Critique of Critical Criticism attack on the Bauer family.
 Begins Critique of Political Economy and Philosophy.
 Breaks off to write German Ideology in collaboration with F. Engels and P. Hess.

(cf. Bibliography. Bulletin I.).

Bibliographical Notes on the Early Works of Marx.

In 1932 S. Landshut and J.P. Meyer edited what turned out to be a most important, even if not complete publication of the earlier works of Marx under the title "Der Historische Materialismus. Die Fruchtschriften." 2 vols. Alfred Kroner Verlag, Leipzig. Some of Marx's writings were published here for the first time, amongst them "Nationalökonomie und Philosophie"; others were published after having been available only in more or less inaccessible periodicals, as, e.g., the Anti-Stirner; others again were made available to the German public after having been published only in Russian, as, e.g., Marx's doctorate's thesis.

The term Earlier Writing covers the period 1837-1847, i.e., from Marx's letter to his father (10th Nov. 1837) to the publication of the Communist Manifesto (1848). In the following we outline the contents of the Landshut-Meyer edition. The bulk of these writings has not been published in English. We understand that Lawrence and Wishart are preparing the publication of some of these writings.

Contents of the Landshut-Meyer edition of the
Earlier Writings of Marx.

Volume I.

Marx' letter to his father. (1837)	Complete; not available in English.
Doctorate's thesis. (1840)	2 chapters only; not available in English.
Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of State'. (1841-42)	Complete; not available in English. 162 pp.
"Rheinische Zeitung". Three articles. (1842-43)	Dealing with the State; Communist ; Forestry laws ; Not available in English.
"Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher". (1843-44)	
a. Correspondence with Arnold Ruge.	Complete; not available in English.
b. On Jewry.	Complete; published by Martin Lawrence, 1938.
aa. Review of B. Bauer's book.	

- bb. On the emancipation of Jews and Christians.
- c. A Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Law'. Introduction in English.

Paris "Vorwaerts". (1844)

Socialism in Germany (from a review of Weitling's book). Not available in English.

Nationalökonomie und Philosophie*
Political Economy and the State,
Law, Ethics, Industrial Life.
(1844)

Published for the first time 27 pp. Not available in English.

The Holy Family. (Anti-Bruno Bauer)
(1844-45)

Out of print; 6 chapters only; not available in English.

Volume II.

The bulk of this volume is taken up by four publications from the MS. of "Deutsche Ideologie", a voluminous work written by Marx, Engels and Hess in 1845-46 but left unpublished on account of censorship. Its purpose was to offer an all-round criticism of post-Hegelian philosophy.

Theses on Feuerbach.
(1845)

Published in English in "A Handbook of Marxism", V. Gollanz, 1935.

From: "Deutsche Ideologie"

A. Introduction.

Feuerbach. Materialism und Idealismus

Complete; a sample published in the "Handbook", pp. 210-213, under the title "German Ideology".

B.

B. "Sankt Max" (Anti-Stirner)

First complete publication. 400 pp. Not available in English.

C. On "True Socialism",
A criticism of several
articles about socialism
which appeared in the
"Rheinische Jahrbücher"

Some of this is published for the first time; not available in English.

D. "Dr. Kuhlmann", or the prophet of
of True Socialism.

Published for the first time; not available in English.

Appendix.

- a. Weitling's report on his meeting with Marx.
- b. Annenkow's letter on this meeting. (18
(31st March 1848)

Poverty of Philosophy. (Anti-Brounion).
(1847).

Published by Martin Lawrence as well as in the "Handbook", p. 348.

The Communist Manifesto.
(1848).

Various English editions. Also "Handbook", p. 33.

Readers are referred to:

J. Macmurray: Dialectical Materialism. An essay on the relationship of theory and practice. In: "Marxism", V. Gollanz, V. Gollanz.

The Early Development of Marx's Thought. In: "Christianity and the Social Revolution". V. Gollanz, 1930, p. 209.

K. Korsch: The Essence of Fascism. Chapt. V.: Spinoza, Hegel and Marx; chapt. VI: Klages, Nietzsche and Marx. In: "Christianity and the Social Revolution", p. 359.
